WRITINGS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS - VOLUME 1

by Jonathan Edwards

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

100 Chapters

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Chapter 2

01.00. A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections

A TREATISE

CONCERNING RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS. IN THREE PARTS. BY JONATHAN EDWARDS

Jonathan Edwards (October 5 1758) was a colonial American Congregational preacher and theologian. He is known as one of the greatest and most profound American evangelical theologians. His work is very broad in scope, but he is often associated with his defense of Calvinist theology and the Puritan heritage, while missing the Puritan Era by almost 150 years.

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01.01. Introduction

THERE is no question whatsoever, that is of greater importance to mankind, and what is more concerns every individual person to be well resolved in, than this: What are the distinguishing qualifications of those that are in favor with God, and entitled to his eternal rewards? Or, which comes to the same thing, What is the nature of true religion? And wherein do lie the distinguishing notes of that virtue and holiness that is acceptable in the sight of God? But though it be of such importance, and though we have clear and abundant light in the word of God to direct us in this matter, yet there is no one point, wherein professing Christians do more differ one from another. It would be endless to reckon up the variety of opinions in this point, that divide the Christian world; making manifest the truth of that declaration of our Savior, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few there be that find it." The consideration of these things has long engaged me to attend to this matter, with the utmost diligence and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, that I have been capable of. It is a subject on which my mind has been peculiarly intent, ever since I first entered on the study of divinity. But as to the success of my inquiries it must be left to the judgment of the reader of the following treatise.

I am sensible it is much more difficult to judge impartially of that which is the subject of this discourse, in the midst of the dust and smoke of such a state of controversy, as this land is now in, about things of this nature. As it is more difficult to write impartially, so it is more difficult to read impartially. Many will probably be hurt in their spirits, to find so much that appertains to religious affection, here condemned: and perhaps indignation and contempt will be excited in others by finding so much here justified and approved. And it may be, some will be ready to charge me with inconsistency with myself, in so much approving some things, and so much condemning others; as I have found this has always been objected to by some, ever since the beginning of our late controversies about religion. It is a hard thing to be a hearty zealous friend of what has been good and glorious, in the late extraordinary appearances, and to rejoice much in it; and at the same time to see the evil and pernicious tendency of what has been bad, and earnestly to oppose that. But yet, I am humbly but fully persuaded, we shall never be in the way of truth, nor go on in a way acceptable to God, and tending to the advancement of Christ’s kingdom till we do so. There is indeed something very mysterious in it, that so much good, and so much bad, should be mixed together in the church of God; as it is a mysterious thing, and what has puzzled and amazed many a good Christian, that there should be that which is so divine and precious, as the saving grace of God, and the new and divine nature dwelling in the same heart, with so much corruption, hypocrisy, and iniquity, in a particular saint. Yet neither of these is more mysterious than real. And neither of them is a new or rare thing. It is no new thing, that much false religion should prevail, at a time of great reviving of true religion, and that at such a time multitudes of hypocrites should spring up among true saints. It was so in that great reformation, and revival of religion, that was in Josiah’s time; as appears by Jeremiah 3:10, and Jeremiah 4:3-4, and also by the great apostasy that there was in the land, so soon after his reign. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews, that was in the days of John the Baptist; as appears by the great apostasy of that

people so soon after so general an awakening, and the temporary religious comforts and joys of many: John 5:35, "Ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." So it was in those great commotions that were among the multitude, occasioned by the preaching of Jesus Christ; of the many that were then called, but few were chosen; of the multitude that were roused and affected by his preaching, and at one time or other appeared mightily engaged, full of admiration of Christ, and elevated with joy, but few were true disciples, that stood the shock of the great trials that came afterwards, and endured to the end. Many were like the stony ground, or thorny ground; and but few, comparatively, like the good ground. Of the whole heap that was gathered, great part was chaff; that the wind afterwards drove away; and the heap of wheat that was left, was comparatively small; as appears abundantly, by the history of the New Testament. So it was in that great outpouring of the Spirit that was in the apostles' days as appears by Matthew 24:10-13. Galatians 3:1, and Galatians 4:11, Galatians 4:15. Php 2:21, and Php 3:18-19, and the two epistles to the Corinthians, and many other parts of the New Testament. And so it was in the great reformation from Popery. It appears plainly to have been in the visible church of God, in times of great reviving of religion, from time to time, as it is with the fruit trees in the spring; there are a multitude of blossoms, all of which appear fair and beautiful, and there is a promising appearance of young fruits; but many of them are but of short continuance; they soon fall off, and never come to maturity. Not that it is to be supposed that it will always be so; for though there never will, in this world, be an entire purity, either in particular saints, in a perfect freedom from mixtures of corruption; or in the church of God, without any mixture of hypocrites with saints, and counterfeit religion, and false appearances of grace with true religion, and real holiness: yet it is evident, that there will come a time of much greater purity in the church of God, than has been in ages past; it is plain by these texts of Scripture, Isaiah 52:1. Ezekiel 44:6-7, Joel 3:17. Zechariah 14:21. Psalms 69:32, Psalms 69:35-36. Isaiah 35:8, Isaiah 35:10, chap. Isaiah 4:3-4. Ezekiel 20:38. Psalms 37:9-10, Psalms 37:21, Psalms 37:29. And one great reason of it will be that at that time God will give much greater light to his people, to distinguish between true religion and its counterfeits. Malachi 3:3, "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness." With Malachi 3:18, which is a continuation of the prophecy of the same happy times. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

It is by the mixture of counterfeit religion with true, not discerned and distinguished, that the devil has had his greatest advantage against the cause and kingdom of Christ, all along hitherto. It is by this means, principally, that he has prevailed against all revivings of religion, that ever have been sheen the first founding of the Christian church. By this, he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more than by all the persecutions of both Jews and Heathens. The apostles, in all their epistles, show themselves much more concerned at the former mischief, than the latter. By this, Satan prevailed against the reformation, began by Luther. Zwinglius, &c., to put a stop to its progress, and bring it into disgrace; ten times more, than by all those bloody, cruel, and before unheard of persecutions of the church of Rome. By this, principally, has he prevailed against revivals of religion, that have been in our nation since the reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love and spoil the joy of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think, I have had opportunity enough to see plainly that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising in its

beginning. Here, most evidently has been the main advantage Satan has had against us; by this he has foiled us. It is by this means, that the daughter of Zion in this land now lies on the ground, in such piteous circumstances as we now behold her; with her garments rent, her face disfigured, her nakedness exposed, her limbs broken, and weltering in the blood of her own wounds, and in no wise able to arise, and this, so quickly after her late great joys and hopes: Lamentations 1:17, "Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her: the Lord hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries shall be roundabout him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them." I have seen the devil prevail the same way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. Satan goes on with mankind, as he began with them. He prevailed against our first parents, and cast them out of paradise, and suddenly brought all their happiness and glory to an end, by appearing to be a friend to their happy paradisaic state, and pretending to advance it to higher degrees. So the same cunning serpent, that beguiled Eve through his subtlety, by perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, hath suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect, we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisaic state of the church of God in New England.

After religion has revived in the church of God, and enemies appear, people that are engaged to defend its cause, are commonly most exposed, where they are sensible of danger. While they are wholly intent upon the opposition that appears openly before them, to make head against that, and do neglect carefully to look all around them, the devil comes behind them, and gives a fatal stab unseen; and has opportunity to give a more home stroke, and wound the deeper, because he strikes at his leisure, and according to his pleasure, being obstructed by no guard or resistance. And so it is ever likely to be in the church, whenever religion revives remarkably, till we have learned well to distinguish between true and false religion, between saving affections and experiences, and those manifold fair shows, and glistering appearances, by which they are counterfeited; the consequences of which, when they are not distinguished, are often inexpressibly dreadful. By this means, the devil gratifies himself, by bringing it to pass, that that should be offered to God, by multitudes, under a notion of a pleasing acceptable service to him, that is indeed above all things abominable to him. By this means he deceives great multitudes about the state of their souls; making them think they are something, when they are nothing; and so eternally undoes them; and not only so, but establishes many in a strong confidence of their eminent holiness, who are in God’s sight some of the vilest of hypocrites. By this means, he many ways damps and wounds religion in the hearts of the saints, obscures and deforms it by corrupt mixtures, causes their religious affections woefully to degenerate, and sometimes, for a considerable time, to be like the manna that bred worms and stank; and dreadfully ensnares and confounds the minds of others of the saints and brings them into great difficulties and temptation, and entangles them in a wilderness, out of which they can by no means extricate themselves. By this means, Satan mightily encourages the hearts of open enemies of religion, and strengthens their hands, and fills them with weapons, and makes strong their fortresses; when, at the same time, religion and the church of God lie exposed to them, as a city without walls. By this means, he brings it to pass, that men work wickedness under a notion of doing God service, and so sin without restraint, yea with earnest forwardness and zeal, any with all their might. By this means he brings in even the friends of religion, insensibly to themselves, to do the work of enemies, by destroying religion in a far more effectual manner than open enemies can do, under a notion of advancing it. By this means the devil scatters the flock of Christ, and sets them one against

another, and that with great heat of spirit, under a nation of zeal for God; and religion, by degrees degenerates into vain jangling; and during the strife, Satan leads both parties far out of the right way, driving each to great extremes, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, according as he finds they are most inclined, or most easily moved and swayed, till the right path in the middle is almost wholly neglected. And in the midst of this confusion, the devil has great opportunity to advance his own interest, and make it strong in ways innumerable, and get the government of all into his own hands and work his own will. And by what is seen of the terrible consequences of this counterfeit religion, when not distinguished from true religion, God's people in general have their minds unhinged and unsettled in things of religion, and know not where to set their foot, or what to think or do; and many are brought into doubts, whether there be anything in religion; and heresy, and infidelity, and atheism greatly prevail.

Therefore it greatly concerns us to use our utmost endeavors clearly to discern, and have it well settled and established, wherein true religion does consist. Till this be done, it may be expected, that great revivings of religion will be but of short continuance; till this be done, there is but little good to be expected of all our warm debates in conversation and from the press, not knowing clearly and distinctly what we ought to contend for. My design is to contribute my mite, and use my best (however feeble) endeavors to this end, in the ensuing treatise; wherein it must be noted, that my design is somewhat diverse from the design of what I have formerly published, which was to show the distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of God, including both his common and saving operations; but what I aim at now, is to show the nature and signs of the gracious operations of God's Spirit, by which they are to be distinguished from all things whatsoever, that the minds of men are the subjects of, which are not of a saving nature. If I have succeeded, in this my aim, in any tolerable measure, I hope it will tend to promote the interest of religion. And whether I have succeeded to bring any light to this subject or no, and however my attempts may be reproached in these captious and censorious times, I hope ins the mercy of a gracious God, for the acceptance of the sincerity of my endeavors; and hope also for the candor and prayers of the true followers of the meek and charitable Lamb of God.

01.02. PART 1

CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE AFFECTIONS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN RELIGION.

1 Peter 1:8 : Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In these words, the apostle represents the state of the minds of the Christians he wrote to, under the persecutions they were then the subjects of. These persecutions are what he has respect to, in the two preceding verses, when he speaks of the trial of their faith, and of their being in heaviness through manifold temptations.

Such trials are of threefold benefit to true religion. Hereby the truth of it is manifested, and it appears to be indeed true religion; they, above all other things, have a tendency to distinguish between true religion and false, and to cause the difference between them evidently to appear. Hence they are called by the name of trials, in the verse nextly preceding the text, and in innumerable other places; they try the faith and religion of professors, of what sort it is, as apparent gold is tried in the fire, and manifested, whether it be true gold or no. And the faith of true Christians being thus tried and proved to be true, is "found to praise, and honor, and glory," as in 1 Peter 1:7. And then, these trials are of further benefit to true religion; they not only manifest the truth of it, but they make its genuine beauty and amiableness remarkably to appear. True virtue never appears so lovely, as when it is most oppressed; and the divine excellency of real Christianity, is never exhibited with such advantage, as when under the greatest trials: then it is that true faith appears much more precious than gold! And upon this account is "found to praise, and honor, and glory." And again, another benefit that such trials are of to true religion, is, that they purify and increase it. They not only manifest it to be true, but also tend to refine it, and deliver it from those mixtures of that which is false, which encumber and impede it; that nothing may be left but that which is true. They tend to cause the amiableness of true religion to appear to the best advantage, as was before observed; and not only so, but they tend to increase its beauty, by establishing and confirming it, and making it more lively and vigorous, and purifying it from those things that obscured its luster and glory. As gold that is tried in the fire, is purged from its alloy, and all remainders of dross, and comes forth more solid and beautiful; so true faith being tried as gold is tried in the fire, becomes more precious, and thus also is "found unto praise, and honor, and glory." The apostle seems to have respect to each of these benefits, that persecutions are of to true religion, in the verse preceding the text.

And, in the text, the apostle observes how true religion operated in the Christians he wrote to, under their persecutions, whereby these benefits of persecution appeared in them; or what manner of operation of true religion, in them, it was, whereby their religion, under persecution, was manifested to be true religion, and eminently appeared in the genuine beauty and amiableness of true religion, and also appeared to be increased and purified, and so was like to be "found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." And there were two kinds of operation, or exercise of true religion, in them, under their sufferings, that the apostle takes notice of in the text, wherein these benefits appeared.

1. Love to Christ: "Whom having not yet seen, ye love." The world was ready to wonder, what strange principle it was, that influenced them to expose themselves to so great sufferings, to forsake the things that were seen, and renounce all that was dear and pleasant, which was the object of sense. They seemed to the men of the world about them, as though they were beside themselves, and to act as though they hated themselves; there was nothing in their view, that could induce them thus to suffer, and support them under, and carry them through such trials. But although there was nothing that was seen, nothing that the world saw, or that the Christians themselves ever saw with their bodily eyes, that thus influenced and supported them, yet they had a supernatural principle of love to something unseen; they loved Jesus Christ, for they saw him spiritually whom the world saw not, and whom they themselves had never seen with bodily eyes.

2. Joy in Christ. Though their outward sufferings were very grievous, yet their inward spiritual joys were greater than their sufferings; and these supported them, and enabled them to suffer with cheerfulness.

There are two things which the apostle takes notice of in the text concerning this joy. 1. The manner in which it rises, the way in which Christ, though unseen, is the foundation of it, viz., by faith; which is the evidence of things not seen: "In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice." 2. The nature of this joy; "unspeakable and full of glory." Unspeakable in the kind of it; very different from worldly joys, and carnal delights; of a vastly more pure, sublime, and heavenly nature, being something supernatural, and truly divine, and so ineffably excellent; the sublimity and exquisite sweetness of which, there were no words to set forth. Unspeakable also in degree; it pleasing God to give them this holy joy, with a liberal hand, and in large measure, in their state of persecution. Their joy was full of glory. Although the joy was unspeakable, and no words were sufficient to describe it, yet something might be said of it, and no words more fit to represent its excellency than these, that it was full of glory; or, as it is in the original, glorified joy. In rejoicing with this joy, their minds were filled, as it were, with a glorious brightness, and their natures exalted and perfected. It was a most worthy, noble rejoicing, that did not corrupt and debase the mind, as many carnal joys do; but did greatly beautify and dignify it; it was a prelibation of the joy of heaven, that raised their minds to a degree of heavenly blessedness; it filled their minds with the light of God’s glory, and made themselves to shine with some communication of that glory.

Hence the proposition or doctrine, that I would raise from these words, is this:

DOCTRINE. True religion, in great part, consists in holy affections.

We see that the apostle, in observing and remarking the operations and exercises of religion in the Christians he wrote to, wherein their religion appeared to be true and of the right kind, when it had its greatest trial of what sort it was, being tried by persecution as gold is tried in the fire, and when their religion not only proved true, but was most pure, and cleansed from its dross and mixtures of that which was not true, and when religion appeared in them most in its genuine excellency and native beauty, and was found to praise, and honor, and glory; he singles out the religious affections of love and joy, that were then in exercise in them: these are the exercises of religion he takes notice of wherein their religion did thus appear true and pure, and in its proper glory. Here, I would, 1. Show what is intended by the affections.

2. Observe some things which make it evident, that a great part of true religion lies in the affections.

1. It may be inquired, what the affections of the mind are?

I answer: The affections are no other than the more vigorous and sensible exercises of the inclination and will of the soul.

God has endued the soul with two faculties: one is that by which it is capable of perception and speculation, or by which it discerns, and views, and judges of things; which is called the understanding. The other faculty is that by which the soul does not merely perceive and view things, but is some way inclined with respect to the things it views or considers; either is inclined to them, or is disinclined and averse from them; or is the faculty by which the soul does not behold things, as an indifferent unaffected spectator, but either as liking or disliking, pleased or displeased, approving or rejecting. This faculty is called by various names; it is sometimes called the inclination: and, as it has respect to the actions that are determined and governed by it, is called the and the will: and the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is often called the heart. The exercise of this faculty are of two sorts; either those by which the soul is carried out towards the things that are in view, in approving of them, being pleased with them, and inclined to them; or those in which the soul opposes the things that are in view, in disapproving of them, and in being displeased with them, averse from them, and rejecting them. And as the exercises of the inclination and will of the soul are various in their kinds, so they are much more various in their degrees. There are some exercises of pleasedness or displeasedness, inclination or disinclination, wherein the soul is carried but a little beyond the state of indifference.-And there are other degrees above this, wherein the approbation or dislike, pleasedness or aversion, are stronger, wherein we may rise higher and higher, till the soul comes to act vigorously and sensibly, and the actings of the soul are with that strength, that (through the laws of the union which the Creator has fixed between the soul and the body) the motion of the blood and animal spirits begins to be sensibly altered; whence oftentimes arises some bodily sensation, especially about the heart and vitals, that are the fountain of the fluids of the body: from whence it comes to pass, that the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, perhaps in all nations and ages, is called the heart. And it is to be noted, that they are these more vigorous and sensible exercises of this faculty that are called the affections. The will, and the affections of the soul, are not two faculties; the affections are not essentially distinct from the will, nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will, and inclination of the soul, but only in the liveliness and sensibleness of exercise.

It must be confessed, that language is here somewhat imperfect, and the meaning of words in a considerable measure loose and unfixed, and not precisely limited by custom, which governs the use of language. In some sense, the affection of the soul differs nothing at all from the will and inclination, and the will never is in any exercise any further than it is affected; it is not moved out of a state of perfect indifference, any otherwise than as it is affected one way or other, and acts nothing any further. But yet there are many actings of the will and inclination, that are not so commonly called affections: in everything we do, wherein we act voluntarily, there is an exercise of the will and inclination; it is our inclination that governs us in our actions; but all the actings of the inclination and will, in all our common actions of life, are not ordinarily called affections. Yet, what are commonly called affections are not essentially different from them, but only in the degree and

manner of exercise. In every act of the will whatsoever, the soul either likes or dislikes, is either inclined or disinclined to what is in view: these are not essentially different from those affections of love and hatred: that liking or inclination of the soul to a thing, if it be in a high degree, and be vigorous and lively, is the very same thing with the affection of love; and that disliking and disinclining, if in a greater degree, is the very same with hatred. In every act of the will for, or towards something not present, the soul is in some degree inclined to that thing; and that inclination, if in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affection of desire. And in every degree of the act of the will, wherein the soul approves of something present, there is a degree of pleasedness; and that pleasedness, if it be in a considerable degree, is the very same with the affections of joy or delight. And if the will disapproves of what is present, the soul is in some degree displeased, and if that displeasedness be great, it is the very same with the affection of grief or sorrow.

Such seems to be our nature, and such the laws of the union of soul and body, that there never is in any case whatsoever, any lively and vigorous exercise of the will or inclination of the soul, without some effect upon the body, in some alteration of the motion of its fluids, and especially of the animal spirits. And, on the other hand, from the same laws of the union of the soul and body, the constitution of the body, and the motion of its fluids, may promote the exercise of the affections. But yet it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper seat of the affections. The body of man is no more capable of being really the subject of love or hatred, joy or sorrow, fear or hope, than the body of a tree, or than the same body of man is capable of thinking and understanding. As it is the soul only that has ideas, so it is the soul only that is pleased or displeased with its ideas. As it is the soul only that thinks, so it is the soul only that loves or hates, rejoices or is grieved at what it thinks of. Nor are these motions of the animal spirits, and fluids of the body, anything properly belonging to the nature of the affections, though they always accompany them, in the present state; but are only effects or concomitants of the affections that are entirely distinct from the affections themselves, and no way essential to them; so that an unbodied spirit may be as capable of love and hatred, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, or other affections, as one that is united to a body. The affections and passions are frequently spoken of as the same; and yet in the more common use of speech, there is in some respect a difference; and affection is a word that in its ordinary signification, seems to be something more extensive than passion, being used for all vigorous lively actings of the will or inclination; but passion for those that are more sudden, and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and the mind more overpowered, and less in its own command. As all the exercises of the inclination and will, are either in approving and liking, or disapproving and rejecting; so the affections are of two sorts; they are those by which the soul is carried out to what is in view, cleaving to it, or seeking it; or those by which it is averse from it, and opposes it. Of the former sort are love, desire, hope, joy, gratitude, complacence. Of the latter kind are hatred, fear, anger, grief, and such like; which it is needless now to stand particularly to define. And there are some affections wherein there is a composition of each of the aforementioned kinds of actings of the will; as in the affection of pity, there is something of the former kind, towards the person suffering, and something of the latter towards what he suffers. And so in zeal, there is in it high approbation of some person or thing, together with vigorous opposition to what is conceived to be contrary to it.

There are other mixed affections that might be also mentioned, but I hasten to,

II. The second thing proposed, which was to observe some things that render it evident, that true religion, in great part consists in the affections. And here,

1. What has been said of the nature of the affections makes this evident, and may be sufficient, without adding anything further, to put this matter out of doubt; for who will deny that true religion consists in a great measure, in vigorous and lively actings of the inclination and will of the soul, or the fervent exercises of the heart? That religion which God requires, and will accept, does not consist in weak, dull, and lifeless wishes, raising us but a little above a state of indifference: God, in his word, greatly insists upon it, that we be good in earnest, "fervent in spirit," and our hearts vigorously engaged in religion: Romans 12:11, "Be ye fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Deuteronomy 10:12, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord the God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?" and Deuteronomy 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:6, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy might." It is such a fervent vigorous engagedness of the heart in religion, that is the fruit of a real circumcision of the heart, or true regeneration, and that has the promises of life; Deuteronomy 30:6, “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

If we be not in good earnest in religion, and our wills and inclinations be not strongly exercised, we are nothing. The things of religion are so great, that there can be no suitableness in the exercises of our hearts, to their nature and importance, unless they be lively and powerful. In nothing is vigor in the actings of our inclinations so requisite, as in religion; and in nothing is lukewarmness so odious. True religion is evermore a powerful thing; and the power of it appears, in the first place in the inward exercises of it in the heart, where is the principal and original seat of it. Hence true religion is called the power of godliness, in distinction from the external appearances of it, that are the form of it, 2 Timothy 3:5 : "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it." The Spirit of God, in those that have sound and solid religion, is a spirit of powerful holy affection; and therefore, God is said "to have given the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," 2 Timothy 1:7. And such, when they receive the Spirit of God, in his sanctifying and saving influences, are said to be "baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;" by reason of the power and fervor of those exercises the Spirit of God excites in their hearts, whereby their hearts, when grace is in exercise, may be said to “burn within them;" as is said of the disciples, Luke 24:32. The business of religion is from time to time compared to those exercises, wherein men are wont to have their hearts and strength greatly exercised and engaged, such as running, wrestling or agonizing for a great prize or crown, and fighting with strong enemies that seek our lives, and warring as those, that by violence take a city or kingdom. And though true grace has various degrees, and there are some that are but babes in Christ, in whom the exercise of the inclination and will, towards divine and heavenly things, is comparatively weak; yet everyone that has the power of godliness in his heart, has his inclinations and heart exercised towards God and divine things, with such strength and vigor that these holy exercises do prevail in him above all carnal or natural affections, and are effectual to overcome them: for every true disciple of Christ “loves him above father or mother, wife and children, brethren and sisters, houses and lands: yea, than his own life." From hence it follows, that wherever true religion is, there are vigorous exercises of the inclination and will towards divine objects: but by what was said before, the vigorous, lively, and

sensible exercises of the will, are no other than the affections of the soul.

2. The Author of the human nature has not only given affections to men, but has made them very much the spring of men's actions. As the affections do not only necessarily belong to the human nature, but are a very great part of it; so (inasmuch as by regeneration persons are renewed in the whole man, and sanctified throughout) holy affections do not only necessarily belong to true religion, but are a very great part of it. And as true religion is of a practical nature, and God hath so constituted the human nature, that the affections are very much the spring of men's actions, this also shows, that true religion must consist very much in the affections.

Such is man's nature, that he is very inactive, any otherwise than he is influenced by some affection, either love or hatred, desire, hope, fear, or some other. These affections we see to be the springs that set men agoing, in all the affairs of life, and engage them in all their pursuits: these are the things that put men forward, and carry them along, in all their worldly business; and especially are men excited and animated by these, in all affairs wherein they are earnestly engaged, and which they pursue with vigor. We see the world of mankind to be exceeding busy and active; and the affections of men are the springs of the motion: take away all love and hatred, all hope and fear, all anger, zeal, and affectionate desire, and the world would be, in a great measure motionless and dead; there would be no such thing as activity amongst mankind, or any earnest pursuit whatsoever. It is affection that engages the covetous man, and him that is greedy of worldly profits, in his pursuits; and it is by the affections, that the ambitious man is put forward in pursuit of worldly glory; and it is the affections also that actuate the voluptuous man, in his pursuit of pleasure and sensual delights: the world continues, from age to age, in a continual commotion and agitation, in a pursuit of these things, but take away all affection, and the spring of all this motion would be gone, and the motion itself would cease. And as in worldly things, worldly affections are very much the spring of men's motion and action; so in religious matters, the spring of their actions is very much religious affection: he that has doctrinal knowledge and speculation only, without affection, never is engaged in the business of religion.

3. Nothing is more manifest in fact, than that the things of religion take hold of men's souls, no further than they affect them. There are multitudes that often hear the word of God, and therein hear of those things that are infinitely great and important, and that most nearly concern them, and all that is heard seems to be wholly ineffectual upon them, and to make no alteration in their disposition or behavior; and the reason is, they are not affected with what they hear. There are many that often hear of the glorious perfections of God, his almighty power and boundless wisdom, his infinite majesty, and that holiness of God, by which he is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, and the heavens are not pure in his sight, and of God's infinite goodness and mercy, and hear of the great works of God's wisdom, power and goodness, wherein there appear the admirable manifestations of these perfections; they hear particularly of the unspeakable love of God and Christ, and of the great things that Christ has done and suffered, and of the great things of another world, of eternal misery in bearing the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and of endless blessedness and glory in the presence of God, and the enjoyment of his dear love; they also hear the peremptory commands of God, and his gracious counsels and warnings, and the sweet invitations of the gospel; I say, they often hear these things and yet remain as they were before, with no sensible alteration in them, either in heart or practice, because they are not affected with what they hear; and ever will be so till they are affected.-I am

bold to assert, that there never was any considerable change wrought in the mind or conversation of any person, by anything of a religious nature, that ever he read, heard or saw, that had not his affections moved. Never was a natural man engaged earnestly to seek his salvation; never were any such brought to cry after wisdom, and lift up their voice for understanding, and to wrestle with God in prayer for mercy; and never was one humbled, and brought to the foot of God, from anything that ever he heard or imagined of his own unworthiness and deserving of God's displeasure; nor was ever one induced to fly for refuge unto Christ, while his heart remained unaffected. Nor was there ever a saint awakened out of a cold, lifeless flame, or recovered from a declining state in religion, and brought back from a lamentable departure from God, without having his heart affected. And in a word, there never was anything considerable brought to pass in the heart or life of any man living, by the things of religion, that had not his heart deeply affected by those things.

4. The holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affection; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal. The Scriptures place much of religion in godly fear; insomuch, that it is often spoken of as the character of those that are truly religious persons, that they tremble at God's word, that they fear before him, that their flesh trembles for fear of him, and that they are afraid of his judgments, that his excellency makes them afraid, and his dread falls upon them, and the like: and a compellation commonly given the saints in Scripture, is "fearers of God," or, "they that fear the Lord." And because the fear of God is a great part of true godliness, hence true godliness in general, is very commonly called by the name of the fear of God; as everyone knows, that knows anything of the Bible. So hope in God and in the promises of his word, is often spoken of in the Scripture, as a very considerable part of true religion. It is mentioned as one of the three great things of which religion consists, 1 Corinthians 13:13. Hope in the Lord is also frequently mentioned as the character of the saints: Psalms 146:5, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." Jeremiah 17:7, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." Psalms 31:24, "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." And the like in many other places. Religious fear and hope are, once and again, joined together, as jointly constituting the character of the true saints; Psalms 33:18, "Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." Psalms 147:11, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." Hope is so great a part of true religion, that the apostle says, "we are saved by hope," Romans 8:24. And this is spoken of as the helmet of the Christian soldier. 1 Thessalonians 5:8, "And for a helmet, the hope of salvation;" and the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, which preserves it from being cast away by the storms of this evil world." Hebrews 6:19, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." It is spoken of as a great fruit and benefit which true saints receive by Christ's resurrection: 1 Peter 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." The Scriptures place religion very much in the affection of love, in love to God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to the people of God, and to mankind. The texts in which this is manifest, both in the Old Testament and New, are innumerable. But of this more afterwards. The contrary affection of hatred also, as having sin for its object, is spoken of in Scripture as no inconsiderable part of true religion. It is spoken of as that by which true religion may be known and distinguished; Proverbs 8:13, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."

And accordingly the saints are called upon to give evidence of their sincerity by this; Psalms 97:10, "Ye that love the Lord hate evil." And the Psalmist often mentions it as an evidence of his sincerity; Psalms 2:1-12, Psalms 3:1-8, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside." Psalms 119:104, "I hate every false way." So Psalms 119:127. Again, Psalms 139:21, "Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?" So holy desire, exercised in longings, hungerings, and thirstings after God and holiness, is often mentioned in Scripture as an important part of true religion; Isaiah 26:8, "The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee." Psalms 27:4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalms 42:1-2, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psalms 63:1-2, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." Psalms 84:1-2, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Psalms 119:20, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." So Psalms 73:25, and Psalms 143:6-7, and Psalms 130:6. Song of Solomon 3:1-2, and Song of Solomon 6:8. Such a holy desire and thirst of soul is mentioned, as one thing which renders or denotes a man truly blessed, in the beginning of Christ's sermon on the mount, Matthew 5:6 : "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." And this holy thirst is spoken of, as a great thing in the condition of a participation of the blessings of eternal life; Revelation 21:6, "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely." The Scriptures speaks of holy joy, as a great part of true religion. So it is represented in the text. And as an important part of religion, it is often exhorted to, and pressed, with great earnestness; Psalms 37:4, "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Psalms 97:12, "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous." So Psalms 33:1, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous." Matthew 5:12, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad." Php 3:1, "Finally, brethren, rejoice in the Lord." And Php 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." 1 Thessalonians 5:16, "Rejoice evermore." Psalms 149:2, "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their king." This is mentioned among the principal fruits of the Spirit of grace; Galatians 5:21, "The fruit of the Spirit is love," &c. The Psalmist mentions his holy joy, as an evidence of his sincerity. Psalms 119:14, "I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches."

Religious sorrow, mourning, and brokenness of heart, are also frequently spoken of as a great part of true religion. These things are often mentioned as distinguishing qualities of the true saints, and a great part of their character; Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.' Psalms 34:18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Isaiah 61:1-2, "The Lord hath anointed me, to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn." This godly sorrow and brokenness of heart is often spoken of, not only as a great thing in the distinguishing character of the saints, but that in them, which is peculiarly acceptable and pleasing to God; Psalms 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Isaiah 57:15, "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble,

and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isaiah 66:2, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit."

Another affection often mentioned, as that in the exercise of which much of true religion appears, is gratitude; especially as exercised in thankfulness and praise to God. This being so much spoken of in the book of Psalms, and other parts of the holy Scriptures, I need not mention particular texts.

Again, the holy Scriptures do frequently speak of compassion or mercy, as a very great and essential thing in true religion, insomuch that good men are in Scripture denominated from hence; and a merciful man and a good man are equivalent terms in Scripture; Isaiah 57:1, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away." And the Scripture chooses out this quality, as that by which, in a peculiar manner, a righteous man is deciphered; Psalms 37:21, "The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth;" and Psalms 37:26, "He is ever merciful, and lendeth." And Proverbs 14:21, "He that honoreth the Lord, hath mercy on the poor." And Colossians 3:12, "Put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," &c. This is one of those great things by which those who are truly blessed are described by our Savior; Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." And this Christ also speaks of, as one of the weightier matters of the law; Matthew 23:23, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." To the like purpose is that, Micah 6:8, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" And also that, Hosea 6:6 "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice." Which seems to have been a text much delighted in by our Savior, by his manner of citing it once and again, Matthew 9:13, and Matthew 12:7.

Zeal is also spoken of, as a very essential part of the religion of true saints. It is spoken of as a great thing Christ had in view, in giving himself for our redemption; Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And this is spoken of, as the great thing wanting in the lukewarm Laodiceans, Revelation 3:15-16, Revelation 3:19.

I have mentioned but a few texts, out of an innumerable multitude, all over the Scripture, which place religion very much in the affections. But what has been observed, may be sufficient to show that they who would deny that much of true religion lies in the affections, and maintain the contrary, must throw away what we have been wont to own for our Bible, and get some other rule, by which to judge of the nature of religion.

5. The Scriptures do represent true religion, as being summarily comprehended in love, the chief of the affections, and fountain of all other affections. So our blessed Savior represents the matter, in answer to the lawyer, who asked him, which was the great commandment of the law Matthew 22:37-40 : "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Which last words signify as much, as that these two commandments comprehend all the duty prescribed, and the religion taught in the law and the prophets. And the apostle Paul does from time to time make the same representation of the matter; as in Romans 13:8, "He that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law." And ver. 10, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And Galatians

5:14, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." So likewise in 1 Timothy 1:5, "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart," &c. So the same apostle speaks of love, as the greatest thing in religion, and as the vitals, essence and soul of it; without which, the greatest knowledge and gifts, and the most glaring profession, and everything else which appertains to religion, are vain and worthless; and represents it as the fountain from whence proceeds all that is good, in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 through out; for that which is there rendered charity, in the original is agaph, the proper English of which is love.

Now, although it be true, that the love thus spoken of includes the whole of a sincerely benevolent propensity of the soul towards God and man; yet it may be considered, that it is evident from what has been before observed, that this propensity or inclination of the soul, when in sensible and vigorous exercise, becomes affection, and is no other than affectionate love. And surely it is such vigorous and fervent love which Christ speaks of, as the sum of all religion, when he speaks of loving God with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our minds, and our neighbor as ourselves, as the sum of all that was taught and prescribed in the law and the prophets.

Indeed it cannot be supposed, when this affection of love is here, and in other Scriptures, spoken of as the sum of all religion, that hereby is meant the act, exclusive of the habit, or that the exercise of the understanding is excluded, which is implied in all reasonable affection. But it is doubtless true, and evident from these Scriptures, that the essence of all true religion lies in holy love; and that in this divine affection, and an habitual disposition to it, and that light which is the foundation of it, and those things which are the fruits of it, consists the whole of religion. From hence it clearly and certainly appears, that great part of true religion consists in the affections. For love is not only one of the affections, but it is the first and chief of the affections, and the fountain of all the affections. From love arises hatred of those things which are contrary to what we love, or which oppose and thwart us in those things that we delight in: and from the various exercises of love and hatred, according to the circumstances of the objects of these affections, as present or absent, certain or uncertain, probable or improbable, arise all those other affections of desire, hope, fear, joy, grief, gratitude, anger, &c. From a vigorous, affectionate, and fervent love to God, will necessarily arise other religious affections; hence will arise an intense hatred and abhorrence of sin, fear of sin, and a dread of God’s displeasure, gratitude to God for his goodness, complacence and joy in God, when God is graciously and sensibly present, and grief when he is absent, and a joyful hope when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent zeal for the glory of God. And in like manner, from a fervent love to men, will arise all other virtuous affections towards men.

6. The religion of the most eminent saints we have an account of in the Scripture, consisted much in holy affections.

I shall take particular notice of three eminent saints, who have expressed the frame and sentiments of their own hearts, and so described their own religion, and the manner of their intercourse with God, in the writings which they have left us, that are a part of the sacred canon. The first instance I shall take notice of, is David, that "man after God’s own heart;" who has given us a lively portraiture of his religion in the book of Psalms. Those holy songs of his he has there left us, are nothing else but the expressions and breathings of devout and holy affections; such as

an humble and fervent love to God, admiration of his glorious perfections and wonderful works, earnest desires, thirstings, and pantings of soul after God, delight and joy in God, a sweet and melting gratitude to God, for his great goodness, a holy exultation and triumph of soul in the favor, sufficiency, and faithfulness of God, his love to, and delight in the saints, the excellent of the earth, his great delight in the word and ordinances of God, his grief for his own and others' sins, and his fervent zeal for God, and against the enemies of God and his church. And these expressions of holy affection, which the psalms of David are everywhere full of, are the more to our present purpose, because those psalms are not only the expressions of the religion of so eminent a saint, that God speaks of as so agreeable to his mind; but were also, by the direction of the Holy Ghost, penned for the use of the church of God in its public worship, not only in that age, but in after ages; as being fitted to express the religion of all saints, in all ages, as well as the religion of the Psalmist. And it is moreover to be observed, that David, in the book of Psalms, speaks not as a private person, but as the Psalmist of Israel, as the subordinate head of the church of God, and leader in their worship and praises; and in many of the psalms speaks in the name of Christ, as personating him in these breathings forth of holy affection; and in many other psalms he speaks in the name of the church.

Another instance I shall observe, is the apostle Paul; who was in many respects, the chief of all the ministers of the New Testament; being above all others, a chosen vessel unto Christ, to bear his name before the Gentiles, and made a chief instrument of propagating and establishing the Christian church in the world, and of distinctly revealing the glorious mysteries of the gospel, for the instruction of the church in all ages; and (as has not been improperly thought by some) the most eminent servant of Christ that ever lived, received to the highest rewards in the heavenly kingdom of his Master. By what is said of him in the Scripture, he appears to have been a person that was full of affection. And it is very manifest, that the religion he expresses in his epistles, consisted very much in holy affections. It appears by all his expressions of himself, that he was, in the course of his life, inflamed, actuated, and entirely swallowed up, by a most ardent love to his glorious Lord, esteeming all things as loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of him, and esteeming them but dung that he might win him. He represents himself, as overpowered by this holy affection, and as it were compelled by it to go forward in his service, through all difficulties and sufferings, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. And his epistles are full of expressions of an overpowering affection towards the people of Christ. He speaks of his dear love to them, 2 Corinthians 12:19, Php 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:2; of his "abundant love," 2 Corinthians 2:4; and of his "affectionate and tender love," as of a nurse towards her children, 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 : "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; so, being affectionately desirous of you we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." So also he speaks of his "bowels of love," Php 1:8, Philemon 1:5, Philemon 1:12, and Philemon 1:20. So he speaks of his "earnest care" for others, 2 Corinthians 8:16, and of his "bowels of pity, or mercy towards them, Php 2:1; and of his concern for others, even to anguish of heart," 2 Corinthians 2:4 : "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears; not that you should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." He speaks of the great conflict of his soul for them, Colossians 2:1. He speaks of great and continual grief that he had in his heart from compassion to the Jews, Romans 9:2. He speaks of "his mouth's being opened, and his heart enlarged" towards Christians, 2 Corinthians 6:11 : "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is

enlarged." He often speaks of his "affectionate and longing desires," 1 Thessalonians 2:8, Romans 1:11, Php 1:8, and Php 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:4. The same apostle is very often, in his epistles, expressing the affection of joy, 2 Corinthians 1:12 and 2 Corinthians 7:7, and 2 Corinthians 7:9. 2 Corinthians 7:16. Php 1:4, and Php 2:12, and Php 3:3. Colossians 1:34. 1 Thessalonians 3:9. He speaks of his "rejoicing with great joy," Php 4:10, Philemon 1:7; of his "joying and rejoicing," Php 2:1, Php 2:7, and "of his rejoicing exceedingly," 2 Corinthians 7:13, and of his being "filled with comfort, and being exceeding joyful," 2 Corinthians 7:4. He speaks of himself as "always rejoicing," 2 Corinthians 6:10. So he speaks of the triumphs of his soul, 2 Corinthians 2:14, and of his glorying in tribulation," 2 Thessalonians 1:4, and Romans 5:3. He also expresses the affection of hope; in Php 1:20, he speaks of his "earnest expectation, and his hope." He likewise expresses an affection of godly jealousy, 2 Corinthians 11:2-3. And it appears by his whole history, after his conversion, in the Acts, and also by all his epistles, and the accounts he gives of himself there that the affection of zeal, as having the cause of his Master, and the interest and prosperity of his church, for its object, was mighty in him, continually inflaming his heart, strongly engaging to those great and constant labors he went through, in instructing, exhorting, warning, and reproving others, "travailing in birth with them;" conflicting with those powerful and innumerable enemies who continually opposed him, wrestling with principalities and powers, not fighting as one who beats the air, running the race set before him, continually pressing forwards through all manner of difficulties and sufferings; so that others thought him quite beside himself. And how full he was of affection, does further appear by his being so full of tears: in 2 Corinthians 2:4, he speaks of his a many tears;" and so Acts 20:19; and of his "tears that he shed continually night and day," Acts 20:31.

Now if anyone can consider these accounts given in the Scripture of this great apostle, and which he gives of himself, and yet not see that his religion consisted much in affection, must have a strange faculty of managing his eyes to shut out the light which shines most full in his face. The other instance I shall mention, is of the apostle John, that beloved disciple, who was the nearest and dearest to his Master, of any of the twelve, and was by him admitted to the greatest privileges of any of them; being not only one of the three who were admitted to be present with him in the mount at his transfiguration, and at the raising of Jairus’s daughter, and whom he took with him when he was in his agony, and one of the three spoken of by the apostle Paul, as the three main pillars of the Christian church; but was favored above all, in being admitted to lean on his Master’s bosom at his last supper, and in being chosen by Christ, as the disciple to whom he would reveal his wonderful dispensations towards his church, to the end of time; as we have an account in the Book of Revelation; and to shut up the canon of the New Testament, and of the whole Scripture; being preserved much longer than all the rest of the apostles, to set all things in order in the Christian church, after their death.

It is evident by all his writings (as is generally observed by divines) that he was a person remarkably full of affection: his addresses to those whom he wrote to being inexpressibly tender and pathetical, breathing nothing but the most fervent love; as though he were all made up of sweet and holy affection. The proofs of which cannot be given without disadvantage, unless we should transcribe his whole writings.

7. He whom God sent into the world to be the light of the world, and head of the whole church, and the perfect example of true religion and virtue, for the imitation of all, the Shepherd whom the

whole flock should follow wherever he goes, even the Lord Jesus Christ, was a person who was remarkably of a tender and affectionate heart; and his virtue was expressed very much in the exercise of holy affections. He was the greatest instance of ardency, vigor and strength of love, to both God and man, that ever was. It was these affections which got the victory, in that mighty struggle and conflict of his affections, in his agonies, when "he prayed more earnestly, and offered strong crying and tears," and wrestled in tears and in blood. Such was the power of the exercises of his holy love, that they were stronger than death, and in that great struggle, overcame those strong exercises of the natural affections of fear and grief, when he was sore amazed, and his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. And he also appeared to be full of affection in the course of his life. We read of his great zeal, fulfilling that in Psalms 69:1-36, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," John 2:17. We read of his grief for the sins of men, Mark 3:5 : "He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts;" and his breaking forth in tears and exclamations, from the consideration of the sin and misery of ungodly men and on the sight of the city of Jerusalem, which was full of such inhabitants, Luke 19:41-42 : "And, when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." With Luke 19:13; Luke 19:34, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" We read of Christ's earnest desire, Luke 22:15 : "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." We often read of the affection of pity or compassion in Christ, Matthew 15:32, and Matthew 18:34. Luke 7:13, and of his "being moved with compassion," Matthew 9:36, and Matthew 14:14, and Mark 6:34. And how tender did his heart appear to be, on occasion of Mary's and Martha's mourning for their brother, and coming to him with their complaints and tears! Their tears soon drew tears from his eyes he was affected with their grief, and wept with them; though he knew their sorrow should so soon be turned into joy, by their brother's being raised from the dead; see John 11:1-57. And how ineffably affectionate was that last and dying discourse, which Jesus had with his eleven disciples the evening before he was crucified; when he told them he was going away, and foretold them the great difficulties and sufferings they should meet with in the world, when he was gone; and comforted and counseled them as his dear little children; and bequeathed to them his Holy Spirit, and therein his peace, and his comfort and joy, as it were in his last will and testament, in John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, and John 16:1-33; and concluded the whole with that affectionate intercessory prayer for them, and his whole church, in John 17:1-26. Of all the discourses ever penned, or uttered by the mouth of any man, this seems to be the most affectionate and affecting.

8. The religion of heaven consists very much in affection.

There is doubtless true religion in heaven, and true religion in its utmost purity and perfection. But according to the Scripture representation of the heavenly state, the religion of heaven consists chiefly in holy and mighty love and joy, and the expression of these in most fervent and exalted praises. So that the religion of the saints in heaven, consists in the same things with that religion of the saints on earth, which is spoken of in our text, viz., love, and "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Now it would be very foolish to pretend, that because the saints in heaven be not united to flesh and blood, and have no animal fluids to be moved (through the laws of union of soul and

body) with those great emotions of their souls, that therefore their exceeding love and joy are no affections. We are not speaking of the affections of the body, but of the affections of the soul, the chief of which are love and joy. When these are in the soul, whether that be in the body or out of it, the soul is affected and moved. And when they are in the soul, in that strength in which they are in the saints in heaven, the soul is mightily affected and moved, or, which is the same thing, has great affections. It is true, we do not experimentally know what love and joy are in a soul out of a body, or in a glorified body; i.e., we have not had experience of love and joy in a soul in these circumstances; but the saints on earth do know what divine love and joy in the soul are, and they know that love and joy are of the same kind with the love and joy which are in heaven, in separate souls there. The love and joy of the saints on earth, is the beginning and dawning of the light, life, and blessedness of heaven, and is like their love and joy there; or rather, the same in nature, though not the same with it, or like to it, in degree and circumstances. This is evident by many Scriptures, as Proverbs 4:18; John 4:14, and chap. John 6:40 John 6:47, John 6:50-51, John 6:54, John 6:58; 1 John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 13:8-12. It is unreasonable therefore to suppose, that the love and joy of the saints in heaven, not only differ in degree and circumstances, from the holy love and joy of the saints on earth, but is so entirely different in nature, that they are no affections; and merely because they have no blood and animal spirits to be set in motion by them, which motion of the blood and animal spirits is not of the essence of these affections, in men on the earth, but the effect of them; although by their reaction they may make some circumstantial difference in the sensation of the mind. There is a sensation of the mind which loves and rejoices, that is antecedent to any effects on the fluids of the body; and this sensation of the mind, therefore, does not depend on these motions in the body, and so may be in the soul without the body. And wherever there are the exercises of love and joy, there is that sensation of the mind, whether it be in the body or out; and that inward sensation, or kind of spiritual sense, or feeling, and motion of the soul, is what is called affection: the soul when it thus feels (if I may say so), and is thus moved, is said to be affected, and especially when this inward sensation and motion are to a very high degree, as they are in the saints in heaven. If we can learn anything of the state of heaven from the Scripture, the love and joy that the saints have there, is exceeding great and vigorous; impressing the heart with the strongest and most lively sensation of inexpressible sweetness, mightily moving, animating and engaging them, making them like a flame of fire. And if such love and joy be not affections, then the word affection is of no use in language. Will any say, that the saints in heaven, in beholding the face of their Father, and the glory of their Redeemer, and contemplating his wonderful works, and particularly his laying down his life for them, have their hearts nothing moved and affected by all which they behold or consider?

Hence, therefore, the religion of heaven, consisting chiefly in holy love and joy, consists very much in affection; and therefore, undoubtedly, true religion consists very much in affection. The way to learn the true nature of anything, is to go where that thing is to be found in its purity and perfection. If we would know the nature of true gold we must view it, not in the ore, but when it is refined. If we would learn what true religion is, we must go where there is true religion, and nothing but true religion, and in its highest perfection, without any defect or mixture. All who are truly religious are not of this world, they are strangers here, and belong to heaven; they are born from above, heaven is their native country, and the nature which they receive by this heavenly birth, is a heavenly nature, they receive an anointing from above; that principle of true religion which is in them, is a communication of the religion of heaven; their grace is the dawn of glory; and God fits them for

that world by conforming them to it.

9. This appears from the nature and design of the ordinances and duties, which God hath appointed, as means and expressions of true religion. To instance in the duty of prayer: it is manifest, we are not appointed in this duty, to declare God's perfections, his majesty, holiness, goodness, and all-sufficiency, and our own meanness, emptiness, dependence, and unworthiness, and our wants and desires, to inform God of these things, or to incline his heart, and prevail with him to be willing to show us mercy; but suitably to affect our own hearts with the things we express, and so to prepare us to receive the blessings we ask. And such gestures and manner of external behavior in the worship of God, which custom has made to be significations of humility and reverence, can be of no further use than as they have some tendency to affect our own hearts, or the hearts of others. And the duty of singing praises to God seems to be appointed wholly to excite and express religious affections. No other reason can be assigned why we should express ourselves to God in verse, rather than in prose, and do it with music but only, that such is our nature and frame, that these things have a tendency to move our affections. The same thing appears in the nature and design of the sacraments, which God hath appointed. God, considering our frame, hath not only appointed that we should be told of the great things of the gospel, and of the redemption of Christ, and instructed in them by his word; but also that they should be, as it were, exhibited to our view, in sensible representations, in the sacraments, the more to affect us with them. And the impressing divine things on the hearts and affections of men, is evidently one great and main end for which God has ordained that his word delivered in the holy Scriptures, should be opened, applied, and set home upon men, in preaching. And therefore it does not answer the aim which God had in this institution, merely for men to have good commentaries and expositions on the Scripture, and other good books of divinity; because, although these may tend as well as preaching to give men a good doctrinal or speculative understanding of the things of the word of God, yet they have not an equal tendency to impress them on men's hearts and affections. God hath appointed a particular and lively application of his word to men in the preaching of it, as a fit means to affect sinners with the importance of the things of religion, and their own misery, and necessity of a remedy, and the glory and sufficiency of a remedy provided; and to stir up the pure minds of the saints, and quicken their affections, by often bringing the great things of religion to their remembrance, and setting them before them in their proper colors, though they know them, and have been fully instructed in them already, 2 Peter 1:12-13. And particularly, to promote those two affections in them, which are spoken of in the text, love and joy: "Christ gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; that the body of Christ might be edified in love," Ephesians 4:11-12, Ephesians 4:16. The apostle in instructing and counseling Timothy concerning the work of the ministry, informs him that the great end of that word which a minister is to preach, is love or charity, 1 Timothy 3:1-16; 1 Timothy 4:1-16; 1 Timothy 5:1-25. And another affection which God has appointed preaching as a means to promote in the saints, is joy; and therefore ministers are called "helpers of their joy," 2 Corinthians 1:24.

10. It is an evidence that true religion, or holiness of heart, lies very much in the affection of the heart, that the Scriptures place the sin of the heart very much in hardness of heart. Thus the Scriptures do everywhere. It was hardness of heart which excited grief and displeasure in Christ towards the Jews, Mark 3:5 : "He looked round about on then, with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." It is from men's having such a heart as this, that they treasure up wrath

for themselves: Romans 2:5, "After thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The reason given why the house of Israel would not obey God, was, that they were hardhearted: Ezekiel 3:7, "But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted." The wickedness of that perverse rebellious generation in the wilderness, is ascribed to the hardness of their hearts: Psalms 95:7-10, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work: forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart," &c. This is spoken of as what prevented Zedekiah's turning to the Lord: 2 Chronicles 36:13, "He stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning to the Lord God of Israel." This principle is spoken of, as that from whence men are without the fear of God, and depart from God's ways: Isaiah 63:17, "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways and hardened our heart from thy fear?" And men's rejecting Christ, and opposing Christianity, is laid to this principle: Acts 19:9, "But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude." God's leaving men to the power of the sin and corruption of the heart is often expressed by God's hardening their hearts: Romans 9:18, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." John 12:40, "He hath blinded their minds, and hardened their hearts." And the apostle seems to speak of "an evil heart that departs from the living God, and a hard heart," as the same thing: Hebrews 3:8, "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation," &c.; Hebrews 3:12-13, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God: but exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." And that great work of God in conversion, which consists in delivering a person from the power of sin, and mortifying corruption, is expressed, once and again, by God's "taking away the heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh," Ezekiel 11:19, and Ezekiel 36:26.

Now by a hard heart, is plainly meant an unaffected heart, or a heart not easy to be moved with virtuous affections, like a stone, insensible, stupid, unmoved, and hard to be impressed. Hence the hard heart is called a stony heart, and is opposed to a heart of flesh, that has feeling, and is sensibly touched and moved. We read in Scripture of a hard heart, and a tender heart; and doubtless we are to understand these, as contrary the one to the other. But what is a tender heart, but a heart which is easily impressed with what ought to affect it? God commends Josiah, because his heart was tender; and it is evident by those things which are mentioned as expressions and evidences of this tenderness of heart, that by his heart being tender is meant, his heart being easily moved with religious and pious affection: 2 Kings 22:19, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord." And this is one thing, wherein it is necessary we should "become as little children, in order to our entering into the kingdom of God," even that we should have our hearts tender, and easily affected and moved in spiritual and divine things, as little children have in other things.

It is very plain in some places, in the texts themselves, that by hardness of heart is meant a heart void of affection. So, to signify the ostrich's being without natural affection to her young, it is said,

Job 39:16, "She hardeneth her heart against her young ones, as though they were not hers." So a person having a heart unaffected in time of danger, is expressed by his hardening his heart: Proverbs 28:14, "Happy is the man that feareth alway; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief."

Now, therefore, since it is so plain, that by a hard heart, in Scripture, is meant a heart destitute of pious affections, and since also the Scriptures do so frequently place the sin and corruption of the heart in hardness of heart; it is evident, that the grace and holiness of the heart, on the contrary, must, in a great measure, consist in its having pious affections, and being easily susceptive of such affection. Divines are generally agreed, that sin radically and fundamentally consist in what is negative, or privative, having its root and foundation in a privation or want of holiness. And therefore undoubtedly, if it be so that sin does very much consist in hardness of hearts and so in the want of pious affections of heart, holiness does consist very much in those pious affections.

I am far from supposing that all affections do show a tender heart: hatred, anger, vainglory, and other selfish and self-exalting affections, may greatly prevail in the hardest heart. But yet it is evident, that hardness of heart and tenderness of heart, are expressions that relate to the affection of the heart, and denote the heart’s being susceptible of, or shut up against certain affections; of which I shall have occasion to speak more afterwards.

Upon the whole, I think it clearly and abundantly evident, that true religion lies very much in the affections. Not that I think these arguments prove, that religion in the hearts of the truly godly, is ever in exact proportion to the degree of affection, and present emotion of the mind: for undoubtedly, there is much affection in the true saints which is not spiritual; their religious affections are often mixed; all is not from grace, but much from nature. And though the affections have not their seat in the body; yet the constitution of the body may very much contribute to the present emotion of the mind. And the degree of religion is rather to be judged of by the fixedness and strength of the habit that is exercised in affection, whereby holy affection is habitual, than by the degree of the present exercise; and the strength of that habit is not always in proportion to outward effects and manifestations, or inward effects, in the hurry and vehemence, and sudden changes of the course of the thoughts of the mind. But yet it is evident, that religion consists so much in affection, as that without holy affection there is no true religion; and no light in the understanding is good, which does not produce holy affection in the heart: no habit or principle in the heart is good, which has no such exercise; and no external fruit is good, which does not proceed from such exercises.

Having thus considered the evidence of the proposition laid down, I proceed to some inferences.

1. We may hence learn how great their error is, who are for discarding all religious affections, as having nothing solid or substantial in them.

There seems to be too much of a disposition this way, prevailing in this land at this time. Because many who, in the late extraordinary season, appeared to have great religious affections, did not manifest a right temper of mind, and run into many errors, in the time of their affections, and the heat of their zeal; and because the high affections of many seem to be so soon come to nothing, and some who seemed to be mightily raised and swallowed up with joy and zeal, for a while, seem to have returned like the dog to his vomit; hence religious affections in general are grown out of

credit with great numbers, as though true religion did not at all consist in them. Thus we easily and naturally run from one extreme to another. A little while ago we were in the other extreme; there was a prevalent disposition to look upon all high religious affections as eminent exercises of true grace, without much inquiring into the nature and source of those affections, and the manner in which they arose: if persons did but appear to be indeed very much moved and raised, so as to be full of religious talk, and express themselves with great warmth and earnestness, and to be filled, or to be very full, as the phrases were; it was too much the manner, without further examination, to conclude such persons were full of the Spirit of God, and had eminent experience of his gracious influences. This was the extreme which was prevailing three or four years ago. But of late, instead of esteeming and admiring all religious affections without distinction, it is a thing much more prevalent, to reject and discard all without distinction. Herein appears the subtlety of Satan. While he saw that affections were much in vogue, knowing the greater part of the land were not versed in such things, and had not had much experience of great religious affections to enable them to judge well of them, and distinguish between true and false: then he knew he could best play his game, by sowing tares amongst the wheat, and mingling false affections with the works of God's Spirit: he knew this to be a likely way to delude and eternally ruin many souls, and greatly to wound religion in the saints, and entangle them in a dreadful wilderness, and by and by, to bring all religion into disrepute. But now, when the ill consequences of these false affections appear, and it is become very apparent, that some of those emotions which made a glaring show, and were by many greatly admired, were in reality nothing; the devil sees it to be for his interest to go another way to work, and to endeavor to his utmost to propagate and establish a persuasion, that all affections and sensible emotions of the mind, in things of religion, are nothing at all to be regarded, but are rather to be avoided, and carefully guarded against, as things of a pernicious tendency. This he knows is the way to bring all religion to a mere lifeless formality, and effectually shut out the power of godliness, and everything which is spiritual, and to have all true Christianity turned out of doors. For although to true religion there must indeed be something else besides affection; yet true religion consists so much in the affections, that there can be no Hue religion without them. He who has no religious affection, is in a state of spiritual death, and is wholly destitute of the powerful, quickening, saving influences of the Spirit of God upon his heart. As there is no true religion where there is nothing else but affection, so there is no true religion where there is no religious affection. As on the one hand, there must be light in the understanding, as well as an affected fervent heart; where there is heat without light, there can be nothing divine or heavenly in that heart; so on the other hand, where there is a kind of light without heat, a head stored with notions and speculations, with a cold and unaffected heart, there can be nothing divine in that light, that knowledge is no true spiritual knowledge of divine things. If the great things of religion are rightly understood, they will affect the heart. The reason why men are not affected by such infinitely great, important, glorious, and wonderful things, as they often hear and read of, in the word of God, is undoubtedly because they are blind; if they were not so, it would be impossible, and utterly inconsistent with human nature, that their hearts should be otherwise than strongly impressed, and greatly moved by such things. This manner of slighting all religious affections, is the way exceedingly to harden the hearts of men, and to encourage them in their stupidity and senselessness, and to keep them in a state of spiritual death as long as they live, and bring them at last to death eternal. The prevailing prejudice against religious affections at this day, in the land, is apparently of awful effect to harden the hearts of sinners, and damp the graces of many of the

saints, and stun the life and power of religion, and preclude the effect of ordinances, and hold us down in a state of dullness and apathy, and undoubtedly causes many persons greatly to offend God, in entertaining mean and low thoughts of the extraordinary work he has lately wrought in this land. And for persons to despise and cry down all religious affections, is the way to shut all religion out of their own hearts, and to make thorough work in ruining their souls.

They who condemn high affections in others, are certainly not likely to have high affections themselves. And let it be considered, that they who have but little religious affection, have certainly but little religion. And they who condemn others for their religious affections, and have none themselves, have no religion.

There are false affections, and there are true. A man's having much affection, does not prove that he has any true religion: but if he has no affection it proves that he has no true religion. The right way, is not to reject all affections, nor to approve all; but to distinguish between affections, approving some, and rejecting others; separating between the wheat and the chaff, the gold and the dross, the precious and the vile.

2. If it be so, that true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may infer, that such means are to be desired, as have much of a tendency to move the affections. Such books, and such a way of preaching the word, and administration of ordinances, and such a way of worshipping God in prayer, and singing praises, is much to be desired, as has a tendency deeply to affect the hearts of those who attend these means.

Such a kind of means would formerly have been highly approved of, and applauded by the generality of the people of the land, as the most excellent and profitable, and having the greatest tendency to promote the ends of the means of grace. But the prevailing taste seems of late strangely to be altered: that pathetical manner of praying and preaching, which would formerly have been admired and extolled, and that for this reason, because it had such a tendency to move the affections, now, in great multitudes, immediately excites disgust, and moves no other affections, that those of displeasure and contempt.

Perhaps, formerly the generality (at least of the common people) were in the extreme, of looking too much to an affectionate address, in public performances: but now, a very great part of the people seem to have gone far into a contrary extreme. Indeed there may be such means, as may have a great tendency to stir up the passions of weak and ignorant persons, and yet have no great tendency to benefit their souls: for though they may have a tendency to excite affections, they may have little or none to excite gracious affections, or any affections tending to grace. But undoubtedly, if the things of religion, in the means used, are treated according to their nature, and exhibited truly, so as tends to convey just apprehensions, and a right judgment of them; the more they have a tendency to move the affections the better.

3. If true religion lies much in the affections, hence we may learn, what great cause we have to be ashamed and confounded before God, that we are no more affected with the great things of religion. It appears from what has been said, that this arises from our having so little true religion.

God has given to mankind affections, for the same purpose which he has given all the faculties and principles of the human soul for, viz., that they might be subservient to man's chief end, and the great business for which God has created him, that is, the business of religion. And yet how

common is it among mankind, that their affections are much more exercised and engaged in other matters, than in religion! In things which concern men's worldly interest, their outward delights, their honor and reputation, and their natural relations, they have their desires eager, their appetites vehement, their love warm and affectionate, their zeal ardent; in these things their hearts are tender and sensible, easily moved, deeply impressed, much concerned, very sensibly affected, and greatly engaged; much depressed with grief at worldly losses, and highly raised with joy at worldly successes and prosperity. But how insensible and unmoved are most men, about the great things of another world! How dull are their affections! How heavy and hard their hearts in these matters! Here their love is cold, their desires languid, their zeal low, and their gratitude small. How they can sit and hear of the infinite height, and depth, and length, and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, to be offered up a sacrifice for the sins of men, and of the unparalleled love of the innocent, and holy, and tender Lamb of God, manifested in his dying agonies, his bloody sweat, his loud and bitter cries, and bleeding heart, and all this for enemies, to redeem them from deserved, eternal burnings, and to bring to unspeakable and everlasting joy and glory; and yet be cold, and heavy, insensible, and regardless! Where are the exercises of our affections proper, if not here? What is it that does more require them? And what can be a fit occasion of their lively and vigorous exercise, if not such a one as this? Can anything be set in our view, greater and more important? Any thing more wonderful and surprising? Or more nearly concerning our interest? Can we suppose the wise Creator implanted such principles in the human nature as the affections, to be of use to us, and to be exercised on certain proper occasions, but to lie still on such an occasion as this? Can any Christian who believes the truth of these things, entertain such thoughts?

If we ought ever to exercise our affections at all, and if the Creator has not unwisely constituted the human nature in making these principles a part of it, when they are vain and useless; then they ought to be exercised about those objects which are most worthy of them. But is there anything which Christians can find in heaven or earth, so worthy to be the objects of their admiration and love, their earnest and longing desires, their hope, and their rejoicing, and their fervent zeal, as those things that are held forth to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ? In which not only are things declared most worthy to affect us, but they are exhibited in the most affecting manner. The glory and beauty of the blessed Jehovah, which is most worthy in itself, to be the object of our admiration and love, is there exhibited in the most affecting manner that can he conceived of, as it appears, shining in all its luster, in the face of an incarnate, infinitely loving, meek, compassionate, dying Redeemer. All the virtues of the Lamb of God, his humility, patience, meekness, submission, obedience, love and compassion, are exhibited to our view, in a manner the most tending to move our affections, of any that can be imagined; as they all had their greatest trial, and their highest exercise, and so their brightest manifestation, when he was in the most affecting circumstances; even when he was under his last sufferings, those unutterable and unparalleled sufferings he endured, from his tender love and pity to us. There also the hateful nature of our sins is manifested in the most affecting manner possible: as we see the dreadful effects of them, in that our Redeemer, who undertook to answer for us, suffered for them. And there we have the most affecting manifestation of God's hatred of sin, and his wrath and justice in punishing it; as we see his justice in the strictness and inflexibleness of it; and his wrath in its terribleness, in so dreadfully punishing our sins, in one who was infinitely dear to him, and loving to us. So has God disposed things, in the affair of our redemption, and in his glorious dispensations, revealed to us in the

gospel, as though everything were purposely contrived in such a manner, as to have the greatest possible tendency to reach our hearts in the most tender part, and move our affections most sensibly and strongly. How great cause have we therefore to be humbled to the dust, that we are no more affected!

01.03. PART II(a)

SHOWING WHAT ARE NO CERTAIN SIGNS THAT RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS ARE GRACIOUS, OR THAT THEY ARE NOT.

If anyone, on the reading of what has been just now said, is ready to acquit himself, and say, "I am not one of those who have no religious affections; I am often greatly moved with the consideration of the great things of religion:" let him not content himself with this, that he has religious affections: for as we observed before, as we ought not to reject and condemn all affections, as though true religion did not at all consist in affection; so on the other hand, we ought not to approve of all, as though everyone that was religiously affected had true grace, and was therein the subject of the saving influences of the Spirit of God; and that therefore the right way is to distinguish among religious affections, between one sort and another. Therefore let us now endeavor to do this; and in order to do it, I would do two things.

I. I would mention some things, which are no signs one way or the other, either that affections are such as true religion consists in, or that they are otherwise; that we may be guarded against judging of affections by false signs.

II. I would observe some things, wherein those affections which are spiritual and gracious, differ from those which are not so, and may be distinguished and known.

First, I would take notice of some things, which are no signs that affect titans are gracious, or that they are not.

It is no sign one way or the other, that religious affections are very great, or raised very high.

Some are ready to condemn all high affections: if persons appear to have their religious affections raised to an extraordinary pitch, they are prejudiced against them, and determine that they are delusions, without further inquiry. But if it be, as has been proved, that true religion lies very much in religious affections, then it follows, that if there be a great deal of true religion, there will be great religious affections; if true religion in the hearts of men be raised to a great height, divine and holy affections will be raised to a great height.

Love is an affection, but will any Christian say, men ought not to love God and Jesus Christ in a high degree? And will any say, we ought not to have a very great hatred of sin, and a very deep sorrow for it? Or that we ought not to exercise a high degree of gratitude to God for the mercies we receive of him, and the great things he has done for the salvation of fallen men? Or that we should not have very great and strong desires after God and holiness? Is there any who will profess, that his affections in religion are great enough; and will say, "I have no cause to be humbled, that I am no more affected with the things of religion than I am; I have no reason to be ashamed, that I have no greater exercises of love to God and sorrow for sin, and gratitude for the mercies which I have received?" Who is there that will bless God that he is affected enough with what he has read and heard of the wonderful love of God to worms and rebels, in giving his only begotten Son to die for

them, and of the dying love of Christ; and will pray that he may not be affected with them in any higher degree, because high affections are improper and very unlovely in Christians, being enthusiastical, and ruinous to true religion? Our text plainly speaks of great and high affections when it speaks of "repining with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:" here the most superlative expressions are used, which language will afford. And the Scriptures often require us to exercise very high affections: thus in the first and great commandment of the law, there is an accumulation of expressions, as though words were wanting to express the degree in which we ought to love God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." So the saints are called upon to exercise high degrees of joy: "Rejoice," says Christ to his disciples, "and be exceeding glad," Matthew 5:12. So it is said, Psalms 68:3, "Let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." So in the book of Psalms, the saints are often called upon to shout for joy; and in Luke 6:23, to leap for joy. So they are abundantly called upon to exercise high degrees of gratitude for mercies, to "praise God with all their hearts, with hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and their souls magnifying the Lord, singing his praises, talking of his wondrous works, declaring his doings, &c." And we find the most eminent saints in Scripture often professing high affections. Thus the Psalmist speaks of his love, as if it were unspeakable; Psalms 119:97, "O how love I thy law!" So he expresses a great degree of hatred of sin, Psalms 139:21, Psalms 29:1-11 : "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred." He also expresses a high degree of sorrow for sin: he speaks of his sins "going over his head as a heavy burden that was too heavy for him: and of his roaring all the day, and his moisture being turned into the drought of summer," and his bones being as it were broken with sorrow. So he often expresses great degrees of spiritual desires, in a multitude of the strongest expressions which can be conceived of; such as "his longing, his soul’s thirsting as a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, his panting, his flesh and heart crying out, his soul’s breaking for the longing it hath," &c. He expresses the exercises of great and extreme grief for the sins of others, Psalms 119:136, "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." And Psalms 119:53, "Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law." He expresses high exercises of joy, Psalms 21:1 : "The king shall joy in thy strength, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice." Psalms 71:23 "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee." Psalms 63:3-7, "Because thy loving kindness is better than life; my lips shall praise thee, Thus will I bless thee, while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help; therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." The Apostle Paul expresses high exercises of affection. Thus he expresses the exercises of pity and concern for others’ good, even to anguish of heart; a great, fervent, and abundant love, and earnest and longing desires, and exceeding joy; and speaks of the exultation and triumphs of his soul, and his earnest expectation and hope, and his abundant tears, and the travails of his soul, in pity, grief, earnest desires, godly jealousy, and fervent zeal, in many places that have been cited already, and which therefore I need not repeat. John the Baptist expressed great joy, John 1:15-36. Those blessed women that anointed the body of Jesus, are represented as in a very high exercise of religious affection, on occasion of Christ’s resurrection, Matthew 28:8 : "And they departed from the sepulcher with fear and great joy."

It is often foretold of the church of God, in her future happy seasons here on earth, that they shall exceedingly rejoice: Psalms 89:15-16, "They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh," &c. The same is represented in innumerable other places. And because high degrees of joy are the proper and genuine fruits of the gospel of Christ, therefore the angel calls this gospel, "good tidings of great joy, that should be to all people." The saints and angels in heaven, that have religion in its highest perfection, are exceedingly affected with what they behold and contemplate of God's perfections and works. They are all as a pure heavenly flame of fire in their love and in the greatness and strength of their joy and gratitude: their praises are represented, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder." Now the only reason why their affections are so much higher than the holy affections of saints on earth, is, they see the things they are affected by, more according to their truth, and have their affections more conformed to the nature of things. And therefore, if religious affections in men here below, are but of the same nature and kind with theirs, the higher they are, and the nearer they are to theirs in degree, the better, because therein they will be so much the more conformed to truth, as theirs are. From these things it certainly appears, that religious affections being in a very high degree, is no evidence that they are not such as have the nature of true religion. Therefore they do greatly err, who condemn persons as enthusiasts merely because their affections are very high. And on the other hand, it is no evidence that religious affections are of a spiritual and gracious nature, because they are great. It is very manifest by the holy Scripture, our sure and infallible rule to judge of things of this nature, that there are religious affections which are very high, that are not spiritual and saving. The Apostle Paul speaks of affections in the Galatians, which had been exceedingly elevated, and which yet he manifestly speaks of, as fearing that they were vain, and had come to nothing: Galatians 4:15, "Where is the blessedness you spoke of? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." And in Galatians 4:11, he tells them, "he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed upon them labor in vain." So the children of Israel were greatly affected with God's mercy to them, when they had seen how wonderfully he wrought for them at the Red Sea, where they sang God's praise; though they soon forgot his works. So they were greatly affected again at mount Sinai, when they saw the marvelous manifestations God made of himself there; and seemed mightily engaged in their minds, and with great forwardness made answer, when God proposed his holy covenant to them, saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient." But how soon was there an end to all this mighty forwardness and engagedness of affection! How quickly were they turned aside after other gods, rejoicing and shouting around their golden calf! So great multitudes who were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead, were elevated to a high degree, and made a mighty ado, when Jesus presently after entered into Jerusalem, exceedingly magnifying Christ, as though the ground were not good enough for the ass he rode to tread upon; and therefore cut branches of palm trees, and strewed them in the way; yea, pulled off their garments, and spread them in the way; and cried with loud voices, "Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest;" so as to make the whole city ring again, and put all into an uproar. We learn by the evangelist John, that the reason why the people made this ado, was because they were affected with the miracle of raising Lazarus, John 12:18. Here was a vast multitude crying Hosanna on this occasion, so that it gave occasion to the Pharisees to say,

"Behold, the world has gone after him," John 12:19, but Christ had at that time but few true disciples. And how quickly was this ado at an end! All of this nature is quelled and dead, when this Jesus stands bound, with a mock robe and a crown of thorns, to be derided, spit upon, scourged, condemned and executed. Indeed, there was a great and loud outcry concerning him among the multitude then, as well as before; but of a very different kind: it is not then, Hosanna, hosanna, but Crucify, crucify. And it is the concurring voice of all orthodox divines, that there may be religious affections, which are raised to a very high degree, and yet there be nothing of true religion.[Mr. Stoddard observes, "That common affections are sometimes stronger than saving."-Guide to Christ, p. 2.]

II. It is no sign that affections have the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they have great effects on the body.

All affections whatsoever, have in some respect or degree, an effect on the body. As was observed before, such is our nature, and such are the laws of union of soul and body, that the mind can have no lively or vigorous exercise, without some effect upon the body. So subject is the body to the mind, and so much do its fluids, especially the animal spirits, attend the motions and exercises of the mind, that there cannot be so much as an intense thought, without an effect upon them. Yea, it is questionable whether an imbodied soul ever so much as thinks one thought, or has any exercise at all, but that there is some corresponding motion or alteration of motion, in some degree, of the fluids, in some part of the body. But universal experience shows, that the exercise of the affections have in a special manner a tendency to some sensible effect upon the body. And if this be so, that all affections have some effect upon the body, we may then well suppose, the greater those affections be, and the more vigorous their exercise (other circumstances being equal) the greater will be the effect on the body. Hence it is not to be wondered at, that very great and strong exercises of the affections should have great effects on the body. And therefore, seeing there are very great affections, both common and spiritual; hence it is not to be wondered at, that great effects on the body should arise from both these kinds of affections. And consequently these effects are no signs, that the affections they arise from, are of one kind or the other.

Great effects on the body certainly are no sure evidences that affections are spiritual; for we see that such effects oftentimes arise from great affections about temporal things, and when religion is no way concerned in them. And if great affections about secular things, that are purely natural, may have these effects, I know not by what rule we should determine that high affections about religious things, which arise in like manner from nature, cannot have the like effect.

Nor, on the other hand, do I know of any rule any have to determine, that gracious and holy affections, when raised as high as any natural affections, and have equally strong and vigorous exercises, cannot have a great effect on the body. No such rule can be drawn from reason: I know of no reason, why a being affected with a view of God’s glory should not cause the body to faint, as well as being affected with a view of Solomon’s glory. And no such rule has as yet been produced from the Scripture; none has ever been found in all the late controversies which have been about things of this nature. There is a great power in spiritual affections: we read of the power which worketh in Christians,[Ephesians 3:7] and of the Spirit of God being in them as the Spirit of power,[2 Timothy 1:7] and of the effectual working of his power in them.[Ephesians 3:7, Ephesians 3:20] But man’s nature is weak: flesh and blood are represented in Scripture as

exceeding weak; and particularly with respect to its unfitness for great spiritual and heavenly operations and exercises, Matthew 26:41, 1 Corinthians 15:43, and 1 Corinthians 15:50. The text we are upon speaks of "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." And who that considers what man's nature is, and what the nature of the affections is, can reasonably doubt but that such unutterable and glorious joys, may be too great and mighty for weak dust and ashes, so as to be considerably overbearing to it? It is evident by the Scripture that true divine discoveries, or ideas of God's glory, when given in a great degree have a tendency, by affecting the mind, to overbear the body; because the Scripture teaches us often, that if these ideas or views should be given to such a degree as they are given in heaven, the weak frame of the body could not subsist under it, and that no man can, in that manner, see God and live. The knowledge which the saints have of God's beauty and glory in this world, and those holy affections that arise from it, are of the same nature and kind with what the saints are the subjects of in heaven, differing only in degree and circumstances: what God gives them here, is a foretaste of heavenly happiness, and an earnest of their future inheritance. And who shall limit God in his giving this earnest, or say he shall give so much of the inheritance, such a part of the future reward as an earnest of the whole, and no more? And seeing God has taught us in his word, that the whole reward is such, that it would at once destroy the body, is it not too bold a thing for us, so to set bounds to the sovereign God, as to say that in giving the earnest of this reward in this world, he shall never give so much of it, as in the least to diminish the strength of the body, when God has nowhere thus limited himself? The Psalmist, speaking of the vehement religious affections he had, speaks of an effect in his flesh or body, besides what was in his soul, expressly distinguishing one from the other, once and again: Psalms 84:2, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Here is a plain distinction between the heart and the flesh, as being each affected. So Psalms 63:1, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Here also is an evident designed distinction between the soul and the flesh. The prophet Habakkuk speaks of his bodies being overborne by a sense of the majesty of God, Habakkuk 3:16 : "When I heard, my belly trembled: my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness enter into my bones, and I trembled in myself." So the Psalmist speaks expressly of his flesh trembling, Psalms 119:120 : My flesh trembleth for fear of thee." That such ideas of God's glory as are sometimes given in this world, have a tendency to overhear the body, is evident, because the Scripture gives us an account, that this has sometimes actually been the effect of those external manifestations God has made of himself to some of the saints which were made to that end, viz., to give them an idea of God's majesty and glory. Such instances we have in the prophet Daniel, and the apostle John. Daniel, giving an account of an external representation of the glory of Christ, says, Daniel 10:8, "And there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength." And the apostle John, giving an account of the manifestation made to him, says, Revelation 1:17, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." It is in vain to say here, these were only external manifestations or symbols of the glory of Christ, which these saints beheld: for though it be true, that they were outward representations of Christ's glory, which they beheld with their bodily eyes; yet the end and use of these external symbols are representations was to give to these prophets an idea of the thing represented, and that was the true divine glory and majesty of Christ, which is his spiritual glory; they were made use of only as significations of this spiritual glory, and thus undoubtedly they received them, and improved them, and were affected by them. According to the end for which God intended these

outward signs, they received by them a great and lively apprehension of the real glory and majesty of God’s nature, which they were signs of; and thus were greatly affected, their souls swallowed up, and their bodies overborne. And I think they are very bold and daring, who will say God cannot, or shall not give the like clear and affecting ideas and apprehensions of the same real glory and majesty of his nature, to any of his saints, without the intervention of any such external shadows of it.

Before I leave this head, I would farther observe, that it is plain the Scripture often makes use of bodily effects, to express the strength of holy and spiritual affections; such as trembling,[Psalms 119:120. Ezra 9:4. Isaiah 66:2, Isaiah 66:5. Habakkuk 3:16] groaning,[Romans 8:36] being sick,[Song of Solomon 2:5, and Song of Solomon 5:8] crying out,[Psalms 84:2] panting,[Psalms 38:10, and Psalms 42:1, and Psalms 119:131] and fainting.[Psalms 84:2, and Psalms 119:81] Now if it be supposed, that these are only figurative expressions, to represent the degree of affection: yet I hope all will allow, that they are fit and suitable figures to represent the high degree of those spiritual affections, which the Spirit of God makes use of them to represent; which I do not see how they would be, if those spiritual affections, let them be in never to high a degree, have no tendency to any such things; but that on the contrary, they are the proper effects and sad tokens of false affections, and the delusion of the devil. I cannot think, God would commonly make use of things which are very alien from spiritual affections, and are shrewd marks of the hand of Satan, and smell strong of the bottomless pit, as beautiful figures, to represent the high degree of holy and heavenly affections.

III. It is no sign that affections are truly gracious affections, or that they are not, that they cause those who have them to be fluent, fervent, and abundant, in talking of the things of religion.

There are many persons, who, if they see this in others, are greatly prejudiced against them. Their being so full of talk, is with them a sufficient ground to condemn them, as Pharisees, and ostentatious hypocrites. On the other hand, there are many, who if they see this effect in any, are very ignorantly and imprudently forward, at once to determine that they are the true children of God, and are under the saving influences of his Spirit, and speak of it as a great evidence of a new creature; they say, "such a one’s mouth is now opened: he used to be slow to speak; but now he is full and free; he is free now to open his heart, and tell his experiences, and declare the praises of God; it comes from him, as free as water from a fountain;" and the like. And especially are they captivated into a confident and undoubting persuasion, that they are savingly wrought upon, if they are not only free and abundant, but very affectionate and earnest in their talk. But this is the fruit of but little judgment, a scanty and short experience; as events do abundantly show: and is a mistake persons often run into, through their trusting to their own wisdom and discerning, and making their own notions their rule, instead of the holy Scripture. Though the Scripture be full of rules, both how we should judge of our own state, and also how we should be conducted in our opinion of others; yet we have nowhere any rule, by which to judge ourselves or others to be in a good estate, from any such effect: for this is but the religion of the mouth and of the tongue, and what is in the Scripture represented by the leaves of a tree, which, though the tree ought not to be without them, yet are nowhere given as an evidence of the goodness of the tree. That persons are disposed to be abundant in talking of things of religion, may be from a good cause, and it may be from a bad one. It may be because their hearts are very full of holy affections; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:" and it may be because persons’ hearts are very full of religious

affection which is not holy; for still out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. It is very much the nature of the affections, of whatever kind they be, and whatever objects they are exercised about, if they are strong, to dispose persons to be very much in speaking of that which they are affected with: and not only to speak much, but to speak very earnestly and fervently. And therefore persons talking abundantly and very fervently about the things of religion, can be an evidence of no more than this, that they are very much affected with the things of religion; but this may be (as has been already shown) and there be no grace. That which men are greatly affected with, while the high affection lasts, they will be earnestly engaged about, and will be likely to show that earnestness in their talk and behavior; as the greater part of the Jews, in all Judah and Galilee, did for a while, about John the Baptist's preaching and baptism, when they were willing for a season to rejoice in his light; a mighty ado was made, all over the land, and among all sorts of persons, about this great prophet and his ministry. And so the multitude, in like manner, often manifested a great earnestness, a mighty engagedness of spirit in everything that was external, about Christ and his preaching and miracles, "being astonished at his doctrine, anon with joy receiving the word," following him sometimes night and day, leaving meat, drink, and sleep to hear him: once following him into the wilderness, fasting three days going to hear him; some times crying him up to the clouds, saying, "Never man spake like this man!" being fervent and earnest in what they said. But what did these things come to, in the greater part of them? A person may be over full of talk of his own experiences; commonly falling upon it, everywhere, and in all companies; and when it is so, it is rather a dark sign than a good one. As a tree that is over full of leaves seldom bears much fruit; and as a cloud, though to appearance very pregnant and full of water, if it brings with it overmuch wind, seldom affords much rain to the dry and thirsty earth; which very thing the Holy Spirit is pleased several times to make use of, to represent a great show of religion with the mouth, without answerable fruit in the life: Proverbs 25:24, "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain." And the apostle Jude, speaking of some in the primitive times, that crept in unawares among the saints, and having a great show of religion, where for a while not suspected, "These are clouds (says he) without water, carried about of winds," Jude 1:4 and Jude 1:12. And the apostle Peter, speaking of the same, says, 2 Peter 2:17, "These are clouds without water, carried with a tempest."

False affections, if they are equally strong, are much more forward to declare themselves, than true: because it is the nature of false religion, to affect show and observation; as it was with the Pharisees.[That famous experimental divine, Mr. Shepherd, says, "A Pharisee's trumpet shall be heard to the town's end; when simplicity walks through the town unseen. Hence a man will sometimes covertly commend himself (and myself ever comes in), and tells you a long story of conversion; and a hundred to one if some lie or other slip not out with it. Why, the secret meaning is, I pray admire me. Hence complain of wants and weaknesses: Pray think what a broken-hearted Christian I am." Parab. of the Ten Virgins. Part I. pages 179, 180. And holy Mr. Flavel says thus: "O reader, if thy heart were right with God, and thou didst not cheat thyself with a vain profession, thou wouldst have frequent business with God, which thou wouldst be loth thy dearest friend, or the wife of thy bosom should be privy to. Non est religio, ubi omnia patent. Religion doth not lie open to all, to the eyes of men. Observed duties maintain our credit; but secret duties maintain our life. It was the saying of a heathen, about his secret correspondency with his friend, What need the world be acquainted with it? Thou and I are theatre enough to each other. There are inclosed pleasures in religion, which none but renewed spiritual souls do feelingly understand." Flavel's

Touchstone of Sincerity, Chap. II. Sect. 2.]

It is no sign that affections are gracious, or that they are otherwise, that persons did not make them themselves, or excite them of their own contrivance and by their own strength.

There are many in these days, that condemn all affections which are excited in a way that the subjects of them can give no account of, as not seeming to be the fruit of any of their own endeavors, or the natural consequence of the faculties and principles of human nature, in such circumstances, and under such means; but to be from the influence of some extrinsic and supernatural power upon their minds. How greatly has the doctrine of the inward experience, or sensible perceiving of the immediate power and operation of the Spirit of God, been reproached and ridiculed by many of late! They say, the manner of the Spirit of God is to co-operate in a silent, secret, and undiscernable way with the use of means, and our own endeavors; so that there is no distinguishing by sense, between the influences of the Spirit of God, and the natural operations of the faculties of our own minds. And it is true, that for any to expect to receive the saving influences of the Spirit of God, while they neglect a diligent improvement of the appointed means of grace, is unreasonable presumption. And to expect that the Spirit of God will savingly operate upon their minds, without the Spirit's making use of means, as subservient to the effect, is enthusiastical. It is also undoubtedly true, that the Spirit of God is very various in the manner and circumstances of his operations, and that sometimes he operates in a way more secret and gradual, and from smaller beginnings, than at others. But if there be indeed a power, entirely different from, and beyond our power, or the power of all means and instruments, and above the power of nature, which is requisite in order to the production of saving grace in the heart, according to the general profession of the country; then, certainly it is in no wise unreasonable to suppose, that this effect should very frequently be produced after such a manner, as to make it very manifest, apparent, and sensible that it is so. If grace be indeed owing to the powerful and efficacious operation of an extrinsic agent, or divine efficient out of ourselves, why is it unreasonable to suppose it should seem to be so to them who are the subjects of it? Is it a strange thing, that it should seem to be as it is? When grace in the heart indeed is not produced by our strength, nor is the effect of the natural power of our own faculties, or any means or instruments, but is properly the workmanship and production of the Spirit of the Almighty, is it a strange and unaccountable thing, that it should seem to them who are subjects of it, agreeable to truth, and not right contrary to truth; so that if persons tell of effects that they are conscious to in their own minds, that seem to them not to be from the natural power or operation of their minds, but from the supernatural power of some other agent, it should at once be looked upon as a sure evidence of their being under a delusion, because things seem to them to be as they are? For this is the objection which is made: it is looked upon as a clear evidence, that the apprehensions and affections that many persons have, are not really from such a cause, because they seem to them to be from that cause: they declare that what they are conscious of, seems to them evidently not to be from themselves, but from the mighty power of the Spirit of God; and others from hence condemn them, and determine what they experience is not from the Spirit of God, but from themselves, or from the devil. Thus unreasonably are multitudes treated at this day by their neighbors.

If it be indeed so, as the Scripture abundantly teaches, that grace in the soul is so the effect of God's power, that it is fitly compared to those effects which are farthest from being owing to any strength in the subject, such as a generation, or a being begotten, and resurrection, or a being

raised from the dead, and creation, or a being brought out of nothing into being, and that it is an effect wherein the mighty power of God is greatly glorified, and the exceeding greatness of his power is manifested;[Ephesians 1:17-20] then what account can be given of it, that the Almighty, in so great a work of his power, should so carefully hide his power, that the subjects of it should be able to discern nothing of it? Or what reason or revelation have any to determine that he does so? If we may judge by the Scripture this is not agreeable to God's manner, in his operations and dispensations; but on the contrary, it is God's manner, in the great works of his power and mercy which he works for his people, to order things so as to make his hand visible, and his power conspicuous, and men's dependence on him most evident, that no flesh should glory in his presence,[1 Corinthians 1:27-29] that God alone might be exalted,[Isaiah 2:11-17] and that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of man,[2 Corinthians 4:7] and that Christ's power might be manifested in our weakness,[2 Corinthians 12:9] and none might say mine own hand hath saved me.[Judges 7:2] So it was in most of those temporal salvations which God wrought for Israel of old, which were types of the salvation of God's people from their spiritual enemies. So it was in the redemption of Israel from their Egyptian bondage; he redeemed them with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm; and that his power might be the more conspicuous, he suffered Israel first to be brought into the most helpless and forlorn circumstances. So it was in the great redemption by Gideon; God would have his army diminished to a handful, and they without any other arms than trumpets and lamps, and earthen pitchers. So it was in the deliverance of Israel from Goliath, by a stripling with a sling and a stone. So it was in that great work of God, his calling the Gentiles, and converting the Heathen world, after Christ's ascension, after that the world by wisdom knew not God, and all the endeavors of philosophers had proved in vain, for many ages, to reform the world, and it was by everything become abundantly evident, that the world was utterly helpless, by anything else but the mighty power of God. And so it was in most of the conversions of particular persons, we have an account of in the history of the New Testament: they were not wrought on in that silent, secret, gradual, and insensible manner, which is now insisted on; but with those manifest evidences of a supernatural power, wonderfully and suddenly causing a great change, which in these days are looked upon as certain signs of delusion and enthusiasm. The Apostle, in Ephesians 1:18-19, speaks of God's enlightening the minds of Christians, and so bringing them to believe in Christ, to the end that they might know the exceeding greatness of his power to them who believe. The words are, "The eyes of our understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power," &c. Now when the apostle speaks of their being thus the subjects of his power, in their enlightening and effectual calling, to the end that they might know what his mighty power was to them who believe, he can mean nothing else than, "that they might know by experience." But if the saints know this power by experience, then they feel it and discern it, and are conscious of it; as sensibly distinguishable from the natural operations of their own minds, which is not agreeable to a motion of God's operating so secretly, and undiscernably, that it cannot be known that they are the subjects of the influence of any extrinsic power at all, any otherwise than as they may argue it from Scripture assertions; which is a different; thing from knowing it by experience. So that it is very unreasonable and unscriptural to determine that affections are not from the gracious operations of God's Spirit, because they are sensibly not from the persons themselves that are the subjects of them. On the

other hand, it is no evidence that affections are gracious, that they are not properly produced by those who are the subjects of them, or that they arise in their minds in a manner they cannot account for.

There are some who make this an argument in their own favor; when speaking of what they have experienced, they say, "I am sure I did not make it myself; it was a fruit of no contrivance or endeavor of mine; it came when I thought nothing of it; if I might have the world for it, I cannot make it again when I please." And hence they determine that what they have experienced, must be from the mighty influence of the Spirit of God, and is of a saving nature; but very ignorantly, and without grounds. What they have been the subjects of, may indeed not be from themselves directly, but may be from the operation of an invisible agent, some spirit besides their own: but it does not thence follow, that it was from the Spirit of God. There are other spirits who have influence on the minds of men, besides the Holy Ghost. We are directed not to believe every spirit, but to try the spirits, whether they be of God. There are many false spirits, exceeding busy with men, who often transform themselves into angels of light, and do in many wonderful ways, with great subtlety and power, mimic the operations of the Spirit of God. And there are many of Satan's operations which are very distinguishable from the voluntary exercises of men's own minds. They are so, in those dreadful and horrid suggestions, and blasphemous injections with which he follows many persons; and in vain and fruitless frights and terrors, which he is the author of. And the power of Satan may be as immediate, and as evident in false comforts and joys, as in terrors and horrid suggestions; and oftentimes is so in fact. It is not in men's power to put themselves in such raptures, as the Anabaptists in Germany, and many other raving enthusiasts like them, have been the subjects of. And besides, it is to be considered that persons may have those impressions on their minds, which may not be of their own producing, nor from an evil spirit, but from the Spirit of God, and yet not be from any saving, but a common influence of the Spirit of God; and the subjects of such impressions may be of the number of those we read of, Hebrews 6:4-5, "that are once enlightened, and taste of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and taste the good word of God, and the power of the world to come;" and yet may be wholly unacquainted with those "better things that accompany salvations" of spoken of Hebrews 6:9. And where neither a good nor evil spirit have any immediate hand, persons, especially such as are of a weak and vapory habit of body, and the brain weak and easily susceptive of impressions, may have strange apprehensions and imaginations, and strong affections attending them, unaccountably arising, which are not voluntarily produced by themselves. We see that such persons are liable to such impressions about temporal things; and there is equal reason, why they should about spiritual things. As a person who is asleep has dreams that he is not the voluntary author of; so may such persons, in like manner, be the subjects of involuntary impressions, when they are awake.

V. It is no sign that religious affections are truly holy and spiritual, or that they are not, that they come with texts of Scripture, remarkably brought to the mind.

It is no sign that affections are not gracious, that they are occasioned by Scriptures so coming to mind; provided it be the Scripture itself, or the truth which the Scripture so brought contains and teaches, that is the foundation of the affection, and not merely, or mainly, the sudden and unusual manner of its coming to the mind. But on the other hand, neither is it any sign that affections are gracious, that they arise on occasion of Scriptures brought suddenly and wonderfully to the mind;

whether those affections be fear or hope, joy or sorrow, or any other. Some seem to look upon this as a good evidence that their affections are saving, especially if the affections excited are hope or joy, or any other which are pleasing and delightful. They will mention it as an evidence that all is right, that their experience came with the word, and will say, "There were such and such sweet promises brought to my mind: they came suddenly, as if they were spoken to me: I had no hand in bringing such a text to my own mind; I was not thinking of anything leading to it; it came all at once, so that I was surprised. I had not thought of it a long time before; I did not know at first that it was Scripture; I did not remember that ever I had read it." And it may be, they will add, "One Scripture came flowing in after another, and so texts all over the Bible, the most sweet and pleasant, and the most apt and suitable which could be devised; and filled me full as I could hold: I could not but stand and admire: the tears flowed; I was full of joy, and could not doubt any longer." And thus they think they have undoubted evidence that their affections must be from God, and of the right kind, and their state good: but without any manner of grounds. How came they by any such rule, as that if any affections or experiences arise with promises, and comfortable texts of Scripture, unaccountably brought to mind, without their recollection, or if a great number of sweet texts follow one another in a chain, that this is a certain evidence their experiences are saving? Where is any such rule to be found in the Bible, the great and only sure directory in things of this nature?

What deceives many of the less understanding and considerate sort of people, in this matter, seems to be this; that the Scripture is the word of God, and has nothing in it which is wrong, but is pure and perfect; and therefore, those experiences which come from the Scripture must be right. But then it should be considered, affections may arise on occasion of the Scripture, and not properly come from the Scripture, as the genuine fruit of the Scripture, and by a right use of it; but from an abuse of it. All that can be argued from the purity and perfection of the word of God, with respect to experiences, is this, that those experiences which are agreeable to the word of God, are right, and cannot be otherwise; and not that those affections must be right, which arise on occasion of the word of God coming to the mind.

What evidence is there that the devil cannot bring texts of Scripture to the mind, and misapply them to deceive persons? There seems to be nothing in this which exceeds the power of Satan. It is no work of such mighty power, to bring sounds or letters to persons' minds, that we have any reason to suppose nothing short of Omnipotence can be sufficient for it. If Satan has power to bring any words or sounds at all to persons' minds, he may have power to bring words contained in the Bible. There is no higher sort of power required in men, to make the sounds which express the words of a text of Scripture, than to make the sounds which express the words of an idle story or song. And so the same power in Satan, which is sufficient to renew one of those kinds of sounds in the mind, is sufficient to renew the other: the different signification, which depends wholly on custom, alters not the case, as to ability to make or revive the sounds or letters. Or will any suppose, that texts or Scriptures are such sacred things, that the devil durst not abuse them, nor touch them? In this also they are mistaken. He who was bold enough to lay hold on Christ himself, and carry him hither and thither, into the wilderness, and into a high mountain, and to a pinnacle of the temple, is not afraid to touch the Scripture, and abuse that for his own purpose; as he showed at the same time that he was so bold with Christ, he then brought one Scripture and another, to deceive and tempt him. And if Satan did presume, and was permitted to put Christ himself in mind of texts of Scripture to tempt him, what reason have we determine that he dare not,

or will not be permitted, to put wicked men in the mind of texts of Scripture, to tempt and deceive them? And if Satan may thus abuse one text of Scripture, so he may another. Its being a very excellent place of Scripture, a comfortable and precious promise, alters not the case, as to his courage or ability. And if he can bring one comfortable text to the mind, so he may a thousand; and may choose out such Scriptures as tend most to serve his purpose; and may heap up Scripture promises, tending, according to the perverse application he makes of them, wonderfully to remove the rising doubts, and to confirm the false joy and confidence of a poor deluded sinner.

We know the devil's instruments, corrupt and heretical teachers, can and do pervert the Scripture, to their own and others' damnation, 2 Peter 3:16. We see they have the free use of Scripture, in every part of it: there is no text so precious and sacred, but they are permitted to abuse it, to the eternal ruin of multitudes of souls; and there are no weapons they make use of with which they do more execution. And there is no manner of reason to determine, that the devil is not permitted thus to use the Scripture, as well as his instruments. For when the latter do it, they do it as his instruments and servants, and through his instigation and influence: and doubtless he does the same he instigates others to do; the devil's servants do but follow their master, and do the same work that he does himself. And as the devil can abuse the Scripture, to deceive and destroy men, so may men's own folly and corruptions as well. The sin which is in men, acts like its father. Men's own hearts are deceitful like the devil, and use the same means to deceive. So that it is evident, that any person may have high affections of hope and joy, arising on occasion of texts of Scripture, yea, precious promises of Scripture coming suddenly and remarkably to their minds, as though they were spoken to them, yea, a great multitude of such texts, following one another in a wonderful manner; and yet all this be no argument that these affections are divine, or that they are any other than the effects of Satan's delusions. And I would further observe, that persons may have raised and joyful affections, which may come with the word of God, and not only so, but from the word, and those affections not be from Satan, nor yet properly from the corruptions of their own hearts, but from some influence of the Spirit of God with the word and yet have nothing of the nature of true and saving religion in them. Thus the stony ground hearers had great joy from the word; yea, which is represented as arising from the word, as growth from a seed; and their affections had, in their appearance, a very great and exact resemblance with those represented by the growth on the good ground, the difference not appearing until it was discovered by the consequences in a time of trial: and yet there was no saving religion in these affections.[Mr. Stoddard in his Guide to Christ, speaks of it as a common thing, for persons while in a natural condition, and before they have ever truly accepted of Christ, to have Scripture promises come to them with a great deal of refreshing: which they take as tokens of God's love, and hope that God has accepted them; and so are confident of their good estate. Pages 8, 9. Impression anno 1735.]

01.04. PART II(b)

VI. It is no evidence that religious affections are saving, or that they are otherwise, that there is an appearance of love in them.

There are no professing Christians who pretend, that this is an argument against the truth and saving nature of religious affections. But, on the other hand, there are some who suppose, it is a good evidence that affections are from the sanctifying and saving influences of the Holy Ghost.-Their argument is that Satan cannot love; this affection being directly contrary to the devil, whose very nature is enmity and malice. And it is true, that nothing is more excellent, heavenly, and divine, than a spirit of true Christian love to God and men: it is more excellent than knowledge, or prophecy, or miracles, or speaking with the tongue of men and angels. It is the chief of the graces of God's Spirit, and the life, essence and sum of all true religion; and that by which we are most conformed to heaven, and most contrary to hell and the devil. But yet it is in arguing from hence, that there are no counterfeits of it. It may be observed that the more excellent anything is, the more will be the counterfeits of it. Thus there are many more counterfeits of silver and gold, than of iron and copper: there are many false diamonds and rubies, but who goes about to counterfeit common stones? Though the more excellent things are, the more difficult it is to make anything that shall be like them, in their essential nature and internal virtues; yet the more manifold will the counterfeits be, and the more will art and subtlety be displayed, in an exact imitation of the outward appearance. Thus there is the greatest danger of being cheated in buying of medicines that are most excellent and sovereign, though it be most difficult to imitate them with anything of the like value and virtue, and their counterfeits are good for nothing when we have them. So it is with Christian virtues and graces; the subtlety of Satan, and men's deceitful hearts, are wont chiefly to be exercised in counterfeiting those that are in highest repute. So there are perhaps no graces that have more counterfeits than love and humility; these being virtues wherein the beauty of a true Christian does especially appear. But with respect to love; it is plain by the Scripture, that persons may have a kind of religious love, and yet have no saving grace. Christ speaks of many professing Christians that have such love, whose love will not continue, and so shall fail of salvation, Matthew 24:12-13 : "And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Which latter words plainly show, that those spoken of before, whose love shall not endure to the end, but wax cold, should not be saved.

Persons may seem to have love to God and Christ, yea, to have very strong and violent affections of this nature, and yet have no grace. For this was evidently the case with many graceless Jews, such as cried Jesus up so high, following him day and night, without meat, drink, or sleep; such as said, "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," and cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David."[Agreeable to this, Mr. Stoddard observes, in his Guide to Christ, that some sinners have pangs of affection, and give an account that they find a spirit of love to God, and of their aiming at the glory of God, having that which has a great resemblance of saving grace; and that sometimes their common affections are stronger than saving. And supposes, that sometimes natural then

may have such violent pangs of false affection to God, that their may think themselves willing to be damned. Pages 21, and 65.] The apostle seems to intimate, that there were many in his days who had a counterfeit love to Christ, in Ephesians 6:24 : "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The last word, in the original, signifies incorruption; which shows, that the apostle was sensible that there were many who had a kind of love to Christ, whose love was not pure and spiritual. So also Christian love to the people of God may be counterfeited. It is evident by the Scripture, that there may be strong affections of this kind, without saving grace; as there were in the Galatians towards the Apostle Paul, when they were ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him; although the apostle expresses his fear that their affections were come to nothing, and that he had bestowed upon them labor in vain, Galatians 4:11, Galatians 4:15.

VII. Persons having religious affections of many kinds, accompanying one another, is not sufficient to determine whether they have any gracious affections or no.

Though false religion is wont to be maimed and monstrous, and not to have that entireness and symmetry of parts, which is to be seen in true religion: yet there may be a great variety of false affections together, that may resemble gracious affections.

It is evident that there are counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affections; as of love to God, and love to the brethren, as has been just now observed; so of godly sorrow for sin, as in Pharaoh, Saul, and Ahab, and the children of Israel in the wilderness, Exodus 9:27, 1 Samuel 24:16-17, and 1 Samuel 24:21, 1 Kings 21:27, Numbers 14:39-40 and of the fear of God, as in the Samaritans, "who feared the Lord, and served their own gods at the same time," 2 Kings 17:32-33; and those enemies of God we read of, Psalms 66:3, who, "through the greatness of God’s power, submit themselves to him," or, as it is in the Hebrew, "lie unto him," i.e., yield a counterfeit reverence and submission. So of a gracious gratitude, as in the children of Israel, who sang God’s praise at the Red Sea, Psalms 106:12; and Naaman the Syrian, after his miraculous cure of his leprosy, 2 Kings 5:15, &c. So of spiritual joy, as in the stony ground hearers, Matthew 13:20, and particularly many of John the Baptist’s hearers, John 5:35. So of zeal, as in Jehu, 2 Kings 10:16, and in Paul before his conversion, Galatians 1:14, Php 3:6, and the unbelieving Jews, Acts 22:3, Romans 10:2. So graceless persons may have earnest religious desires, which may be like Baalam’s desires, which he expresses under an extraordinary view that he had of the happy state of God’s people, as distinguished from all the rest of the world, Numbers 23:9-10. They may also have a strong hope of eternal life, as the Pharisees had. And as men, while in a state of nature, are capable of a resemblance of all kinds of religious affections, so nothing hinders but that they may have many of them together. And what appears in fact, does abundantly evince that it is very often so indeed. It seems commonly to be so, that when false affections are raised high, many false affections attend each other. The multitude that attended Christ into Jerusalem, after that great miracle of raising Lazarus, seem to have been moved with many religious affections at once, and all in a high degree. They seem to have been filled with admiration, and there was a show of a high affection of love, and also of a great degree of reverence, in their laying their garments on the ground for Christ to tread upon; and also of great gratitude to him, for the great and good works he had wrought, praising him with loud voices for his salvation; and earnest desires of the coming of God’s kingdom, which they supposed Jesus was now about to set up, and showed great hopes and raised expectations of it, expecting it would immediately appear; and hence were filled with joy, by which they were so animated in their acclamations, as to make the whole city ring with the

noise of them; and appeared great in their zeal and forwardness to attend Jesus, and assist him without further delay, now in the time of the great feast of the Passover, to set up his kingdom. And it is easy, from nature, and the nature of the affections, to give an account why, when one affection is raised very high, that it should excite others; especially if the affection which is raised high, be that of counterfeit love, as it was in the multitude who cried Hosanna. This will naturally draw many other affections after it. For, as was observed before, love is the chief of the affections, and as it were the fountain of them. Let us suppose a person who has been for some time in great exercise and terror through fear of hell, and his heart weakened with distress and dreadful apprehensions, and upon the brink of despair, and is all at once delivered, by being firmly made to believe, through some delusion of Satan, that God has pardoned him, and accepts him as the object of his dear love, and promises him eternal life; as suppose through some vision, or strong idea or imagination, suddenly excited in him, of a person with a beautiful countenance, smiling on him, and with arms open, and with blood dropping down, which the person conceives to be Christ, without any other enlightening of the understanding, to give a view of the spiritual divine excellency of Christ and his fullness; and of the way of salvation revealed in the gospel: or perhaps by some voice or words coming as if they were spoken to him, such as these, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee;" or, "Fear not, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom," which he takes to be immediately spoken by God to him, though there was no preceding acceptance of Christ, or closing of the heart with him: I say, if we should suppose such a case, what various passions would naturally crowd at once, or one after another, into such a person’s mind! It is easy to be accounted for, from mere principles of nature, that a person’s heart, on such an occasion, should be raised up to the skies with transports of joy; and be filled with fervent affection, to that imaginary God or Redeemer, who he supposes has thus rescued him from the jaws of such dreadful destruction, that his soul was so amazed with the fears of, and has received him with such endearment, as a peculiar favorite; and that now he should be filled with admiration and gratitude, and his mouth should be opened, and be full of talk about what he has experienced; and that, for a while he should think and speak of scarce anything else, and should seem to magnify that God who has done so much for him, and call upon others to rejoice with him, and appear with a cheerful countenance, and talk with a loud voice: and however, before his deliverance, he was full of quarrellings against the justice of God, that now it should be easy for him to submit to God, and own his unworthiness, and cry out against himself, and appear to be very humble before God, and lie at his feet as tame as a lamb; and that he should now confess his unworthiness, and cry out, "Why me? Why me?" (Like Saul, who when Samuel told him that God had appointed him to be king, makes answer, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" Much in the language of David, the true saint, 2 Samuel 7:18, "Who am I, and what is my father’s house, that thou has brought me hitherto?") Nor is it to be wondered at, that now he should delight to be with them who acknowledge and applaud his happy circumstances, and should love all such as esteem and admire him and what he has experienced, and have violent zeal against all such as would make nothing of such things, and be disposed openly to separate, and as it were to proclaim war with all who be not of his party, and should now glory in his sufferings, and be very much for condemning and censuring all who seem to doubt, or make any difficulty of these things; and while the warmth of his affections lasts, should be mighty forward to take pains, and deny himself, to promote the interest of the party who he imagines favors such things, and seem

earnestly desirous to increase the number of them, as the Pharisees compassed sea and land to make one proselyte.["Associating with godly men does not prove that a man has grace: Ahithophel was David's companion. Sorrows for the afflictions of the church, and desires for the conversion of souls, do not prove it. These things may be found in carnal men, and so can be no evidence of grace."-Stoddard's Nature of Saving Conversion, p. 82.] And so I might go on, and mention many other things, which will naturally arise in such circumstances. He must have but slightly considered human nature, who thinks such things as these cannot arise in this manner, without any supernatural interposition of divine power. As from true divine love flow all Christian affections, so from a counterfeit love in like manner naturally flow other false affections. In both cases, love is the fountain, and the other affections are the streams. The various faculties, principles, and affections of the human nature, are as it were many channels from one fountain: if there be sweet water in the fountain, sweet water will from thence flow out into those various channels; but if the water in the fountain be poisonous, then poisonous streams will also flow out into all those channels. So that the channels and streams will be alike, corresponding one with another; but the great difference will lie in the nature of the water. Or, man's nature may be compared to a tree, with many branches, coming from one root: if the sap in the root be good, there will also be good sap distributed throughout the branches, and the fruit that is brought forth will be good and wholesome; but if the sap in the root and stock be poisonous, so it will be in many branches (as in the other case), and the fruit will be deadly. The tree in both cases may be alike; there may be an exact resemblance in shape; but the difference is found only in eating the fruit. It is thus (in some measure at least) oftentimes between saints and hypocrites. There is sometimes a very great similitude between true and false experiences, in their appearance, and in what is expressed and related by the subjects of them: and the difference between them is much like the difference between the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and baker; they seemed to be much alike, insomuch that when Joseph interpreted the chief butler's dream, that he should be delivered from his imprisonment, and restored to the king's favor, and his honorable office in the palace, the chief baker had raised hopes and expectations, and told his dream also; but he was woefully disappointed; and though his dream was so much like the happy and well boding dream of his companion, yet it was quite contrary in its issue.

VIII. Nothing can certainly be determined concerning the nature of the affections, by this, that comforts and joys seem to follow awakenings and convictions of conscience, in a certain order.

Many persons seem to be prejudiced against affections and experiences that come in such a method, as has been much insisted on by many divines; first, such awakenings, fears, and awful apprehensions, followed with such legal humblings, in a sense of total sinfulness and helplessness, and then, such and such light and comfort; they look upon all such schemes, laying down such methods and steps, to be of men's devising; and particularly if high affections of joy follow great distress and terror, it is made by many an argument against those affections. But such prejudices and objections are without reason or Scripture. Surely it cannot be unreasonable to suppose, that before God delivers persons from a state of sin and exposedness to eternal destruction, he should give them some considerable sense of the evil he delivers from; that they may be delivered sensibly, and understand their own salvation, and know something of what God does for them. As men that are saved are in two exceeding different states, first a state of condemnation, and then in a state of justification and blessedness: and as God, in the work of the

salvation of mankind, deals with them suitably to their intelligent rational nature; so its seems reasonable, and agreeable to God's wisdom, that men who are saved should be in these two states sensibly; first, that they should, sensibly to themselves, be in a state of condemnation, and so in a state of woeful calamity and dreadful misery, and so afterwards in a state of deliverance and happiness; and that they should be first sensible of their absolute extreme necessity, and afterwards of Christ's sufficiency and God's mercy through him. And that it is God's manner of dealing with men, to "lead them into a wilderness, before he speaks comfortably to them," and so to order it, that they shall be brought into distress, and made to see their own helplessness and absolute dependence on his power and grace, before he appears to work any great deliverance for them, is abundantly manifest by the Scripture. Then is God wont to "repent himself for his professing people, when their strength is gone, and there is none shut up or left," and when they are brought to see that their false gods cannot help them, and that the rock in whom they trusted is vain, Deuteronomy 32:36-37. Before God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt, they were prepared for it, by being made to "see that they were in an evil case," and "to cry unto God, because of their hard bondage," Exodus 2:23, and Exodus 5:19. And before God wrought that great deliverance for them at the Red Sea, they were brought into great distress, the wilderness had shut them in, they could not turn to the right hand nor the left, and the Red Sea was before them, and the great Egyptian host behind, and they were brought to see that they could do nothing to help themselves, and that if God did not help them, they should be immediately swallowed up; and then God appeared, and turned their cries into songs. So before they were brought to their rest, and to enjoy the milk and honey of Canaan, God "led them through a great and terrible wilderness, that he might humble them and teach them what was in their heart, and so do them good in their latter end," Deuteronomy 8:2, Deuteronomy 8:16. The woman that had the issue of blood twelve years, was not delivered, until she had first "spent all her living on earthly physicians, and could not be healed of any," and so was left helpless, having no more money to spend; and then she came to the great Physician, without any money or price, and was healed by him, Luke 8:43-44. Before Christ would answer the request of the woman of Canaan, he first seemed utterly to deny her, and humbled her, and brought her to own herself worthy to be called a dog; and then he showed her mercy, and received her as a dear child, Matthew 15:22, &c. The Apostle Paul, before a remarkable deliverance, was "pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life; but had the sentence of death in himself, that he might not trust in himself, but in God that raiseth the dead," 2 Corinthians 1:8-10. There was first a great tempest, and the ship was covered with the waves, and just ready to sink, find the disciples were brought to cry to Jesus, "Lord save us, we perish;" and then the winds and seas were rebuked, and there was a great calm, Matthew 8:24-26. The leper, before he is cleansed, must have his mouth stopped, by a covering on his upper lip, and was to acknowledge his great misery and utter uncleannesss by rending his clothes, and crying, "Unclean, unclean," Leviticus 13:45. And backsliding Israel, before God heals them, are brought to "acknowledge that they have sinned, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord," and to see that "they lie down in their shame, and that confusion covers them," and "that in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains," and that God only can save them, Jeremiah 3:23-25. Joseph, who was sold be his brethren, and therein was a type of Christ, brings his brethren into great perplexity and distress, and brings them to reflect on their sin, and to say, We are verily guilty; and at last to resign up themselves entirely into his hands for bondmen; and then reveals himself to them, as their brother and their savior.

And if we consider those extraordinary manifestations which God made of himself to saints of old, we shall find that he commonly first manifested himself in a way which was terrible, and then by those things that were comfortable. So it was with Abraham; first, a horror of great darkness fell upon him, and then God revealed himself to him in sweet promises, Genesis 15:12-13. So it was with Moses at Mount Sinai; first, God appeared to him in all the terrors of his dreadful Majesty, so that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake," and then he made all his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, "The Lord God gracious and merciful," &c. So it was with Elijah; first, there is a stormy wind, and earthquakes and devouring fire, and then a still, small, sweet voice, 1 Kings 19:1-21. So it was with Daniel; he first saw Christ's countenance as lightning, that terrified him, and caused him to faint away; and then be is strengthened and refreshed with such comfortable words as these, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved," Daniel 10:1-21. So it was with the apostle John, Revelation 1:1-20. And there is an analogy observable in God's dispensations and deliverances which he works for his people, and the manifestations which he makes of himself to them, both ordinary and extraordinary. But there are many things in Scripture which do more directly show, that this is God's ordinary manner in working salvation for the souls of men, and in the manifestations God makes of himself and of his mercy in Christ, in the ordinary works of his grace on the hearts of sinners. The servant that owed his prince ten thousand talents, is first held to his debt, and the king pronounces sentence of condemnation upon him, and commands him to be sold, and his wife and children, and payment to be made; and thus he humbles him, and brings him to own the as whole of the debt to be just, and then forgives him all. The prodigal son spends all he has, and is brought to see himself in extreme circumstances, and to humble himself, and own his unworthiness, before he is relieved and feasted by his father, Luke 15:1-32. Old inveterate wounds must be searched to the bottom, in order to healing: and the Scripture compares sin, the wound of the soul, to this, and speaks of healing this wound without thus searching of it, as vain and deceitful, Jeremiah 7:11. Christ, in the work of his grace on the hearts of men, is compared to rain on the new mown grass, grass that is cut down with a scythe, Psalms 72:6, representing his refreshing, comforting influences on the wounded spirit. Our first parents, after they had sinned, were first terrified with God's majesty and justice, and had their sin, with its aggravations, set before them by their Judge, before they were relieved by the promise of the seed of the woman. Christians are spoken of as those "that have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them," Hebrews 6:18, which representation implies great fear and sense of danger, preceding. To the like purpose, Christ is called "a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," Isaiah 32:1-20 at the beginning. And it seems to be the natural import of the word gospel, glad tidings, that it is news of deliverance and salvation, after great fear and distress. There is also reason to suppose, that God deals with particular believers, as he dealt with his church, which he first made to hear his voice in the law, with terrible thunders and lightning and kept her under that schoolmaster to prepare her for Christ; and then comforted her with the joyful sound of the gospel from Mount Zion. So likewise John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Christ, and prepare men's hearts for his reception, by showing them their sins, and by bringing the self-righteous Jews off from their own righteousness, telling them that they were "a generation of vipers," and showing them their danger of "the wrath to come," telling them that "the axe was laid at the root of the trees," &c. And if it be indeed God's manner (as I think the foregoing considerations show that it undoubtedly is), before he gives men the comfort of a deliverance from

their sin and misery, to give them a considerable sense of the greatness and dreadfulness of those evils, and their extreme wretchedness by reason of them; surely it is not unreasonable to suppose, that persons, at least oftentimes, while under these views, should have great distresses and terrible apprehensions of mind; especially if it be considered what these evils are that they have a view of; which are no other than great and manifold sins, against the infinite majesty of the great Jehovah, and the suffering of the fierceness of his wrath to all eternity. And the more so still, when we have many plain instances in Scripture of persons that have actually been brought into great distress, by such convictions, before they have received saving consolations: as the multitude at Jerusalem, who were "pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And the apostle Paul, who trembled and was astonished, before he was comforted; and the gaoler, when "he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" From these things it appears to be very unreasonable in professing Christians to make this an objection against the truth and spiritual nature of the comfortable and joyful affections which any have, that they follow such awful apprehensions and distresses as have been mentioned.

And, on the other hand, it is no evidence that comforts and joys are right, because they succeed great terrors, and amazing fears of hell.[Mr. Shepard speaks of "men's being cast down as low as hell by sorrow and lying under chains, quaking in apprehension of terror to come, and then raised up to heaven in joy, not able to live; and yet not rent from lust: and such are objects of pity now, and are likely to be the objects of terror at the great day."-Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 125.] This seems to be what some persons lay a great weight upon; esteeming great terrors an evidence of the great work of the law as wrought on the heart, well preparing the way for solid comfort; not considering that terror and a conviction of conscience are different things. For though convictions of conscience do often cause terror; yet they do not consist in it; and terrors do often arise from other causes. Convictions of conscience, through the influences of God's Spirit, consist in conviction of sinfulness of heart and practices and of the dreadfulness of sins as committed against a God of terrible majesty, infinite holiness and hatred of sin, and strict justice in punishing of it. But there are some persons that have frightful apprehensions of hell, a dreadful pit ready to swallow them up, and flames just ready to lay hold of them, and devils around them, ready to seize them; who at the same time seem to have very little proper enlightenings of conscience really convincing them of their sinfulness of heart and life. The devil, if permitted, can terrify men as well as the Spirit of God, it is a work natural to him, and he has many ways of doing it, in a manner tending to no good.

He may exceedingly affright persons, by impressing on them images and ideas of many external things, of a countenance frowning, a sword drawn, black clouds of vengeance, words of an awful doom pronounced,["The way of the Spirit's working when it does convince men, is by enlightening natural conscience. The Spirit does not work by giving a testimony, but by assisting natural conscience to do its work. Natural conscience is the instrument in the hand of God to accuse, condemn, terrify, and to urge to duty. The Spirit of God leads men into the consideration of their danger, and makes them to be affected therewith; Proverbs 20:17; "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." Stoddard's Guide to Christ, p. 44.] hell gaping, devils coming, and the like, not to convince persons of things that are true, and revealed in the word of God, but to lead them to vain and groundless determinations; as that their day is past,

that they are reprobated, that God is implacable, that he has come to a resolution immediately to cut them off, &c. And the terrors which some persons have, are very much owing to the particular constitution and temper they are of. Nothing is more manifest than that some persons are of such a temper and frame, that their imaginations are more strongly impressed with everything they are affected with, than others; and the impression on the imagination reacts on the affection, and raises that still higher; and so affection and imagination act reciprocally, one on another, till their affection is raised to a vast height, and the person is swallowed up, and loses as possession of himself.[The famous Mr. Perkins distinguishes between "those sorrows that come through convictions of conscience, and melancholic passions arising only from mere imagination, strongly conceived in the brain; which, he says, usually come on a sudden, like lightning into a house."-Vol. I. of his works, page 385.] And some speak of a great sight they have of their wickedness, who really, when the matter comes to be well examined into and thoroughly weighted, are found to have little or no convictions of conscience. They tell of a dreadful hard heart, and how their heart lies like a stone; when truly they have none of those things in their minds or thoughts, wherein the hardness of men's heart does really consist. They tell of a dreadful load and sink of sin, a heap of black and loathsome filthiness within them; when, if the matter be carefully inquired into, they have not in view anything wherein the corruption of nature does truly consist, nor have they any thought of any particular thing wherein their hearts are sinfully defective, or fall short of what ought to be in them, or any exercises at all of corruption in them. And many think also they have great convictions of their actual sins, who truly have none. They tell how their sins are set in order before them, they see them stand encompassing them round in a row, with a dreadful, frightful appearance; when really they have not so much as one of the sins they gave been guilty of in the course of their lives, coming into view, that they are affected with the aggravations of. And if persons have had great terrors which really have been from the awakening and convincing influences of the Spirit of God, it doth not thence follow that their terrors must needs issue in true comfort. The unmortified corruption of the heart may quench the Spirit of God (after he has been striving) by leading men to presumptuous, and self-exalting hopes and joys, as well as otherwise. It is not every woman who is really in travail, that brings forth a real child; but it may be a monstrous production, without anything of the form or properties of human nature belonging to it. Pharaoh's chief baker after he had lain in the dungeon with Joseph, had a vision that raised his hopes and he was lifted out of the dungeon, as well as the chief butler; but it was to be hanged. But if comforts and joys do not only come after great terrors and awakenings, but there be an appearance of such preparatory convictions and humiliations, and brought about very distinctly, by such steps, and in such a method as has frequently been observable in true converts; this is no certain sign that the light and comforts which follow are true and saving. And for these following reasons:

First, As the devil can counterfeit all the saving operations and graces of the Spirit of God, so he can counterfeit those operations that are preparatory to grace. If Satan can counterfeit those effects of God's Spirit, which are special, divine and sanctifying, so that there shall be a very great resemblance, in all that can be observed by others; much more easily may he imitate those works of God's Spirit which are common, and which men, while they are yet his own children, are the subjects of. These works are in no wise so much above him as the other. There are no works of God that are so high and divine, and above the powers of nature, and out of reach of the power of all creatures, as those works of his Spirit, whereby he forms the creature in his own image, and

makes it to be a partaker of the divine nature. But if the devil can be the author of such resemblances of these as have been spoken of, without doubt he may of those that are of an infinitely inferior kind. And it is abundantly evident in fact, that there are false humiliations and false submissions, as well as false comforts.[The venerable Mr. Stoddard observes, "A man may say, that now he can justify God however he deals with him, and not be brought off from his own righteousness; and that some men do justify God from a partial conviction of the righteousness of their condemnation; conscience takes notice of their sinfulness, and tells them that they may be righteously damned; as Pharaoh, who justified God, Exodus 9:27. And they give some kind of consent to it but many times it does not continue; they have only a pang upon them, that usually dies away after a little time."-Guide to Christ, p. 71.] How far was Saul brought, though a very wicked man, and of a haughty spirit, when he (though a great king) was brought, in conviction of his sin, as it were to fall down, all in tears, weeping aloud, before David his own subject (and one that he had for a long time mortally hated, and openly treated as an enemy), and condemn himself before him, crying out, "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil!" And at another time, "I have sinned, I have played the fool, I have erred exceedingly," 1 Samuel 24:16-17, and 1 Samuel 26:21. And yet Saul seems then to have had very little of the influences of the Spirit of God, it being after God's Spirit had departed from him, and given him up, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And if this proud monarch, in a pang of affection, was brought to humble himself so low before a subject that he hated, and still continued an enemy to, there doubtless may be appearances of great conviction and humiliation in men, before God, while they yet remain enemies to him, and though they finally continue so. There is oftentimes in men who are terrified through fears of hell, a great appearance of their being brought off from their own righteousness, when they are not brought off from it in all ways, although they are in many ways that are more plain and visible. They have only exchanged some ways of trusting in their own righteousness, for others that are more secret and subtle. Oftentimes a great degree of discouragement, as to many things they used to depend upon, is taken for humiliation: that is called a submission to God, which is no absolute submission, but has some secret bargain in it, that it is hard to discover.

Secondly, If the operations and effects of the Spirit of God, in the convictions, and comforts of true converts, may be sophisticated, then the order of them may be imitated. If Satan can imitate the things themselves, he may easily put them one after another, in such a certain order. If the devil can make A, B, and C, it is as easy for him to put A first, and B next, and C next, as to range item in a contrary order. The nature of divine things is harder for the devil to imitate, than their order. He cannot exactly imitate divine operations in their nature, though his counterfeits may be very much like them in external appearance, but he can exactly imitate their order. When counterfeits are made, there is no divine power needful in order to the placing one of them first, and another last. And therefore no order or method of operations and experiences is any certain sign of their divinity. That only is to be trusted to, as a certain evidence of grace, which Satan cannot do, and which it is impossible should be brought to pass by any power short of divine.

Thirdly, We have no certain rule to determine how far God's own Spirit may go in those operations and convictions which in themselves are not spiritual and saving, and yet the person that is the subject of them never be converted, but fall short of salvation at last. There is no necessary connection in the nature of things, between anything that a natural man may experience while in a

state of nature, and the saving grace of God's Spirit. And if there be no connection in the nature of things, then there can be no known and certain connection at all, unless it be by divine revelation. But there is no revealed certain connection between a state of salvation, and anything that a natural man can be the subject of, before he believes in Christ. God has revealed no certain connection between salvation, and any qualifications in men, but only grace and its fruits. And therefore we do not find any legal convictions, or comforts, following these legal convictions, in any certain method or order, ever once mentioned in the Scripture, as certain signs of grace, or things peculiar to the saints; although we do find gracious operations and effects themselves, so mentioned, thousands of times. Which should be enough with Christians who are willing to have the word of God, rather than their own philosophy, and experiences and conjectures, as their sufficient and sure guide in things of this nature.

Fourthly, Experience does greatly confirm, that persons seeming to have convictions and comforts following one another in such a method and order, as is frequently observable in true converts, is no certain sign of grace.[Mr. Stoddard, who had much experience of things of this nature, long ago observed, that converted and unconverted men cannot be certainly distinguished by the account they give of their experience; the same relation of experiences being common to both. And that many persons have given a fair account of a work of conversion, that have carried well in the eye of the world for several years, but have not proved well at last.-Appeal to the Learned, p. 75, 76.] I appeal to all those ministers in this land, who have had much occasion of dealing with souls in the late extraordinary season, whether there have not been many who do not prove well, that have given a fair account of their experiences, and have seemed to be converted according to rule, i.e., with convictions and affections, succeeding distinctly and exactly, in that order and method, which has been ordinarily insisted on, as the order of the operations of the Spirit of God in conversion. And as a seeming to have this distinctness as to steps and method, is no certain sign that a person is converted; so a being without it, is no evidence that a person is not converted. For though it might be made evident to a demonstration, on Scripture principles, that a sinner cannot be brought heartily to receive Christ as his Savior, who is not convinced of his sin and misery, and of his own emptiness and helplessness, and his just desert of eternal condemnation; and that therefore such convictions must be some way implied in what is wrought in his soul; yet nothing proves it to be necessary, that all those things which are implied or presupposed in an act of faith in Christ, must be plainly and distinctly wrought in the soul, in so many successive and separate works of the Spirit, that shall be each one plain and manifest, in all who are truly converted. On the contrary (as Mr. Shepard observes), sometimes the change made in a saint, at first work, is like a confused chaos; so that the saints know not what to make of it. The manner of the Spirit's proceeding in them that are born of the Spirit, is very often exceeding mysterious and unsearchable; we, as it were, hear the sound of it, the effect of it is discernible; but no man can tell whence it came, or whither it went. And it is oftentimes as difficult to know the way of the Spirit in the new birth, as in the first birth; Ecclesiastes 11:5, "Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, or how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God, that worketh all." The ingenerating of a principle of grace in the soul, seems in Scripture to be compared to the conceiving of Christ in the womb, Galatians 4:19. And therefore the Church is called Christ's mother, Song of Solomon 3:11. And so is every particular believer, Matthew 12:49-50. And the conception of Christ in the womb of the blessed virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost, seems to be a designed resemblance of the conception of Christ in the soul of a

believer, by the power of the same Holy Ghost. And we know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow, either in the womb, or heart that conceives this holy child. The new creature may use that language in Psalms 139:14-15, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret." Concerning the generation of Christ, both in his person, and also in the hearts of his people, it may be said, as in Isaiah 53:8, "Who can declare his generation?" We know not the works of God, that worketh all. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing" (Proverbs 25:2), and to have "his path as it were in the mighty waters, that his footsteps may not be known;" and especially in the works of his Spirit on the hearts of men, which are the highest and chief of his works. And therefore it is said, Isaiah 40:13, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?" It is to be feared that some have gone too far towards directing the Spirit of the Lord, and marking out his footsteps for him, and limiting him to certain steps and methods. Experience plainly shows, that God's Spirit is unsearchable and untraceable, in some of the best of Christians, in the method of his operations, in their conversion. Nor does the Spirit of God proceed discernibly in the steps of a particular established scheme, one half so often as is imagined. A scheme of what is necessary, and according to a rule already received and established by common opinion, has a vast (though to many a very insensible) influence in forming persons' notions of the steps and method of their own experiences. I know very well what their way is; for I have had much opportunity to observe it. Very often, at first, their experiences appear like a confused chaos, as Mr. Shepard expresses it: but then those passages of their experience are picked out, that have most of the appearance of such particular steps that are insisted on; and these are dwelt upon in the thoughts, and these are told of from time to time, in the relation they give: these parts grow brighter and brighter in their view; and others, being neglected, grow more and more obscure: and what they have experienced is insensibly strained to bring all to an exact conformity to the scheme that is established. And it becomes natural for ministers, who have to deal with them, and direct them that insist upon distinctness and clearness of method, to do so too. But yet there has been so much to be seen of the operations of the Spirit of God, of late, that they who have had much to do with souls, and are not blinded with a seven-fold vail of prejudice, must know that the Spirit is so exceeding various in the manner of his operating, that in many cases it is impossible to trace him, or find out his way.

What we have principally to do with, in our inquiries into our own state, or directions we give to others, is the nature of the effect that God has brought to pass in the soul. As to the steps which the Spirit of God took to bring that effect to pass, we may leave them to him. We are often in Scripture expressly directed to try ourselves by the nature of the fruits of the Spirit; but nowhere by the Spirit's method of producing them.[Mr. Shepard, speaking of the soul's closing with Christ, says, "As a child cannot tell how his soul comes into it, nor it may be when; but afterwards it sees and feels that life; so that he were as bad as a beast, that should deny an immortal soul; so here."-Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part II. p. 171.

"If the man do not know the time of his conversion, or first closing with Christ; the minister may not draw any peremptory conclusion from thence, that he is not godly."-Stoddard's Guide to Christ, p. 83. "Do not think there is no compunction, or sense of sin, wrought in the soul, because you cannot so clearly discern and feel it, nor the time of the working, and first beginning of it. I have known many that have come with their complaints, that they were never humbled, they never felt it

so; yet there it hath been, and many times they have seen it, by the other spectacles, and blessed God for it.-Shepard's Sound Believer, page 38. The late impression in Boston.] Many do greatly err in their notions of a clear work of conversion; calling that a clear work, where the successive steps of influence, and method of experience are clear: whereas that indeed is the clearest work (not where the order of doing is clearest, but) where the spiritual and divine nature of the work done, and effect wrought, is most clear.

IX. It is no certain sign that the religious affections which persons have are such as have in them the nature of true religion, or that they have not, that they dispose persons to spend much time in religion, and to be zealously engaged in the external duties of worship. This has, very unreasonably of late, been looked upon as an argument against the religious affections which some have had, that they spend so much time in reading, praying, singing, hearing sermons, and the like. It is plain from the Scripture, that it is the tendency of true grace to cause persons to delight in such religious exercises. True grace had this effect on Anna the prophetess: Luke 2:27, "She departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." And grace had this effect upon the primitive Christians in Jerusalem: Acts 2:46-47, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." Grace made Daniel delight in the duty of prayer, and solemnly to attend it three times a day, as it also did David: Psalms 55:17, "Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray." Grace makes the saints delight in singing praises to God: Psalms 135:3, "Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant." And Psalms 147:1, "Praise ye the Lord; for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely." It also causes them to delight to hear the word of God preached: it makes the gospel a joyful sound to them, Psalms 89:15, and makes the feet of those who publish these good tidings to be beautiful: Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" &c. It makes them love God's public worship: Psalms 26:8, "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth." And Psalms 27:4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalms 84:1-2, &c. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.-Yea, the sparrow hath found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Blessed is the man in whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca-go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Zion appeareth before God." Psalms 84:10, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand."

01.05. PART II(c)

This is the nature of true grace. But yet, on the other hand, persons' being disposed to abound and to be zealously engaged in the external exercises of religion, and to spend much time in them, is no sure evidence of grace; because such a disposition is found in many that have no grace. So it was with the Israelites of old, whose services were abominable to God; they attended the "new moons, and Sabbaths, and calling of assemblies, and spread forth their hands, and made many prayers," Isaiah 1:12-15. So it was with the Pharisees; they "made long prayers, and fasted twice a week." False religion may cause persons to be loud and earnest in prayer: Isaiah 58:4, "Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to cause your voice to be heard on high." That religion which is not spiritual and saving, may cause men to delight in religious duties and ordinances: Isaiah 58:2, "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice: they take delight in approaching to God." It may cause them to take delight in hearing the word of God preached, as it was with Ezekiel's hearers: Ezekiel 33:31-32, "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." So it was with Herod; he heard John the Baptist gladly, Mark 6:20. So it was with others of his hearers, "for a season they rejoiced in his light," John 5:35. So the stony ground hearers heard the word with joy.

Experience shows, that persons, from false religion, may be inclined to be exceeding abundant in the external exercises of religion; yea, to give themselves up to them, and devote almost their whole time to them. Formerly a sort of people were very numerous in the Romish church, called recluses, who forsook the world, and utterly abandoned the society of mankind, and shut themselves up close in a narrow cell, with a vow never to stir out of it, nor to see the face of any of mankind any more (unless that they might be visited in case of sickness), to spend all their days in the exercise of devotion and converse with God. There were also in old time, great multitudes called Hermits and Anchorites, that left the world to spend all their days in lonesome deserts, to give themselves up to religious contemplations and exercises of devotion; some sorts of them having no dwellings, but the caves and vaults of the mountains, and no food, but the spontaneous productions of the earth. I once lived, for many months, next door to a Jew (the houses adjoining one to another), and had much opportunity daily to observe him; who appeared to me the devoutest person that I ever saw in my life; great part of his time being spent in acts of devotion, at his eastern window, which opened next to mine, seeming to be most earnestly engaged, not only in the daytime, but sometimes whole nights.

X. Nothing can be certainly known of the nature of religious affections by this, that they much dispose persons with their mouths to praise and glorify God. This indeed is implied in what has been just now observed, of abounding and spending much time in the external exercises of religion, and was also hinted before; but because many seem to look upon it as a bright evidence

of gracious affection, when persons appear greatly disposed to praise and magnify God, to have their mouths full of his praises, and affectionately to be calling on others to praise and extol him, I thought it deserved a more particular consideration. No Christian will make it an argument against a person, that he seems to have such a disposition. Nor can it reasonably be looked upon as an evidence for a person, if those things that have been already observed and proved, be duly considered, viz., that persons, without grace, may have high affections towards God and Christ, and that their affections, being strong, may fill their mouths and incline them to speak much, and very earnestly, about the things they are affected with, and that there may be counterfeits of all kinds of gracious affection. But it will appear more evidently and directly, that this is no certain sign of grace, if we consider what instances the Scripture gives us of it in those that were graceless. We often have an account of this, in the multitude that were present when Christ preached and wrought miracles; Mark 2:12, "And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion." So Matthew 9:8, and Luke 5:26. Also Matthew 15:31, "Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel." So we are told, that on occasion of Christ's raising the son of the widow of Nain, Luke 7:16, "There came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people." So we read of their glorifying Christ, or speaking exceeding highly of him: Luke 4:15, "And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." And how did they praise him, with loud voices, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David; hosanna in the highest; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," a little before he was crucified! And after Christ's ascension, when the apostles had healed the impotent man, we are told, that all men glorified God for that which was done, Acts 4:21. When the Gentiles in Antioch of Pisidia, heard from Paul and Barnabas, that God would reject the Jews, and take the Gentiles to be his people in their room, they were affected with the goodness of God to the Gentiles, "and glorified the word of the Lord:" but all that did so were not true believers; but only a certain elect number of them; as is intimated in the account we have of it, Acts 13:48 : "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." So of old the children of Israel at the Red Sea, "sang God's praise; but soon forgat his works." And the Jews in Ezekiel's time, "with their mouth showed much love, while their heart went after their covetousness." And it is foretold of false professors and real enemies of religion, that they should show a forwardness to glorify God: Isaiah 66:5, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified."

It is no certain sign that a person is graciously affected, if, in the midst of his hopes and comforts, he is greatly affected with God's unmerited mercy to him that is so unworthy, and seems greatly to extol and magnify free grace. Those that yet remain with unmortified pride and enmity against God, may, when they imagine that they have received extraordinary kindness from God, cry out of their unworthiness, and magnify God's undeserved goodness to them, from no other conviction of their ill deservings, and from no higher principle than Saul had, who, while he yet remained with unsubdued pride and enmity against David, was brought, though a king, to acknowledge his unworthiness, and cry out, "I have played the fool, I have erred exceedingly," and with great affection and admiration, to magnify and extol David's unmerited and unexampled kindness to him, 1 Samuel 25:16-19, and 1 Samuel 26:21, and from no higher principle than that from whence

Nebuchadnezzar was affected with God’s dispensations, that he saw and was the subject of, and praises, extols and honors the King of heaven; and both he, and Darius, in their high affections, call upon all nations to praise God, Daniel 3:28-30, and Daniel 4:1-3, Daniel 4:34-35, Daniel 4:37, and Daniel 6:25-27.

XI. It is no sign that affections are right, or that they are wrong, that they make persons that have them exceeding confident that what they experience is divine, and that they are in a good estate.

It is an argument with some, against persons, that they are deluded if they pretend to be assured of their good estate, and to be carried beyond all doubting of the favor of God; supposing that there is no such thing to be expected in the church of God, as a full and absolute assurance of hope; unless it be in some very extraordinary circumstances; as in the case of martyrdom; contrary to the doctrine of Protestants, which has been maintained by their most celebrated writers against the Papists; and contrary to the plainest Scripture evidence. It is manifest, that it was a common thing for the saints that we have a history or particular account of in Scripture, to be assured. God, in the plainest and most positive manner, revealed and testified his special favor to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Daniel, and others. Job often speaks of his sincerity and uprightness with the greatest imaginable confidence and assurance, often calling God to witness to it; and says plainly, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall see him for myself, and not another," Job 19:25, &c. David, throughout the book of Psalms, almost everywhere speaks without any hesitancy, and in the most positive manner, of God as his God glorying in him as his portion and heritage, his rock and confidence, his shield; salvation, and high tower, and the like. Hezekiah appeals to God, as one that knew that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, 2 Kings 20:3. Jesus Christ, in his dying discourse with his eleven disciples, in John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, and John 16:1-33 (which was as it were Christ’s last will and testament to his disciples, and to his whole church), often declares his special and everlasting love to them in the plainest and most positive terms and promises them a future participation with him in his glory, in the most absolute manner; and tells them at the same time that he does so, to the end that their joy might be full: John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." See also at the conclusion of his whole discourse, chap. John 16:33 : "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the would ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Christ was not afraid of speaking too plainly and positively to them; he did not desire to hold them in the least suspense. And he concluded that last discourse of his with a prayer in their presence, wherein he speaks positively to his Father of those eleven disciples, as having all of them savingly know him, and believed in him, and received and kept his word; and that they were not of the world; and that for their sakes he sanctified himself; and that his will was, that they should be with him in his glory; and tells his Father, that he spake those things in his prayer, to the end, that his joy might be fulfilled in them, John 16:13. By these things it is evident, that it is agreeable to Christ’s designs, and the contrived ordering and disposition Christ makes of things in his church, that there should be sufficient and abundant provision made, that his saints might have full assurance of their future glory. The Apostle Paul, through all his epistles speaks in an assured strain; ever speaking positively of his special relation to Christ, his Lord, and Master, and Redeemer, and his interest in, and expectation of the future reward. It would be endless to take notice of all places that might be enumerated; I shall mention but three or four: Galatians 2:20, "Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in

the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" Php 1:21, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;" 2 Timothy 1:12, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day;" 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day." And the nature of the covenant of grace, and God's declared ends in the appointment and constitution of things in that covenant, do plainly show it to be God's design to make ample provision for the saints having an assured hope of eternal life, while living here upon earth. For so are all things ordered and contrived in that covenant, that everything might be made sure on God's part. "The covenant is ordered in all things and sure:" the promises are most full, and very often repeated, and various ways exhibited; and there are many witnesses, and many seals; and God has confirmed his promises with an oath. And God's declared design in all this, is, that the heirs of the promises might have an undoubting hope and full joy, in an assurance of their future glory. Hebrews 6:17-18, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." But all this would be in vain, to any such purpose, as the saints' strong consolation, and hope of their obtaining future glory, if their interest in those sure promises in ordinary cases was not ascertainable. For God's promises and oaths, let them be as sure as they will, cannot give strong hope and comfort to any particular person, any further than he can know that those promises are made to him. And in vain is provision made in Jesus Christ, that believers might be perfect as pertaining to the conscience, as is signified, Hebrews 9:9, if assurance of freedom from the guilt of sin is not attainable.

It further appears that assurance is not only attainable in some very extraordinary cases, but that all Christians are directed to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, and are told how they may do it, 2 Peter 1:5-8. And it is spoken of as a thing very unbecoming Christians, and an argument of something very blamable in them, not to know whether Christ be in them or no: 2 Corinthians 13:5, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And it is implied that it is an argument of a very blamable negligence in Christians, if they practice Christianity after such a manner as to remain uncertain of the reward, in 1 Corinthians 9:26 : "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly." And to add no more, it is manifest, that Christians' knowing their interest in the saving benefits of Christianity is a thing ordinarily attainable, because the apostle tells us by what means Christians (and not only the apostles and martyrs) were wont to know this: 1 Corinthians 2:12, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." And 1 John 2:3, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And 1 John 2:5, "Hereby know we that we are in him." 1 John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" 1 John 3:19, "Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him;" 1 John 3:24, "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." So 1 John 4:13, and 1 John 5:2, and 1 John 5:19.

Therefore it must needs be very unreasonable to determine, that persons are hypocrites, and their affections wrong, because they seem to be out of doubt of their own salvation, and the affections

they are the subjects of seem to banish all fears of hell. On the other hand, it is no sufficient reason to determine that men are saints, and their affections gracious, because the affections they have are attended with an exceeding confidence that their state is good, and their affections divine.["O professor, look carefully to your foundation: 'Be not high minded, but fear.' You have, it may be, done and suffered many things in and for religion; you have excellent gifts and sweet comforts; a warm zeal for God, and high confidence of your integrity: all this may be right, for aught that I, or (it may be) you know: but yet, it is possible it may be false. You have sometimes judged yourselves, and pronounced yourselves upright; but remember your final sentence is not yet pronounced by your Judge. And what if God weigh you over again, in his more equal balance, and should say, Mene Tekel, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting?' What a confounded man wilt thou be, under such a sentence! Quae splendent in conspectu hominis, sordent in conspectu judicis; things that are highly esteemed of men, are an abomination in the sight of God: He seeth not as man seeth. Thy heart may be false, and thou not know it: yea, it may be false, and thou strongly confident of its integrity."-Flavel's Touchstone of Sincerity, chap. 2. Sect. 5.

"Some hypocrites are a great deal more confident than many saints"-Stoddard's Discourse on the Way to know Sincerity and Hypocrisy, p. 128.] Nothing can be certainly argued from their confidence, how great and strong soever it seems to be. If we see a man that boldly calls God his Father, and commonly speaks in the most bold, familiar, and appropriating language in prayer, "My Father, my dear Redeemer, my sweet Savior, my Beloved," and the like; and it is a common thing for him to use the most confident expressions before men, about the goodness of his state; such as, I know certainly that God is my Father; I know so surely as there is a God in heaven, that he is my God; I know I shall go to heaven, as well as if I were there; I know that God is now manifesting himself to my soul, and is now smiling upon me;" and seems to have done forever with any inquiry or examination into his state, as a thing sufficiently known, and out of doubt, and to contemn all that so much as intimate or suggest that there is some reason to doubt or fear whether all is right; such things are no signs at all that it is indeed so as he is confident it is.["Doth the work of faith, in some believers, bear upon is top branches the full ripe fruits of a blessed assurance? Lo, what strong confidence, and high built persuasions, of an interest in God, have sometimes been found in unsanctified ones! Yea, so strong may this false assurance be, that they dare boldly venture to go to the judgment seat of God, and there defend it. Doth the Spirit of God fill the heart of the assured believer with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, giving him, through faith, a prelibation or foretaste of heaven itself, in those first fruits of it? How near to this comes what the Apostle supposes may be found in apostates!"-Flavel's Husbandry Spiritualized, chap. 12.] Such an overbearing, high-handed, and violent sort of confidence as this, so affecting to declare itself with a most glaring show in the sight of men, which is to be seen in many, has not the countenance of a true Christian assurance: it savors more of the spirit of the Pharisees, who never doubted but that they were saints, and the most eminent of saints, and were bold to go to God, and come up near to him, and lift up their eyes, and thank him for the great distinction he had made between them and other men; and when Christ intimated that they were blind and graceless, despised the suggestion: John 9:40, "And some of the Pharisees which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?" If they had more of the spirit of the publican, with their confidence, who, in a sense of his exceeding unworthiness, stood afar off, and durst not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote on his breast, and cried out of himself as a sinner,

their confidence would have more of the aspect of the confidence of one that humbly trusts and hopes in Christ, and has no confidence in himself.

If we do but consider what the hearts of natural men are, what principles they are under the dominion of, what blindness and deceit, what self-flattery, self-exaltation, and self-confidence reign there, we need not at all wonder that their high opinion of themselves, and confidence of their happy circumstances, be as high and strong as mountains, and as violent as a tempest, when once conscience is blinded, and convictions killed, with false high affections, and those forementioned principles let loose, fed up and prompted by false joys and comforts, excited by some pleasing imaginations, impressed by Satan, transforming himself into an angel of light. When once a hypocrite is thus established in a false hope, he has not those things to cause him to call his hope in question, that oftentimes are the occasion of the doubting of true saints; as, first, he has not that cautious spirit, that great sense of the vast importance of a sure foundation, and that dread of being deceived. The comforts of the true saints increase awakening and caution, and a lively sense how great a thing it is to appear before an infinitely holy, just and omniscient Judge. But false comforts put an end to these things and dreadfully stupify the mind. Secondly, The hypocrite has not the knowledge of his own blindness, and the deceitfulness of his own heart, and that mean opinion of his own understanding that the true saint has. Those that are deluded with false discoveries and affections, are evermore highly conceited of their light and understanding. Thirdly, The devil does not assault the hope of the hypocrite, as he does the hope of a true saint. The devil is a great enemy to a true Christian hope, not only because it tends greatly to the comfort of him that hath it, but also because it is a thing of a holy, heavenly nature, greatly tending to promote and cherish grace in the heart, and a great incentive to strictness and diligence in the Christian life. But he is no enemy to the hope of a hypocrite, which above all things establishes his interest in him that has it. A hypocrite may retain his hope without opposition, as long as he lives, the devil never disturbing it, nor attempting to disturb it. But there is perhaps no true Christian but what has his hope assaulted by him. Satan assaulted Christ himself upon this, whether he were the Son of God or no: and the servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord; it is enough for the disciple, that is most privileged in this world, to be as his Master. Fourthly, He who has a false hope, has not that sight of his own corruptions, which the saint has. A true Christian has ten times so much to do with his heart and its corruptions, as a hypocrite: and the sins of his heart and practice, appear to him in their blackness; they look dreadful; and it often appears a very mysterious thing, that any grace can be consistent with such corruption, or should be in such a heart. But a false hope hides corruption, covers it all over, and the hypocrite looks clean and bright in his own eyes.

There are two sorts of hypocrites: one that are deceived with their outward morality and external religion; many of whom are professed Arminians, in the doctrine of justification: and the other, are those that are deceived with false discoveries and elevations; who often cry down works, and men’s own righteousness, and talk much of free grace; but at the same time make a righteousness of their discoveries and of their humiliation, and exalt themselves to heaven with them. These two kinds of hypocrites, Mr. Shepard, in his exposition of the Parable of the Ten Virgins, distinguishes by the name of legal and evangelical hypocrites; and often speaks of the latter as the worst. And it is evident that the latter are commonly by far the most confident in their hope, and with the most difficulty brought of from it: I have scarcely known the instance of such a one, in my life, that has

been undeceived. The chief grounds of the confidence of many of them, are the very same kind of impulses and supposed revelations (sometimes with texts of Scripture, and sometimes without) that so many of late have had concerning future events; calling these impulses about their good estate, the witness of the Spirit; entirely misunderstanding the nature of the witness of the Spirit, as I shall show hereafter. Those that have had visions and impulses about other things, it has generally been to reveal such things as they are desirous and fond of: and no wonder that persons who give heed to such things, have the same sort of visions or impressions about their own eternal salvation, to reveal to them that their sins are forgiven them, that their names are written in the book of life, that they are in high favor with God, &c., and especially when they earnestly seek, expect, and wait for evidence of their election and salvation this way, as the surest and most glorious evidence of it. Neither is it any wonder, that when they have such a supposed revelation of their good estate, it raises in them the highest degree of confidence of it. It is found by abundant experience, that those who are led away by impulses and imagined revelations, are extremely confident: they suppose that the great Jehovah has declared these and those things to them; and having his immediate testimony, a strong confidence is the highest virtue. Hence they are bold to say, I know this or that-I know certainly-I am as sure as that I have a being, and the like; and they despise all argument and inquiry in the case. And above all things else, it is easy to be accounted for, that impressions and impulses about that which is so pleasing, so suiting their self-love and pride, as their being the dear children of God, distinguished from most in the world in his favor, should make them strongly confident; especially when with their impulses and revelations they have high affections, which they take to be the most eminent exercises of grace. I have known of several persons, that have had a fond desire of something of a temporal nature, through a violent passion that has possessed them; and they have been earnestly pursuing the thing they have desired should come to pass, and have met with great difficulty and many discouragements in it, but at last have had an impression, or supposed revelation, that they should obtain what they sought; and they have looked upon it as a sure promise from the Most High, which has made them most ridiculously confident, against all manner of reason to convince them to the contrary, and all events working against them. And there is nothing hinders, but that persons who are seeking their salvation, may be deceived by the like delusive impressions, and be made confident of that, the same way. The confidence of many of this sort of hypocrites, that Mr. Shepard calls evangelical hypocrites, is like the confidence of some mad men, who think they are kings; they will maintain it against all manner of reason and evidence. And in one sense, it is much more immovable than a truly gracious assurance; a true assurance is not upheld, but by the soul’s being kept in a holy frame, and Grace maintained in lively exercise. If the actings of grace do much decay in the Christian, and he falls into a lifeless frame, he loses his assurance: but this kind of confidence of hypocrites will not be shaken by sin; they (at least some of them) will maintain their boldness in their hope, in the most corrupt frames and wicked ways; which is a sure evidence of their delusion.[Mr. Shepard speaks of it, as a "presumptuous peace, that is not interrupted and broke by evil works." And says, that the "spirit will sigh, and not sing in that bosom, whence corrupt dispositions and passions break out." And that "though men in such frames may seem to maintain the consolation of the Spirit, and not suspect their hypocrisy, under pretense of trusting the Lord’s mercy; yet they cannot avoid the condemnation of the world"; Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 139.

Dr. Ames speaks of it as a thing, by which the peace of a wicked man may be distinguished from the peace a godly man, "that the peace of a wicked man continues, whether he performs the duties of piety and righteousness or no; provided those crimes are avoided that appear horrid to nature itself.' Cases of Conscience, Lib. III. Chap. vii.] And here I cannot but observe, that there are certain doctrines often preached to the people, which need to be delivered with more caution and explanation than they frequently are; for, as they are by many understood, they tend greatly to establish this delusion and false confidence of hypocrites. The doctrines I speak of are those of "Christians living by faith, not by sight; their giving glory to God, by trusting him in the dark; living upon Christ, and not upon experiences; not making their good frames the foundation of their faith:" which are excellent and important doctrines indeed, rightly understood, but corrupt and destructive, as many understand them. The Scripture speaks of living or walking by faith, and not by sight, in no other way than these, viz., a being governed by a respect to eternal things, that are the objects of faith, and are not seen, and not by a respect to temporal things, which are seen; and believing things revealed, that we never saw with bodily eyes; and also living by faith in the promise of future things, without yet seeing or enjoying the things promised, or knowing the way how they can be fulfilled. This will be easily evident to anyone who looks over the Scriptures, which speak of faith in opposition to sight; as 2 Corinthians 4:18, and 2 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:8, Hebrews 11:13, Hebrews 11:17, Hebrews 11:27, Hebrews 11:29, Romans 8:24, John 20:29. But this doctrine, as it is understood by many, is, that Christians ought firmly to believe and trust in Christ, without spiritual sight or light, and although they are in a dark dead frame, and, for the present, have no spiritual experiences or discoveries. And it is truly the duty of those who are thus in darkness, to come out of darkness into light and believe. But that they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without spiritual light or sight, is an anti-scriptural and absurd doctrine. The Scripture is ignorant of any such faith in Christ of the operation of God, that is not founded in a spiritual sight of Christ. That believing on Christ, which accompanies a title to everlasting life, is a "seeing the Son, and believing on him," John 6:40 True faith in Christ is never exercised, any further than persons "behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," 2 Corinthians 3:18, and 2 Corinthians 4:6. They into whose minds "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, does not shine, believe not," 2 Corinthians 4:5. That faith, which is without spiritual light, is not the faith of the children of the light, and of the day; but the presumption of the children of darkness. And therefore to press and urge them to believe, without any spiritual light or sight, tends greatly to help forward the delusions of the prince of darkness. Men not only cannot exercise faith without some spiritual light, but they can exercise faith only just in such proportion as they have spiritual light. Men will trust in God no further than they know him; and they cannot be in the exercise of faith in him one ace further than they have a sight of his fullness and faithfulness in exercise. Nor can they have the exercise of trust in God, any further than they are in a gracious frame. They that are in a dead carnal frame, doubtless ought to trust in God; because that would be the same thing as coming out of their bad frame, and turning to God; but to exhort men confidently to trust in God, and so hold up their hope and peace, though they are not in a gracious frame, and continue still to be so, is the same thing in effect, as to exhort them confidentially to trust in God, but not with a gracious trust: and what is that but a wicked presumption? It is just as impossible for men to have a strong or lively trust in God, when they have no lively exercises of grace, or sensible Christian experiences, as it is for them to be in the lively exercises of grace,

without the exercises of grace.

It is true, that it is the duty of God's people to trust in him when in darkness, and though they remain still in darkness, in that sense, that they ought to trust in God when the aspects of his providence are dark, and look as though God had forsaken them, and did not hear their prayers, and many clouds gather, and many enemies surround them, with a formidable aspect, threatening to swallow them up, and all events of providence seem to be against them, all circumstances seem to render the promises of God difficult to be fulfilled, and God must be trusted out of sight, i.e., when we cannot see which way it is possible for him to fulfill his word; everything but God's mere word makes it look unlikely, so that if persons believe, they must hope against hope. Thus the ancient Patriarchs, and Job, and the Psalmist, and Jeremiah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, and the Apostle Paul, gave glory to God by trusting in God in darkness. And we have many instances of such a glorious victorious faith in the eleventh of Hebrews. But how different a thing is this, from trusting in God, without spiritual sight, and being at the same time in a dead and carnal frame!

There is also such a thing as spiritual light's being let into the soul in one way, when it is not in another; and so there is such a thing as the saints trusting in God, and also knowing their good estate, when they are destitute of some kinds of experience. As for instance, they may have clear views of God's sufficiency and faithfulness, and so confidently trust in him, and know that they are his children; and at the same time, not have those clear and sweet ideas of his love as at other times: for it was thus with Christ himself in his last passion. And they may have views of much of God's sovereignty, holiness, and all sufficiency, enabling them quietly to submit to him, and exercise a sweet and most encouraging hope in God's fullness, when they are not satisfied of their own good estate. But how different things are these, from confidently trusting in God, without spiritual light or experience!

Those that thus insist on persons living by faith, when they have no experience, and are in very bad frames, are also very absurd in their notions of faith. What they mean by faith is, believing that they are in a good estate. Hence they count it a dreadful sin for them to doubt of their state, whatever frames they are in, and whatever wicked things they do, because it is the great and heinous sin of unbelief; and he is the best man, and puts most honor upon God, that maintains his hope of his good estate the most confidently and immovably, when he has the least light or experience; that is to say, when he is in the worst and most wicked frame and way; because, forsooth, that is a sign that he is strong in faith, giving glory to God, and against hope believes in hope. But what Bible do they learn this notion of faith out of, that it is a man's confidently believing that he is in a good estate?[Men do not know that they are godly by believing that they are godly. We know many things by faith, Hebrews 11:3. 'By faith we understand that the worlds were made by the word of God.' Faith is the evidence of things not seen, Hebrews 11:1. Thus men know the Trinity of persons of the Godhead; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that he that believes in him will have eternal life; the resurrection of the dead. And if God should tell a saint that he hath grace, he might know it by believing the word of God. But it is not this way, that godly men do know they have grace. It is not revealed in the word, and the Spirit of God doth not testify it to particular persons.' Stoddard's Nature of Saving Conversion, p. 83, 84.] If this be faith, the Pharisees had faith in an eminent degree; some of which, Christ teaches, committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. The Scripture represents faith as that by which men are brought into a

good estate; and therefore it cannot be the same thing as believing that they are already in a good estate. To suppose that faith consists in persons believing that they are in a good estate, is in effect the same thing, as to suppose that faith consists in a person's believing that he has faith, or believing that he believes.

Indeed persons doubting of their good estate, may in several respects arise from unbelief. It may be from unbelief, or because they have so little faith that they have so little evidence of their good estate: if they had more experience of the actings of faith, and so more experience of the exercise of grace, they would have clearer evidence that their state was good; and so their doubts would be removed. And then their doubting of their state may be from unbelief thus, when, though there be many things that are good evidences of a work of grace in them, yet they doubt very much whether they are really in a state of favor with God, because it is they, those that are so unworthy, and have done so much to provoke God to anger against them. Their doubts in such a case arise from unbelief, as they arise from want of a sufficient sense of, and reliance on, the infinite riches of God's grace, and the sufficiency of Christ for the chief of sinners. They may also be from unbelief, when they doubt of their state, because of the mystery of God's dealings with them; they are not able to reconcile such dispensations with God's favor to them; or when they doubt whether they have any interest in the promises, because the promises from the aspect of providence appear so unlikely to be fulfilled; the difficulties that are in the way are so many and great. Such doubting arises from want of dependence upon God's almighty power, and his knowledge and wisdom, as infinitely above theirs. But yet, in such persons, their unbelief, and their doubting of their state, are not the same thing; though one arises from the other.

Persons may be greatly to blame for doubting of their state, on such grounds as these last mentioned; and they may be to blame, that they have no more grace, and no more of the present exercises and experiences of it, to be an evidence to them of the goodness of their state: men are doubtless to blame for being in a dead, carnal frame; but when they are in such a frame, and have no sensible experience of the exercises of grace, but on the contrary, are much under the prevalence of lusts and an unchristian spirit, they are not to blame for doubting their state. It is as impossible, in the nature of things, that a holy and Christian hope be kept alive, in its clearness and strength, in such circumstances, as it is to keep the light in the room, when the candle is put out; or to maintain the bright sunshine in the air, when the sun is gone down. Distant experiences, when darkened by present prevailing lust and corruption, never keep alive a gracious confidence and assurance; but that sickens and decays upon it, as necessarily as a little child by repeated blows on the head with a hammer. Nor is it at all to be lamented, that persons doubt of their state in such circumstances: but, on the contrary, it is desirable and every way best that they should. It is agreeable to that wise and merciful constitution of things, which God hath established, that it should be so. For so hath God contrived and constituted things, in his dispensations towards his own people, that when their love decays, and the exercises of it fail, or become weak, fear should arise; for then they need it to restrain them from sin, and to excite them to care for the good of their souls, and so to stir them up to watchfulness and diligence in religion: but God hath so ordered, that when love rises, and is in vigorous exercise, then fear should vanish, and be driven away; for then they need it not, having a higher and more excellent principle in exercise, to restrain them from sin, and stir them up to their duty. There are no other principles, which human nature is under the influence of, that will ever make men conscientious, but one of these two, fear or love; and

therefore, if one of these should not prevail as the other decays, God’s people, when fallen into dead and carnal frames, when love is asleep, would be lamentably exposed indeed: and therefore God has wisely ordained, that these two opposite principles of love and fear should rise and fall, like the two opposite scales of a balance; when one rises the other sinks. As light and darkness necessarily and unavoidably succeed each other; if light prevails, so much does darkness cease, and no more; and if light decays, so much does darkness prevail; so it is in the heart of a child of God: if divine love decays and falls asleep, and lust prevails, the light and joy of hope go out, and dark fear and doubting arises; and if, on the contrary, divine love prevails and comes into lively exercise, this brings in the brightness of hope, and drives away black lust, and fear with it. Love is the spirit of adoption, or the childlike principle; if that slumbers, men fall under fear, which is the spirit of bondage, or the servile principle; and so on the contrary. And if it be so, that love, or the spirit of adoption, be carried to a great height, it quite drives away all fear, and gives full assurance; agreeable to that of the apostle, 1 John 4:18, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." These two opposite principles of lust and holy love, bring hope and fear into the hearts of God’s children, in proportion as they prevail; that is, when left to their own natural influence, without something adventitious, or accidental intervening; as the distemper of melancholy, doctrinal ignorance, prejudices of education, wrong instruction, false principles, peculiar temptations, &c.

Fear is cast out by the Spirit of God, no other way than by the prevailing of love; nor is it ever maintained by his Spirit but when love is asleep. At such a time, in vain is all the saint’s self-examinations, and poring on past experience, in order to establish his peace, and get assurance. For it is contrary to the nature of things, as God hath constituted them, that he should have assurance at such a time.

They therefore do directly thwart God’s wise and gracious constitution of things, who exhort others to be confident in their hope, when in dead frames; under a notion of "living by faith, and not by sight, and trusting God in the dark, and living upon Christ, and not upon experiences;" and warn them not to doubt of their good estate, lest they should be guilty of the dreadful sin of unbelief. And it has a direct tendency to establish the most presumptuous hypocrites, and to prevent their ever calling their state in question, how much soever wickedness rages, and reigns in their hearts, and prevails in their lives; under a notion of honoring God, by hoping against hope, and confidently trusting in God, when things look very dark. And doubtless vast has been the mischief that has been done this way.

Persons cannot be said to forsake Christ, and live on their experiences of the exercises of grace, merely because they take them and use them as evidences of grace; for there are no other evidences that they can or ought to take. But then may persons be said to live upon their experiences, when they make a righteousness of them, and instead of keeping their eye on God’s glory and Christ’s excellency, they turn their eyes off these objects without them, on to themselves, to entertain their minds, by viewing their own attainments, and high experiences, and the great things they have met with, and are bright and beautiful in their own eyes, and are rich and increased with goods in their own apprehensions, and think that God has as admiring an esteem of them, on the same account, as they have of themselves: this is living on experiences, and not on Christ; and is more abominable in the sight of God, than the gross immoralities of those who make no pretenses to religion. But this is a far different thing from a mere improving experiences

as evidences of an interest in a glorious Redeemer. But to return from this digression, I would mention one thing more under the general head that I am upon.

XII. Nothing can be certainly concluded concerning the nature of religious affections, that any are the subjects of, from this, that the outward manifestations of them, and the relation persons give of them, are very affecting and pleasing to the truly godly, and such as greatly gain their charity, and win their hearts. The true saints have not such a spirit of discerning that they can certainly determine who are godly, and who are not. For though they know experimentally what true religion is, in the internal exercises of it; yet these are what they can neither feel, nor see, in the heart of another.[Men may have the knowledge of their own conversion: the knowledge that other men have of it is uncertain, because no man can look into the heart of another and see the workings of grace there." Stoddard's Nature of Saving Conversion, chap. 15 at the beginning.] There is nothing in others, that comes within their view, but outward manifestations and appearances; but the Scripture plainly intimates, that this way of judging what is in men by outward appearances, is at best uncertain, and liable to deceit: 1 Samuel 16:7, "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Isaiah 11:3, "He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears."[Mr. Stoddard observes, that "all visible signs are common to converted and unconverted men; and a relation of experiences, among the rest." Appeal to the Learned, p. 75.

"O how hard it is for the eye of man to discern betwixt chaff and wheat! And how many upright hearts are now censured, whom God will clear! How many false hearts are now approved whom God will condemn! Men ordinarily have no convictive proofs, but only probable symptoms; which at most beget but a conjectural knowledge of another's state. And they that shall peremptorily judge either way, may possibly wrong the generation of the upright, or on the other side, absolve and justify the wicked. And truly, considering what has been said, it is no wonder that dangerous mistakes are so frequently made in this matter." Flavel's Husbandry Spiritualized, chap. 12.] They commonly are but poor judges, and dangerous counselors in soul cases, who are quick and peremptory in determining persons' states, vaunting themselves in their extraordinary faculty of discerning and distinguishing, in these great affairs; as though all was open and clear to them. They betray one of these three things: either that they have had but little experience; or are persons of a weak judgment; or that they have a great degree of pride and self-confidence, and so ignorance of themselves. Wise and experienced men will proceed with great caution in such an affair. When there are many probable appearances of piety in others, it is the duty of the saints to receive them cordially into their charity, and to love them and rejoice in them, as their brethren in Christ Jesus. But yet the best of men may be, when the appearances seem to them exceeding fair and bright, as entirely to gain their charity, and conquer their hearts. It has been common thing in the church of God, for such bright professors, that are received as eminent saints, among the saints, to fall away and come to nothing.["Be not offended, if you see great cedars fall, stars fall from heaven, great professors die and decay: do not think they be all such: do not think that the elect shall fall. Truly, some are such that when they fall, one would think a man truly sanctified might fall away, as the Arminians think: 1 John 2:19, They were not of us. I speak this, because the Lord is shaking; and I look for great apostasies: for God is trying all his friends, through all the Christian world. In Germany what profession was there! Who would have thought it? The Lord, who delights to manifest that openly, which was hid secretly, ends a sword and they fall."

Shepard’s Parab. Part 1. p. 118, 119.

"The saints may approve thee and God condemn thee. Revelation 3:1, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Men may say, There is a true Nathanael, and God may say, There is a self-cozening Pharisee. Reader, thou hast heard of Judas and Demas, of Ananias and Sapphira, of Hymeneus and Philetus, once renowned and famous professors, and thou hast heard how they proved at last." Flavel’s Touchstone of Sincerity, Chap. 2. Sect. 5.] And this we need not wonder at, if we consider the things that have been already observed; what things it has been shown may appear in men who are altogether graceless. Nothing hinders but that all these things may meet together in men, and yet they be without a spark of grace in their hearts. They may have religious affections of many kinds together; they may have a sort of affection towards God, that bears a great resemblance of dear love to him; and so a kind of love to the brethren, and great appearances of admiration of God’s perfections and works, and sorrow for sin, and reverence, submission, self-abasement, gratitude, joy, religious longings, and zeal for religion and the good of souls. And these affections may come after great awakenings and convictions of conscience; and there may be great appearances of a work of humiliation: and counterfeit love and joy, and other affections may seem to follow these, and one another, just in the same order that is commonly observable in the holy affections of true converts. And these religious affections may be carried to a great height, and may cause abundance of tears, yea, may overcome the nature of those who are the subjects of them, and may make them affectionate, and fervent, and fluent, in speaking of the things of God, and dispose them to be abundant in it; and may be attended with many sweet texts of Scripture, and precious promises, brought with great impression on their minds; and may dispose them with their mouths to praise and glorify God, in a very ardent manner, and fervently to call upon others to praise him, crying out of their unworthiness, and extolling free grace. And may, moreover, dispose them to abound in the external duties of religion, such as prayer, hearing the word preached, singing, and religious conference; and these things attended with a great resemblance of a Christian assurance, in its greatest height, when the saints mount on eagles’ wings, above all darkness and doubting. I think it has been made plain, that there may be all these things, and yet there be nothing more than the common influences of the Spirit of God, joined with the delusions of Satan, and the wicked and deceitful heart.-To which I may add, that all these things may be attended with a sweet natural temper, and a good doctrinal knowledge of religion, and a long acquaintance with the saints’ way of talking, and of expressing their affections and experiences, and a natural ability and subtlety in accommodating their expressions and manner of speaking to the dispositions and notions of the hearers, and a taking decency of expression and behavior, formed by a good education. How great therefore may the resemblance be, as to all outward expressions and appearances, between a hypocrite and a true saint! Doubtless it is the glorious prerogative of the omniscient God, as the great searcher of hearts, to be able well to separate between sheep and goats. And what an indecent self-exaltation and arrogance it is, in poor, fallible, dark mortals, to pretend that they can determine and know, who are really sincere and upright before God, and who are not!

Many seem to lay great weight on that, and to suppose it to be what may determine them with respect to others’ real piety, when they not only tell a plausible story, but when, in giving an account of their experiences, they make such a representation, and speak after such a manner, that they feel their talk; that is to say, when their talk seems to harmonize with their own

experience, and their hearts are touched and affected and delighted, by what they hear them say, and drawn out by it, in dear love to them. But there is not that certainty in such things, and that full dependence to be had upon them, which many imagine. A true saint greatly delights in holiness; it is a most beautiful thing in his eyes; and God's work, in savingly renewing and making holy and happy, a poor, and before perishing soul, appears to him a most glorious work: no wonder, therefore, that his heart is touched, and greatly affected, when he hears another give a probable account of this work, wrought on his own heart, and when he sees in him probable appearances of holiness; whether those pleasing appearances have anything real to answer them, or no. And if he uses the same words, which are commonly made use of, to express the affections of true saints, and tells of many things following one another in an order, agreeable to the method of the experience of him that hears him, and also speaks freely and boldly, and with an air of assurance; no wonder the other thinks his experiences harmonize with his own. And if, besides all this, in giving his relation, he speaks with much affection; and, above all, if in speaking he seems to show much affection to him to whom he speaks, such an affection as the Galatians did to the Apostle Paul; these things will naturally have a powerful influence, to affect and draw his hearer's heart, and open wide the doors of his charity towards him. David speaks as one who had felt Ahithophel's talk, and had once a sweet savor and relish of it. And therefore exceeding great was his surprise and disappointment, when he fell; it was almost too much for him: Psalms 55:12-14, "It was not an enemy-then I could have borne it; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance: we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

It is with professors of religion, especially such as become so in a time of outpouring of the Spirit of God, as it is with blossoms in the spring;[A time of outpouring of the Spirit of God, reviving religion, and producing the pleasant appearances of it, in new converts, is in Scripture compared to this very thing, viz., the spring season, when the benign influences of the heavens cause the blossoms to put forth. Song of Solomon 2:11-12] there are vast numbers of them upon the trees, which all look fair and promising; but yet many of them never come to anything. And many of those, that in a little time wither up, and drop off, and rot under the trees; yet for a while look as beautiful and gay as others; and not only so, but smell sweet, and send forth a pleasant odor; so that we cannot, by any of our senses, certainly distinguish those blossoms which have in them that secret virtue, which will afterwards appear in the fruit, and that inward solidity and strength which shall enable them to bear, and cause them to be perfected by the hot summer sun, that will dry up the others. It is the mature fruit which comes afterwards, and not the beautiful colors and smell of the blossoms, that we must judge by. So new converts (professedly so), in their talk about things of religion, may appear fair, and be very savory, and the saints may think they talk feelingly. They may relish their talk, and imagine they perceive a divine savor in it, and yet all may come to nothing.

It is strange how hardly men are brought to be contented with the rules and directions Christ has given them, but they must needs go by other rules of their counsels which Christ ever delivered more plainly, than the rule. I know of no directions or councils which Christ ever delivered more plainly, than the rule he has given us, to guide our judging of others' sincerity, viz., that we should judge of the tree chiefly by the fruit: but yet this will not do; but other ways are found out, which are imagined to be more distinguishing and certain. And woeful have been the mischievous consequences of this arrogant setting up men's wisdom above the wisdom of Christ. I believe

many saints have gone much out of the way of Christ's word, in this respect: and some of them have been chastised with whips, and (I had almost said) scorpions, to bring them back again. But many things which have lately appeared, and do now appear, may convince that ordinarily those who have gone farthest this way, that have been most highly conceited of their faculty of discerning, and have appeared most forward, peremptorily and suddenly to determine the state of men's souls, have been hypocrites, who have known nothing of true religion. In the parable of the wheat and tares, it is said, Matthew 13:26, "When the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." As though the tares were not discerned, nor distinguishable from the wheat, until then, as Mr. Flavel observes,[Husbandry Spiritualized, Chap. 12.] who mentions it as an observation of Jerome's, that "wheat and tares are so much alike, until the blade of the wheat comes to bring forth the ear, that it is next to impossible to distinguish them." And then Mr. Flavel adds, "How difficult soever it be to discern the difference between wheat and tares; yet doubtless the eye of sense can much easier discriminate them, than the most quick and piercing eye of man can discern the difference between special and common grace. For all saving graces in the saints, have their counterfeits in hypocrites; there are similar works in those, which a spiritual and very judicious eye may easily mistake for the saving and genuine effects of a sanctifying spirit." As it is the ear of the fruit which distinguishes the wheat from the tares, so this is the true Shibboleth, that he who stands as judge at the passages of Jordan, makes use of to distinguish those that shall pass over Jordan into the true Canaan, from those that should be slain at the passages. For the Hebrew word Shibboleth signifies an ear of corn. And perhaps the more full pronunciation of Jephthah's friends, Shibboleth, may represent a full ear with fruit in it, typifying the fruits of the friends of Christ, the antitype of Jephthah; and the more lean pronunciation of the Ephraimites, his enemies, may represent their empty ears, typifying the show of religion in hypocrites, without substance and fruit. This is agreeable to the doctrine we are abundantly taught in Scripture, viz., that he who is set to judge those that pass through death, whether they have a right to enter into the heavenly Canaan or no, or whether they should not be slain, will judge every man according to his works.

We seem to be taught the same things, by the rules given for the priest's discerning the leprosy. In many cases it was impossible for the priest to determine whether a man had the leprosy, or whether he were clean, by the most narrow inspection of the appearances that were upon him, until he had waited to see what the appearances would come to, and had shut up the person who showed himself to him, one seven days after another; and when he judged, he was to determine by the hair, which grew out of the spot that was showed him, which was as it were the fruit that it brought forth. And here, before I finish what I have to say under this head, I would say something to a strange notion some have of late been led away with, of certainly knowing the good estate that others are in, as though it were immediately revealed to them from heaven, by their love flowing out to them in an extraordinary manner. They argue thus, that their love being very sensible and great, it may be certainly known by them who feel it, to be a true Christian love: and if it be a true Christian love, the Spirit of God must be the author of it: and inasmuch as the Spirit of God who knows certainly, whether others are the children of God or no, and is a spirit of truth, is pleased by an uncommon influence upon them, to cause their love to flow out, in an extraordinary manner, towards such a person as a child of God; it must needs be, that this infallible Spirit, who deceives none, knows that that person is a child of God. But such persons might be convinced of the falseness of their reasoning, if they would consider whether or no it be not their duty, and what

God requires of them, to love those as the children of God who they think are the children of God, and whom they have no reason to think otherwise of, from all that they can see in them, though God, who searches the hearts, knows them not to be his children.

If it be their duty, then it is good, and the want of it sin; and therefore surely the Spirit of God may be the author of it: the Spirit of God, without being a spirit of falsehood, may in such a case assist a person to do his duty, and keep him from sin. But then they argue from the uncommon degree and special manner, in which their love flows out to the person, which they think the Spirit of God never would cause, if he did not know the object to be a child of God. But then I would ask them, whether or no it is not their duty to love all such as they are bound to think are the children of God, from all that they can see in them, to a very great degree, though God, from other things which he sees, that are out of sight to them, knows them not to be so. It is men's duty to love all whom they are bound in charity to look upon as the children of God, with a vastly dearer affection than they commonly do. As we ought to love Christ to the utmost capacity of our nature, so it is our duty to love those who we think are so near and dear to him as his members, with an exceeding dear affection, as Christ has loved us; and therefore it is sin in us not to love them so. We ought to pray to God that he would by his Spirit keep us from sin, and enable us to do our duty: and may not his Spirit answer our prayers, and enable us to do our duty, in a particular instance, without lying? If he cannot, then the Spirit of God is bound not to help his people to do their duty in some instances, because he cannot do it without being a spirit of falsehood. But surely God is so sovereign as that comes to, that he may enable us to do our duty when he pleases, and on what occasion he pleases. When persons think others are his children, God may have other ends in causing their exceedingly endeared love to flow out to them, besides revealing to them whether their opinion of them be right or no: he may have that merciful end in it to enable them to know their duty, and to keep them from that dreadful infinite evil, sin. And will they say God shall not show them that mercy in such a case? If I am at a distance from home, and hear, that in my absence my house is burnt, but my family have, in some extraordinary manner, all escaped the flames; and everything in the circumstances of the story, as I hear it, makes it appear very credible, it would be sin in me, in such a case, not to feel a very great degree of gratitude to God, though the story indeed be not true. And is not God so sovereign, that he may, if he pleases, show me that mercy on that occasion, and enable me to do my duty in a much further degree than I used to do it, and yet not incur the charge of deceitfulness in confirming a falsehood?

It is exceeding manifest, that error or mistake may be the occasion of a gracious exercise, and consequently a gracious influence of the Spirit of God by Romans 14:6 : "He that eateth to the Lord he eateth, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks!" The apostle is speaking of those, who through erroneous and needless scruples, avoided eating legally unclean meats.-By this it is very evident, that there may be true exercises of grace, a true respect to the Lord, and particularly, a true thankfulness, which may be occasioned, both by an erroneous judgment and practice. And consequently, an error may be the occasion of those true holy exercises that are from the infallible Spirit of God. And if so, it is certainly too much for us to determine, to how great a degree the Spirit of God may give this holy exercise, on such an occasion. This notion, of certainly discerning another's state, by love flowing out, is not only not founded on reason or Scripture, but it is anti-scriptural, it is against the rules of Scripture; which say not a word of any such way of judging the state of others as this, but direct us to judge chiefly

by the fruits that are seen in them. And it is against the doctrines of Scripture, which do plainly teach us, that the state of others' souls towards God cannot be known by us, as in Revelation 2:17 : "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." And Romans 2:29, "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." That by this last expression, "whose praise is not of men, but of God," the apostle has respect to the insufficiency of men to judge concerning him, whether he be inwardly a Jew or no (as they could easily see by outward marks, whether men were outwardly Jews), and would signify, that it belongs to God alone to give a determining voice in this matter, is confirmed by the same apostle's use of the phrase, in 1 Corinthians 4:5 : "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart:" and then shall every man have praise of God. The apostle, in the two foregoing verses, says, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord." And again, it is further confirmed, because the apostle, in Romans 2:1-29, directs his speech especially to those who had a high conceit of their own holiness, made their boast of God, and were confident of their own discerning, and that they knew God's will, and approved the things which were excellent, or tried the things that differ (as it is in the margin), Romans 2:19 : "And were confident that they were guides of the blind, and a light to them which are in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes; and so took upon them to judge others." See Romans 2:1, and Romans 2:17-20. And how arrogant must the notion be, that they have, who imagine they can certainly know others' godliness, when that great Apostle Peter pretends not to say any more concerning Sylvanus, than that he was a faithful brother, as he supposed! 1 Peter 5:12. Though this Sylvanus appears to have been a very eminent minister of Christ, and an evangelist, and a famous light in God's church at that day, and an intimate companion of the apostles. See 2 Corinthians 1:19, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, and 2 Thessalonians 1:1.

Chapter 8

01.06. PART III(a)

SHOWING WHAT ARE DISTINGUISHING SIGNS OF TRULY GRACIOUS AND HOLY AFFECTIONS.

I COME now to the second thing appertaining to the trial of religious affections, which was proposed, viz., To take notice of some things, wherein those affections that are spiritual and gracious, do differ from those that are not so. But before I proceed directly to the distinguishing characters, I would previously mention some things which I desire may be observed, concerning the marks I shall lay down.

1. That I am far from undertaking to give such signs of gracious affections, as shall be sufficient to enable any certainly to distinguish true affection from false in others; or to determine positively which of their neighbors are true professors, and which are hypocrites. In so doing, I should be guilty of that arrogance which I have been condemning. Though it be plain that Christ has given rules to all Christians, to enable them to judge of professors of religion, whom they are concerned with, so far as is necessary for their own safety, and to prevent their being led into a snare by false teachers, and false pretenders to religion; and though it be also beyond doubt, that the Scriptures do abound with rules, which may be very serviceable to ministers, in counseling and conducting souls committed to their care, in things appertaining to their spiritual and eternal state; yet it is also evident, that it was never God's design to give us any rules, by which we may certainly know, who of our fellow professors are his, and to make a full and clear separation between sheep and goats; but that, on the contrary, it was God's design to reserve this to himself, as his prerogative. And therefore no such distinguishing signs as shall enable Christians or ministers to do this, are ever to be expected to the world's end: for no more is ever to be expected from any signs, that are to be found in the word of God, or gathered from it, than Christ designed them for.

2. No such signs are to be expected, that shall be sufficient to enable those saints certainly to discern their own good estate, who are very low in grace, or are such as have much departed from God, and are fallen into a dead, carnal, and unchristian frame. It is not agreeable to God's design (as has been already observed), that such should know their good estate: nor is it desirable that they should; but, on the contrary, every way best that they should not; and we have reason to bless God, that he has made no provision that such should certainly know the state that they are in, any other way than by first coming out of the ill frame and way they are in. Indeed it is not properly through the defect of the signs given in the word of God, that every saint living, whether strong or weak, and those who are in a bad frame, as well as others, cannot certainly know their good estate by them. For the rules in themselves are certain and infallible, and every saint has, or has had those things in himself, which are sure evidences of grace; for every, even the least act of grace is so. But it is through his defect to whom the signs are given. There is a twofold defect in that saint who is very low in grace, or in an ill frame, which makes it impossible for him to know certainly that he has true grace, by the best signs and rules which can be given him. First, a defect in the object, or the qualification to be viewed and examined. I do not mean an essential defect;

because I suppose the person to be a real saint; but a defect in degree: grace being very small, cannot be clearly and certainly discerned and distinguished.

Things that are very small, we cannot clearly discern their form, or distinguish them one from another; though, as they are in themselves, their form may be very different. There is doubtless a great difference between the body of man, and the bodies of other animals, in the first conception in the womb: but yet if we should view the different embryos, it might not be possible for us to discern the difference, by reason of the imperfect state of the object; but as it comes to greater perfection, the difference becomes very plain. The difference between creatures of very contrary qualities, is not so plainly to be seen while they are very young; even after they are actually brought forth, as in their more perfect state. The difference between doves and ravens, or doves and vultures, when they first come out of the egg, is not so evident; but as they grow to their perfection, it is exceeding great and manifest. Another defect attending the grace of those I am speaking of is its being mingled with so much corruption, which clouds and hides it, and makes it impossible for it certainly to be known. Though different things that are before us, may have in themselves many marks thoroughly distinguishing them one from another; yet if we see them only in a thick smoke, it may nevertheless be impossible to distinguish them. A fixed star is easily distinguishable from a comet, in a clear sky; but if we view them through a cloud, it may be impossible to see the difference. When true Christians are in an ill frame, guilt lies on the conscience; which will bring fear, and so prevent the peace and joy of an assured hope.

Secondly. There is in such a case a defect in the eye. As the feebleness of grace and prevalence of corruption, obscures the object; so it enfeebles the sight; it darkens the sight as to all spiritual objects, of which grace is one. Sin is like some distempers of the eyes, that make things to appear of different colors from those which properly belong to them, and like many other distempers, that put the mouth out of taste so as to disenable it from distinguishing good and wholesome food from bad, but everything tastes bitter.

Men in a corrupt and carnal frame, have their spiritual senses in but poor plight for judging and distinguishing spiritual things. For these reasons no signs that can be given, will actually satisfy persons in such a case: let the signs that are given be never so good and infallible, and clearly laid down, they will not serve them. It is like giving a man rules, how to distinguish visible objects in the dark; the things themselves may be very different, and their difference may be very well and distinctly described to him; yet all is insufficient to enable him to distinguish them, because he is in the dark. And therefore many persons in such a case spend time in a fruitless labor, in poring on past experiences, and examining themselves by signs they hear laid down from the pulpit, or that they read in books; when there is other work for them to do, that is much more expected of them; which, while they neglect, all their self-examinations are like to be in vain if they should spend never so much time in them. The accursed thing is to be destroyed from their camp, and Achan to be slain; and until this be done they will be in trouble. It is not God’s design that men should obtain assurance in any other way, than by mortifying corruption, and increasing in grace, and obtaining the lively exercises of it.-And although self-examination be a duty of great use and importance, and by no means to be neglected; yet it is not the principal means, by which the saints do get satisfaction of their good estate. Assurance is not to be obtained so much by self-examination, as by action. The Apostle Paul sought assurance chiefly this way, even by "forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth unto those things that were before, pressing towards the mark for

the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." And it was by this means chiefly that he obtained assurance: 1 Corinthians 9:26, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly." He obtained assurance of winning the prize, more by running, than by considering. The swiftness of his pace did more towards his assurance of a conquest, than the strictness of his examination. Giving all diligence to grow in grace, by adding to faith, virtue, &c., is the direction that the Apostle Peter gives us, for "making our calling and election sure, and having an entrance ministered to us abundantly, into Christ's everlasting kingdom;" signifying to us, that without this, our eyes will be dim, and we shall be as men in the dark, that cannot plainly see things past or to come, either the forgiveness of our sins past, or our heavenly inheritance that is future, and far off, 2 Peter 1:5-11.[The way to know your godliness is to renew the visible exercises of grace.-The more the visible exercises of grace are renewed, the more certain you will be. The more frequently these actings are renewed, the more abiding and confirmed your assurance will be. The more men's grace is multiplied, the more their peace is multiplied; 2 Peter 1:2, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord." Stoddard's Way to know Sincerity and Hypocrisy, p. 139 and 142.]

Therefore, though good rules to distinguish true grace from counterfeit, may tend to convince hypocrites, and be of great use to the saints, in many respects; and among other benefits may be very useful to them to remove many needless scruples, and establish their hope; yet I am far from pretending to lay down any such rules, as shall be sufficient of themselves, without other means, to enable all true saints to see their good estate, or as supposing they should be the principal means of their satisfaction.

3. Nor is there much encouragement, in the experience of present or past times, to lay down rules or marks to distinguish between true and false affections, in hopes of convincing any considerable number of that sort of hypocrites, who have been deceived with great false discoveries and affections, and are once settled in a false confidence, and high conceit of their own supposed great experiences and privileges. Such hypocrites are so conceited of their own wisdom, and so blinded and hardened with a very great self-righteousness (but very subtle and secret, under the disguise of great humility), and so invincible a fondness of their pleasing conceit of their great exaltation, that it usually signifies nothing at all to lay before them the most convincing evidences of their hypocrisy. Their state is indeed deplorable, and next to those who have committed the unpardonable sin. Some of this sort of persons seem to be most out of the reach of means of conviction and repentance. But yet the laying down good rules may be a means of preventing such hypocrites, and of convincing many of other kinds of hypocrites; and God is able to convince even this kind, and his grace is not to be limited, nor means to be neglected. And besides, such rules may be of use to the true saints, to detect false affections, which they may have mingled with true; and be a means of their religion's becoming more pure, and like gold tried in the fire.

Having premised these things, I now proceed directly to take notice of those things in which true religious affections are distinguished from false.

I. Affections that are truly spiritual and gracious, do arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are spiritual, supernatural and divine.

I will explain what I mean by these terms, whence will appear their use to distinguish between those affections which are spiritual, and those which are not so.

We find that true saints, or those persons who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are in the New Testament called spiritual persons. And their being spiritual is spoken of as their peculiar character, and that wherein they are distinguished from those who are not sanctified. This is evident, because those who are spiritual are set in opposition to natural men, and carnal men. Thus the spiritual man and the natural man are set in opposition one to another, 1 Corinthians 2:14-15 : "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." The Scripture explains itself to mean an ungodly man, or one that has no grace, by a natural man: thus the Apostle Jude, speaking of certain ungodly men, that had crept in unawares among the saints, Jude 1:4, of his epistle, says, "These are sensual, having not the Spirit." This the apostle gives as a reason why they behaved themselves in such a wicked manner as he had described. Here the word translated sensual, in the original is yucikoi [psychikoi], which is the very same, which in those verses in 1 Corinthians 2:1-16 is translated natural. In the like manner, in the continuation of the same discourse, in the next verse but one, spiritual men are opposed to carnal men; which the connection plainly shows mean the same, as spiritual men and natural men, in the foregoing verses; "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal;" i.e., as in a great measure unsanctified. That by carnal the apostle means corrupt and unsanctified, is abundantly evident, by Romans 7:25, and Romans 8:1, Romans 8:4-9, Romans 8:19, Romans 8:13, Galatians 5:16, to the end, Colossians 2:18. Now therefore, if by natural and carnal in these texts, be intended unsanctified, then doubtless by spiritual, which is opposed thereto, is meant sanctified and gracious. And as the saints are called spiritual in Scripture, so we also find that there are certain properties, qualities, and principles, that have the same epithet given them. So we read of a "spiritual mind," Romans 8:6-7, and of "spiritual wisdom," Colossians 1:9, and of "spiritual blessings," Ephesians 1:3.

Now it may be observed, that the epithet spiritual, in these and other parallel texts of the New Testament, is not used to signify any relation of persons or things to the spirit or soul of man, as the spiritual part of man, in opposition to the body, which is the material part. Qualities are not said to be spiritual, because they have their seat in the soul, and not in the body: for there are some properties that the Scripture calls carnal or fleshly, which have their seat as much in the soul, as those properties that are called spiritual. Thus it is with pride and self-righteousness, and a man’s trusting to his own wisdom, which the apostle calls fleshly, Colossians 2:18. Nor are things called spiritual, because they are conversant about those things that are immaterial, and not corporeal. For so was the wisdom of the wise men, and princes of this world, conversant about spirits, and immaterial beings; which yet the apostle speaks of as natural men, totally ignorant of those things that are spiritual, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16. But it is with relation to the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, that persons or things are termed spiritual in the New Testament. Spirit, as the word is used to signify the third person in the Trinity, is the substantive, of which is formed the adjective spiritual, in the holy Scriptures. Thus Christians are called spiritual persons, because they are born of the Spirit, and because of the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them. And things are called spiritual as related to the Spirit of God; 1 Corinthians 2:13-14, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing

spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Here the apostle himself expressly signifies, that by spiritual things, he means the things of the Spirit of God, and things which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The same is yet more abundantly apparent by viewing the whole context. Again, Romans 8:6, "To be carnally minded, is death; to be spiritually minded, is life and peace" The apostle explains what he means by being carnally and spiritually minded in what follows in Romans 8:9, and shows that by being spiritually minded, he means a having the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in the heart: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, it so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The same is evident by all the context. But time would fail to produce all the evidence there is of this, in the New Testament. And it must be here observed, that although it is with relation to the Spirit of God and his influences, that persons and things are called spiritual; yet not all those persons who are subject to any kind of influence of the Spirit of God, are ordinarily called spiritual in the New Testament. They who have only the common influences of God's Spirit, are not so called, in the places cited above, but only those who have the special, gracious, and saving influences of God's Spirit; as is evident, because it has been already proved, that by spiritual men is meant godly men, in opposition to natural, carnal, and unsanctified men. And it is most plain, that the apostle by spiritually minded, Romans 8:6, means graciously minded. And though the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which natural men might have, are sometimes called spiritual, because they are from the Spirit; yet natural men, whatever gifts of the Spirit they had, were not, in the usual language of the New Testament, called spiritual persons. For it was not by men's having the gifts of the Spirit, but by their having the virtues of the Spirit, that they were called spiritual; as is apparent by Galatians 6:1 : "Brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." Meekness is one of those virtues which the apostle had just spoken of, in the verses next preceding, showing what are the fruits of the Spirit. Those qualifications are said to be spiritual in the language of the New Testament, which are truly gracious and holy, and peculiar to the saints.

Thus, when we read of spiritual wisdom and understanding (as in Colossians 1:9, "We desire that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"), hereby is intended that wisdom which is gracious, and from the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God. For, doubtless, by spiritual wisdom is meant that which is opposite to what the Scripture calls natural wisdom; as the spiritual man is opposed to the natural man. And therefore spiritual wisdom is doubtless the same with that wisdom which is from above, that the Apostle James speaks of, James 3:17 : "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle," &c., for this the apostle opposes to natural wisdom, James 3:15 : "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual"-the last word in the original is the same that is translated natural, in 1 Corinthians 2:14. So that although natural men may be the subjects of many influences of the Spirit of God, as is evident by many Scriptures, as Numbers 24:2, 1 Samuel 10:10, and 1 Samuel 11:6, and 1 Samuel 16:14; 1 Samuel 16:1; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Hebrews 6:4-6, and many others; yet they are not, in the sense of the Scripture, spiritual persons; neither are any of those effects, common gifts, qualities, or affections, that are from the influence of the Spirit of God upon them, called spiritual things. The great difference lies in these two things.

1. The Spirit of God is given to the true saints to dwell in them, as his proper lasting abode; and to influence their hearts, as a principle of new nature or as a divine supernatural spring of life and

action. The Scriptures represent the Holy Spirit not only as moving, and occasionally influencing the saints, but as dwelling in them as his temple, his proper abode, and everlasting dwelling place, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 6:16, John 14:16-17. And he is represented as being there so united to the faculties of the soul, that he becomes there a principle or spring of new nature and life. So the saints are said to live by Christ living in them, Galatians 2:20. Christ by his Spirit not only is in them, but lives in them; and so that they live by his life; so is his Spirit united to them, as a principle of life in them; they do not only drink living water, but this "living water becomes a well or fountain of water," in the soul, "springing up into spiritual and everlasting life," John 4:14, and thus becomes a principle of life in them. This living water, this evangelist himself explains to intend the Spirit of God, chap. John 7:38-39. The light of the Sun of righteousness does not only shine upon them, but is so communicated to them that they shine also, and become little images of that Sun which shines upon them; the sap of the true vine is not only conveyed into them, as the sap of a tree may be conveyed into a vessel, but is conveyed as sap is from a tree into one of its living branches, where it becomes a principle of life. The Spirit of God being thus communicated and united to the saints, they are from thence properly denominated from it, and are called spiritual. On the other hand, though the Spirit of God may many ways influence natural men; yet because it is not thus communicated to them, as an indwelling principle, they do not derive any denomination or character from it: for, there being no union, it is not their own. The light may shine upon a body that is very dark or black; and though that body be the subject of the light, yet, because the light becomes no principle of light in it, so as to cause the body to shine, hence that body does not properly receive its denomination from it, so as to be called a lightsome body. So the Spirit of God acting upon the soul only, without communicating itself to be an active principle in it, cannot denominate it spiritual. A body that continues black, may be said not to have light, though the light shines upon it: so natural men are said "not to have the Spirit," Jude 1:19, sensual or natural (as the word is elsewhere rendered), having not the Spirit.

2. Another reason why the saints and their virtues are called spiritual (which is the principal thing) is, that the Spirit of God, dwelling as a vital principle in their souls, there produces those effects wherein he exerts and communicates himself in his own proper nature. Holiness is the nature of the Spirit of God, therefore he is called in Scripture the Holy Ghost. Holiness, which is as it were the beauty and sweetness of the divine nature, is as much the proper nature of the Holy Spirit, as heat is the nature of fire, or sweetness was the nature of that holy anointing oil, which was the principal type of the Holy Ghost in the Mosaic dispensation; yea, I may rather say, that holiness is as much the proper nature of the Holy Ghost, as sweetness was the nature of the sweet odor of that ointment. The Spirit of God so dwells in the hearts of the saints, that he there, as a seed or spring of life, exerts and communicates himself, in this his sweet and divine nature, making the soul a partaker of God’s beauty and Christ’s joy, so that the saint has truly fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, in thus having the communion or participation of the Holy Ghost. The grace which is in the hearts of the saints, is of the same nature with the divine holiness, as much as it is possible for that holiness to be, which is infinitely less in degree; as the brightness that is in a diamond which the sun shines upon, is of the same nature with the brightness of the sun, but only that it is as nothing to it in degree. Therefore Christ says, John 3:6, "That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit;" i.e., the grace that is begotten in the hearts of the saints, is something of the same nature with that Spirit, and so is properly called a spiritual nature; after the same manner as that which is born of the flesh is flesh, or that which is born of corrupt nature

is corrupt nature. But the Spirit of God never influences the minds of natural men after this manner. Though he may influence them many ways, yet he never, in any of his influences, communicates himself to them in his own proper nature. Indeed he never acts disagreeably to his nature, either on the minds of saints or sinners: but the Spirit of God may act upon men agreeably to his own nature, and not exert his proper nature in the acts and exercises of their minds: the Spirit of God may act so, that his actions may be agreeable to his nature, and yet may not at all communicate himself in his proper nature, in the effect of that action. Thus, for instance, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and there was nothing disagreeable to his nature in that action; but yet he did not at all communicate himself in that action, there was nothing of the proper nature of the Holy Spirit in that motion of the waters. And so he may act upon the minds of men many ways, and not communicate himself any more than when be acts on inamimate things.

Thus not only the manner of the relation of the Spirit, who is the operator, to the subject of his operations, is different; as the Spirit operates in the saints, as dwelling in them, as an abiding principle of action, whereas he doth not so operate upon sinners; but the influence and operation itself is different, and the effect wrought exceeding different. So that not only the persons are called spiritual, as having the Spirit of God dwelling in them; but those qualifications, affections, and experiences, that are wrought in them by the Spirit, are also spiritual, and therein differ vastly in their nature and kind from all that a natural man is or can be the subject of, while he remains in a natural state; and also from all that men or devils can be the authors of. It is a spiritual work in this high sense; and therefore above all other works is peculiar to the Spirit of God. There is no work so high and excellent; for there is no work wherein God doth so much communicate himself, and wherein the mere creature hath, in so high a sense a participation of God; so that it is expressed in Scripture by the saints "being made partakers of the divine nature," 2 Peter 1:4, and "having God dwelling in them, and they in God," 1 John 4:12, 1 John 4:15, 1 John 4:16, and 1 John 3:21; "and having Christ in them," John 17:21, Romans 8:10; "being the temples of the living God," 2 Corinthians 6:16; "living by Christ's life," Galatians 2:20; "being made partakers of God's holiness," Hebrews 12:10; "having Christ's love dwelling in them," John 17:26; "having his joy fulfilled in them," John 17:13; "seeing light in God's light, and being made to drink of the river of God's pleasures," Psalms 36:8-9; "having fellowship with God, or communicating and partaking with him (as the word signifies)," 1 John 1:3. Not that the saints are made partakers of the essence of God, and so are godded with God, and christed with Christ, according to the abominable and blasphemous language and notions of some heretics: but, to use the Scripture phrase, they are made partakers of God's fullness, Ephesians 3:17-19, John 1:16, that is, of God's spiritual beauty and happiness, according to the measure and capacity of a creature; for so it is evident the word fullness signifies in Scripture language. Grace in the hearts of the saints, being therefore the most glorious work of God, wherein he communicates of the goodness of his nature, it is doubtless his peculiar work, and in an eminent manner above the power of all creatures. And the influences of the Spirit of God in this, being thus peculiar to God, and being those wherein God does, in so high a manner, communicate himself, and make the creature partaker of the divine nature (the Spirit of God communicating itself in its own proper nature); this is what I mean by those influences that are divine, when I say that "truly gracious affections do arise from those influences that are spiritual and divine." The true saints only have that which is spiritual; others have nothing which is divine, in the sense that has been spoken of. They not only have not these communications of the Spirit of God in so high a degree as the saints, but have nothing of that nature or kind. For the Apostle

James tells us, that natural men have not the Spirit; and Christ teaches the necessity of a new birth, or of being born of the Spirit, from this, that he that is born of the flesh, has only flesh, and no spirit, John 3:6. They have not the Spirit of God dwelling in them in any degree; for the apostle teaches, that all who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, are some of his, Romans 8:9-11. And a having the Spirit of God is spoken of as a certain sign that persons shall have the eternal inheritance; for it is spoken of as the earnest of it, 2 Corinthians 1:29, and 2 Corinthians 5:5, Ephesians 1:14; and a having anything of the Spirit is mentioned as a sure sign of being in Christ, 1 John 4:13 : "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." Ungodly men not only have not so much of the divine nature as the saints, but they are not partakers of it; which implies that they have nothing of it; for a being partaker of the divine nature is spoken of as the peculiar privilege of the true saints, 2 Peter 1:4. Ungodly men are not "partakers of God’s holiness," Hebrews 12:10. A natural man has no experience of any of those things that are spiritual: the apostle teaches us, that he is so far from it, that he knows nothing about them, he is a perfect stranger to them, the talk about such things is all foolishness and nonsense to him, he knows not what it means; 1 Corinthians 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And to the like purpose Christ teaches us that the world is wholly unacquainted with the Spirit of God, John 14:17 : "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." And it is further evident, that natural men have nothing in them of the same nature with the true grace of the saints, because the apostle teaches us, that those of them who go farthest in religion have no charity, or true Christian love, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. So Christ elsewhere reproves the Pharisees, those high pretenders to religion, that they "had not the love of God in them," John 5:42. Hence natural men have no communion or fellowship with Christ, or participation with him (as these words signify), for this is spoken of as the peculiar privilege of the saints, 1 John 1:3, together with 1 John 1:6-7, and 1 Corinthians 1:8-9. And the Scripture speaks of the actual being of a gracious principle in the soul, though in its first beginning, as a seed there planted, as inconsistent with a man’s being a sinner, 1 John 3:9. And natural men are represented in Scripture, as having no spiritual light, no spiritual life, and no spiritual being; and therefore conversion is often compared to opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead, and a work of creation (wherein creatures are made entirely new), and becoming new-born children.

01.07. PART III(b)

From these things it is evident, that those gracious influences which the saints are subjects of, and the effects of God's Spirit which they experience, are entirely above nature, altogether of a different kind from anything that men find within themselves by nature, or only in the exercise of natural principles; and are things which no improvement of those qualifications, or principles that are natural, no advancing or exalting them to higher degrees, and no kind of composition of them, will ever bring men to; because they not only differ from what is natural, and from everything that natural men experience, in degree and circumstances, but also in kind; and are of a nature vastly more excellent. And this is what I mean, by supernatural, when I say that gracious affections are from those influences that are supernatural. From hence it follows, that in those gracious exercises and affections which are wrought in the minds of the saints, through the saving influences of the Spirit of God, there is a new inward perception or sensation of their minds, entirely different in its nature and kind, from anything that ever their minds were the subjects of before they were sanctified. For doubtless if God by his mighty power produces something that is new, not only in degree and circumstances, but in its whole nature, and that which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of what was there before, or by adding anything of the like kind; I say, if God produces something thus new in a mind, that is a perceiving, thinking, conscious thing; then doubtless something entirely new is felt, or perceived, or thought; or, which is the same thing, there is some new sensation or perception of the mind, which is entirely of a new sorts and which could be produced by no exalting, varying, or compounding of that kind of perceptions or sensations which the mind had before; or there is what some metaphysicians call a new simple idea. If grace be, in the sense above described, an entirely new kind of principle, then the exercises of it are also entirely a new kind of exercises. And if there be in the soul a new sort of exercises which it is conscious of, which the soul knew nothing of before, and which no improvement, composition, or management of what it was before conscious or sensible of, could produce, or anything like it; then it follows that the mind has an entirely new kind of perception or sensation; and here is, as it were, a new spiritual sense that the mind has, or a principle of a new kind of perception or spiritual sensation, which is in its whole nature different from any former kinds of sensation of the mind, as tasting is diverse from any of the other senses; and something is perceived by a true saint, in the exercise of this new sense of mind, in spiritual and divine things, as entirely diverse from anything that is perceived in them, by natural men, as the sweet taste of honey is diverse from the ideas men have of honey by only looking on it, and feeling of it. So that the spiritual perceptions which a sanctified and spiritual person has, are not only diverse from all that natural men have after the manner that the ideas or perceptions of the same sense may differ one from another, but rather as the ideas and sensations of different senses do differ. Hence the work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is often in Scripture compared to the giving a new sense, giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, unstopping the ears of the deaf, and opening the eyes of them that were born blind, and turning from darkness unto light. And because this spiritual sense is immensely the most noble and excellent, and that without which all other principles of perception, and all our faculties are useless and vain; therefore the giving this new sense, with the

blessed fruits and effects of it in the soul, is compared to a raising the dead, and to a new creation. This new spiritual sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new faculties, but are new principles of nature. I use the word principles for want of a word of a more determinate signification. By a principle of nature in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul; or a natural habit or foundation for action, giving a personal ability and disposition to exert the faculties in exercises of such a certain kind; so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises may be said to be his nature. So this new spiritual sense is not a new faculty of understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding. So that new holy disposition of heart that attends this new sense is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of will. The Spirit of God, in all his operations upon the minds of natural men, only moves, impresses, assists, improves, or some way acts upon natural principles; but gives no new spiritual principle. Thus when the Spirit of God gives a natural man visions, as he did Balaam, he only impresses a natural principle, viz., the sense of seeing, immediately exciting ideas of that sense; but he gives no new sense; neither is there anything supernatural, spiritual, or divine in it. So if the Spirit of God impresses on a man's imagination, either in a dream, or when he is awake, any outward ideas of any of the senses, either voices, or shapes and colors, it is only exciting ideas of the same kind that he has by natural principles and senses. So if God reveals to any natural man any secret fact: as, for instance, something that he shall hereafter see or hear; this is not infusing or exercising any new spiritual principle, or giving the ideas of any new spiritual sense; it is only impressing, in an extraordinary manner, the ideas that will hereafter be received by sight and hearing.-So in the more ordinary influences of the Spirit of God on the hearts of sinners, he only assists natural principles to do the same work to a greater degree, which they do of themselves by nature. Thus the Spirit of God by his common influences may assist men's natural ingenuity, as he assisted Bezaleel and Aholiab in the curious works of the tabernacle: so he may assist men's natural abilities in political affairs, and improve their courage and other natural qualifications, as he is said to have put his spirit on the seventy elders, and on Saul, so as to give him another heart: so God may greatly assist natural men's reason, in their reasoning about secular things, or about the doctrines of religion, and may greatly advance the clearness of their apprehensions and notions of things of religion in many respects, without giving any spiritual sense. So in those awakenings and convictions that natural men may have, God only assists conscience, which is a natural principle, to do that work in a further degree, which it naturally does. Conscience naturally gives men an apprehension of right and wrong, and suggests the relation there is between right and wrong, and a retribution: the Spirit of God assists men's consciences to do this in a greater degree, helps conscience against the stupifying influence of worldly objects and their lusts. And so many other ways might be mentioned wherein the Spirit acts upon, assists, and moves natural principles; but after all it is no more than nature moved, acted and improved; here is nothing supernatural and divine. But the Spirit of God in his spiritual influences on the hearts of his saints, operates by infusing or exercising new, divine, and supernatural principles; principles which are indeed a new and spiritual nature, and principles vastly more noble and excellent than all that is in natural men. From what has been said it follows, that all spiritual and gracious affections are attended with and do arise from some apprehension, idea, or sensation of mind, which is in its whole nature different, yea, exceeding different, from all that is, or can be in

the mind of a natural man; and which the natural man discerns nothing of, and has no manner of idea of (agreeable to 1 Corinthians 2:14), and conceives of no more than a man without the sense of tasting can conceive of the sweet taste of honey, or a man without the sense of hearing can conceive of the melody of a tune, or a man born blind can have a notion of the beauty of the rainbow. But here two things must be observed, in order to the right understanding of this.

1. On the one hand it must be observed, that not everything which in any respect appertains to spiritual affections, is new and entirely different from what natural men can conceive of, and do experience; some things are common to gracious affections with other affections; many circumstances, appendages and effects are common. Thus a saint's love to God has a great many things appertaining to it, which are common with a man's natural love to a near relation; love to God makes a man have desires of the honor of God, and a desire to please him; so does a natural man's love to his friend make him desire his honor, and desire to please him; love to God causes a man to delight in the thoughts of God, and to delight in the presence of God, and to desire conformity to God, and the enjoyment of God; and so it is with a man's love to his friend; and many other things might be mentioned which are common to both. But yet that idea which the saint has of the loveliness of God, and that sensation, and that kind of delight he has in that view, which is as it were the marrow and quintessence of his love, is peculiar, and entirely diverse from anything that a natural man has, or can have any notion of. And even in those things that seem to be common, there is something peculiar; both spiritual and natural love cause desires after the object beloved; but they be not the same sort of desires: there is a sensation of soul in the spiritual desires of one that loves God, which is entirely different from all natural desires: both spiritual love and natural love are attended with delight in the object beloved; but the sensations of delight are not the same, but entirely and exceedingly diverse. Natural men may have conceptions of many things about spiritual affections; but there is something in them which is as it were the nucleus, or kernel of them, that they have no more conception of, than one born blind, has of colors.

It may be clearly illustrated by this: we will suppose two men; one is born without the sense of tasting, the other has it; the latter loves honey, and is greatly delighted in it, because he knows the sweet taste of it; the other loves certain sounds and colors; the love of each has many things that appertain to it, which is common; it causes both to desire and delight in the object beloved, and causes grief when it is absent, &c., but yet that idea or sensation which he who knows the taste of honey has of its excellency and sweetness, that is the foundation of his love, is entirely different from anything the other has or can have; and that delight which he has in honey is wholly diverse from anything that the other can conceive of, though they both delight in their beloved objects. So both these persons may in some respects love the same object: the one may love a delicious kind of fruit, which is beautiful to the eye, and of a delicious taste; not only because he has seen its pleasant colors, but knows its sweet taste; the other, perfectly ignorant of this, loves it only for its beautiful colors: there are many things seen, in some respect, to be common to both; both love, both desire, and both delight; but the love and desire, and delight of the one, is altogether diverse from that of the other. The difference between the love of a natural man and a spiritual man is like to this; but only it must be observed, that in one respect it is vastly greater, viz., that the kinds of excellency which are perceived in spiritual objects, by these different kinds of persons, are in themselves vastly more diverse than the different kinds of excellency perceived in delicious fruit, by a tasting and a tasteless man; and in another respect it may not be so great, viz., as the

spiritual man may have a spiritual sense or taste, to perceive that divine and most peculiar excellency but in small beginnings, and in a very imperfect degree.

2. On the other hand, it must be observed that a natural man may have those religious apprehensions and affections, which may be in many respects very new and surprising to him, and what before he did not conceive of; and yet what he experiences be nothing like the exercises of a principle of new nature, or the sensations of a new spiritual sense; his affections may be very new, by extraordinarily moving natural principles in a very new degree, and with a great many new circumstances, and a new co-operation of natural affections, and a new composition of ideas; this may be from some extraordinary powerful influence of Satan, and some great delusion; but there is nothing but nature extraordinarily acted. As if a poor man that had always dwelt in a cottage and, had never looked beyond the obscure village where he was born, should in a jest be taken to a magnificent city and prince's court, and there arrayed in princely robes, and set on the throne, with the crown royal on his head, peers and nobles bowing before him, and should be made to believe that he was now a glorious monarch; the ideas he would have, and the affections he would experience, would in many respects be very new, and such as he had no imagination of before; but all this is no more than extraordinarily raising and exciting natural principles, and newly exalting, varying, and compounding such sort of ideas, as he has by nature; here is nothing like giving him a new sense.

Upon the whole, I think it is clearly manifest, that all truly gracious affections do arise from special and peculiar influences of the Spirit, working that sensible effect or sensation in the souls of the saints, which are entirely different from all that is possible a natural man should experience, not only different in degree and circumstances, but different in its whole nature; so that a natural man not only cannot experience that which is individually the same, but cannot experience anything but what is exceeding diverse, and immensely below it, in its kind; and that which the power of men or devils is not sufficient to produce the like of, or anything of the same nature.

I have insisted largely on this matter, because it is of great importance and use evidently to discover and demonstrate the delusions of Satan, in many kinds of false religious affections, which multitudes are deluded by, and probably have been in all ages of the Christian church; and to settle and determine many articles of doctrine, concerning the operations of the Spirit of God, and the nature of true grace.

Now, therefore, to apply these things to the purpose of this discourse. From hence it appears, that impressions which some have made on their imagination, or the imaginary ideas which they have of God or Christ, or heaven, or anything appertaining to religion, have nothing in them that is spiritual, or of the nature of true grace. Though such things may attend what is spiritual, and be mixed with it, yet in themselves they have nothing that is spiritual, nor are they any part of gracious experience.

Here, for the sake of common people, I will explain what is intended by impressions on the imagination and imaginary ideas. The imagination is that power of the mind whereby it can have a conception, or idea of things of an external or outward nature (that is, of such sort of things as are the objects of the outward senses) when those things are not present, and be not perceived by the senses. It is called imagination from the word image; because thereby a person can have an image of some external thing in his mind, when that thing is not present in reality, nor anything like

it. All such things as we perceive by our five external senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling, are external things: and when a person has an idea or image of any of these sorts of things in his mind, when they are not there, and when he does not really see, hear, smell, taste, nor feel them; that is to have an imagination of them, and these ideas are imaginary ideas: and when such kinds of ideas are strongly impressed upon the mind, and the image of them in the mind is very lively, almost as if one saw them, or heard them, &c., that is called an impression on the imagination. Thus colors and shapes, and a form of countenance, they are outward things; because they are that sort of things which are the objects of the outward sense of seeing; and therefore when any person has in his mind a lively idea of any shape, or color, or form of countenance; that is to have an imagination of those things. So if he has an idea, of such sort of light or darkness, as he perceives by the sense of seeing; that is to have an idea of outward light, and so is an imagination. So if he has an idea of any marks made on paper, suppose letters and words written in a book; that is to have an external and imaginary idea of such kind of things as we sometimes perceive by our bodily eyes. And when we have the ideas of that kind of things which we perceive by any of the other senses, as of any sounds or voices, or words spoken; this is only to have ideas of outward things, viz., of such kind of things as are perceived by the external sense of hearing, and so that also is imagination: and when these ideas are livelily impressed, almost as if they were really heard with the ears, this is to have an impression on the imagination. And so I might go on, and instance in the ideas of things appertaining to the other three senses of smelling, tasting, and feeling.

Many who have had such things have very ignorantly supposed them to be of the nature of spiritual discoveries. They have had lively ideas of some external shape, and beautiful form of countenance; and this they call spiritually seeing Christ. Some have had impressed upon them ideas of a great outward light; and this they call a spiritual discovery of God's or Christ's glory. Some have had ideas of Christ's hanging on the cross, and his blood running from his wounds; and this they call a spiritual sight of Christ crucified, and the way of salvation by his blood. Some have seen him with his arms open ready to embrace them; and this they call a discovery of the sufficiency of Christ's grace and love. Some have had lively ideas of heaven, and of Christ on his throne there, and shining ranks of saints and angels; and this they call seeing heaven opened to them. Some from time to time have had a lively idea of a person of a beautiful countenance smiling upon them; and this they call a spiritual discovery of the love of Christ to their souls, and tasting the love of Christ. And they look upon it a sufficient evidence that these things are spiritual discoveries, and that they see them spiritually because they say they do not see these things with their bodily eves, but in their hearts; for they can see them when their eyes are shut. And in like manner, the imaginations of some have been impressed with ideas of the sense of hearing; they have had ideas of words, as if they were sunken to them, sometimes they are the words of Scripture, and sometimes other words: they have had ideas of Christ's speaking comfortable words to them. These things they have called having the inward call of Christ, hearing the voice of Christ spiritually in their hearts, having the witness of the Spirit, and the inward testimony of the love of Christ, &c. The common and less considerate and understanding sort of people, are the more easily led into apprehensions that these things are spiritual things, because spiritual things being invisible, and not things that can be pointed forth with the finger, we are forced to use figurative expressions in speaking of them, and to borrow names from external and sensible objects to signify them by. Thus we call a clear apprehension of things spiritual by the name of

light; and a having such an apprehension of such or such things, by the name of seeing such things; and the conviction of the judgment, and the persuasion of the will by the word of Christ in the gospel, we signify by spiritually hearing the call of Christ: and the scripture itself abounds with such like figurative expressions. Persons hearing these often used, and having pressed upon them the necessity of having their eyes opened, and having a discovery of spiritual things, and seeing Christ in his glory and having the inward call, and the like, they ignorantly look and wait for some such external discoveries, and imaginary views as have been spoken of; and when they have them are confident, that now their eyes are opened, now Christ has discovered himself to them, and they are his children; and hence are exceedingly affected and elevated with their deliverance and happiness, and many kinds of affections are at once set in a violent motion in them. But it is exceedingly apparent that such ideas have nothing in them which is spiritual and divine, in the sense wherein it has been demonstrated that all gracious experiences are spiritual and divine. These external ideas are in no wise of such a sort, that they are entirely, and in their whole nature diverse from all that men have by nature, perfectly different from, and vastly above any sensation which it is possible a man should have by any natural sense or principle, so that in order to have them, a man must have a new spiritual and divine sense given him, in order to have any sensations of that sort: so far from this, that they are ideas of the same sort which we have by the external senses, that are some of the inferior powers of the human nature: they are merely ideas of external objects, or ideas of that nature, of the same outward, sensitive kind: the same sort of sensations of mind (differing not in degree, but only in circumstances) that we have by those natural principles which are common to us with the beasts, viz., the five external senses. This is a low, miserable notion of spiritual sense, to suppose that it is only a conceiving or imagining that sort of ideas which we have by our animal senses, which senses the beasts have in as great perfection as we; it is, as it were, a turning Christ, or the divine nature in the soul, into a mere animal. There is nothing wanting in the soul, as it is by nature, to render it capable of being the subject of all these external ideas, without any new principles. A natural man is capable of having an idea, and a lively idea of shapes, and colors, and sounds, when they are absent, and as capable as a regenerate man is: so there is nothing supernatural in them. And it is known by abundant experience, that it is not the advancing or perfecting human nature, which makes persons more capable of having such lively and strong imaginary ideas, but that on the contrary, the weakness of body and mind, and distempers of body, make persons abundantly more susceptive of such impressions.[Conceits and whimsies abound most in men of weak reason, children, and such as are cracked in their understanding, have most of them; strength of reason banishes them, as the sun does mists and vapors. But now the more rational any gracious person is, by so much more is he fixed and settled, and satisfied in the grounds of religion; yea, there is the highest and purest reason in religion; and when this change is wrought upon men, it is carried on in a rational way. Isaiah 1:18, John 19:9." Flavel’s Preparation for Sufferings, Chap. vi.] As to a truly spiritual sensation, not only is the manner of its coming into the mind extraordinary, but the sensation itself is totally diverse from all that men have, or can have, in a state of nature, as has been shown. But as to these external ideas, though the way of their coming into the mind is sometimes unusual, yet the ideas in themselves are not the better for that; they are still of no different sort from what men have by their senses; they are of no higher kind, nor a whit better. For instance, the external idea a man has now of Christ hanging on the cross, and shedding his blood, is no better in itself, than the external idea that the Jews his enemies had, who stood round his

cross, and saw this with their bodily eyes. The imaginary idea which men have now of an external brightness and glory of God, is no better than the idea the wicked congregation in the wilderness had of the external glory of the Lord at Mount Sinai, when they saw it with their bodily eyes; or any better than that idea which millions of cursed reprobates will have of the external glory of Christ at the day of judgment, who shall see, and have a very lively idea of ten thousand times greater external glory of Christ, than ever yet was conceived in any man's imagination:["If any man should see, and behold Christ really and immediately, this is not the saving knowledge of him. I know the saints do know Christ as if immediately present; they are not strangers by their distance: if others have seen him more immediately, I will not dispute it. But if they have seen the Lord Jesus as immediately as if here on earth, yet Capernaum saw him so; nay, some of them were disciples for a time, and followed him, John 6:1-71. And yet the Lord was hid from their eyes. Nay, all the world shall see him in his glory, which shall amaze them; and yet this is far short of having the saving knowledge of him, which the Lord doth communicate to the elect. So that though you see the Lord so really, as that you become familiar with him, yet, Luke 13:26 : 'Lord have we not eat and drank,' &c.-and so perish." Shepard's Par. of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 197, 198.] yea, the image of Christ, which men conceive in their imaginations, is not in its own nature of any superior kind to the idea the Papists conceive of Christ, by the beautiful and affecting images of him which they see in their churches (though the way of their receiving the idea may not be so bad); nor are the affections they have, if built primarily on such imaginations, any better than the affections raised in the ignorant people, by the sight of those images, which oftentimes are very great; especially when these images, through the craft of the priests, are made to move, and speak, and weep, and the like.[Satan is transformed into an angel of light: and hence we have heard that some have heard voices; some have seen the very blood of Christ dropping on them, and his wounds in his side: some have seen a great light shining in the chamber, some have been wonderfully affected with their dreams; some in great distress have had inward witness, 'Thy sins are forgiven;' and hence such liberty and joy, that they are ready to leap up and down the chamber. O adulterous generation! this is natural and usual with men, they would fain see Jesus, and have him present to give them peace; and hence Papists have his images. Woe to them that have no other manifested Christ, but such a one." Shepard's Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I, p. 198.] Merely the way of persons receiving these imaginary ideas, does not alter the nature of the ideas themselves that are received; let them be received in what way they will, they are still but external ideas, or ideas of outward appearances, and so are not spiritual. Yea, if men should actually receive such external ideas by the immediate power of the most high God upon their minds, they would not be spiritual, they would be no more than a common work of the Spirit of God; as is evident in fact, in the instance of Balaam, who had impressed on his mind, by God himself, a clear and lively outward representation or idea of Jesus Christ, as "the Star rising out of Jacob, when he heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, and saw the vision of the Almighty, failing into a trance," Numbers 24:16-17, but yet had no manner of spiritual discovery of Christ; that Day Star never spiritually rose in his heart, he being but a natural man. And as these external ideas have nothing divine or spiritual in their nature and nothing but what natural men, without any new principles, are capable of; so there is nothing in their nature which requires that peculiar, inimitable and unparalleled exercise of the glorious power of God, in order to their production, which it has been shown there is in the production of true grace. There appears to be nothing in their nature above the power of the devil. It is certainly not above the power of Satan to suggest thoughts to

men; because otherwise he could not tempt them to sin. And if he can suggest any thoughts or ideas at all, doubtless imaginary ones, or ideas of things external, are not above his power;["Consider how difficult, yea and impossible it is to determine that such a voice, vision, or revelation is of God, and that Satan cannot feign or counterfeit it: seeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may distinguish one spirit from another." Flavel's Causes and Cures of Mental Terrors, Cause 14.] for the external ideas men have are the lowest sort of ideas. These ideas may be raised only by impressions made on the body, by moving the animal spirits, and impressing the brain.-Abundant experience does certainly show, that alterations in the body will excite imaginary or external ideas in the mind; as often, in the case of a high fever, melancholy, &c. These external ideas are as much below the more intellectual exercises of the soul, as the body is a less noble part of man than the soul. And there is not only nothing in the nature of these external ideas or imaginations of outward appearances, from whence we can infer that they are above the power of the devil; but it is certain also that the devil can excite, and often hath excited such ideas. They were external ideas which he excited in the dreams and visions of the false prophets of old, who were under the influence of lying spirits, that we often read of in Scripture, as Deuteronomy 13:1., 1 Kings 22:22, Isaiah 33:7, Ezekiel 13:7. And they were external ideas that he often excited in the minds of the heathen priests, magicians and sorcerers, in their visions and ecstasies, and they were external ideas that he excited in the mind of the man Christ Jesus, when he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them, when those kingdoms were not really in sight. And if Satan or any created being, has power to impress the mind with outward representations, then no particular sort of outward representations can be any evidence of a divine power. Almighty power is no more requisite to represent the shape of man to the imagination, than the shape of anything else: there is no higher kind of power necessary to form in the brain one bodily shape or color than another: it needs a no more glorious power to represent the form of the body of a man, than the form of a chip or block; though it be of a very beautiful human body, with a sweet smile in his countenance, or arms open, or blood running from the hands, feet and side: that sort of power which can represent black or darkness to the imagination, can also represent white and shining brightness: the power and skill which can well and exactly paint a straw, or a stick of wood, on a piece of paper or canvass; the same in kind, only perhaps further improved, will be sufficient to paint the body of a man, with great beauty and in royal majesty, or a magnificent city, paved with gold, full of brightness, and a glorious throne, &c. So it is no more than the same sort of power that is requisite to paint one as the other of these on the brain. The same sort of power that can put ink upon paper, can put on leaf gold. So that it is evident to a demonstration, if we suppose it to be in the devil's power to make any sort of external representation at all on the fancy (as without doubt it is, and never anyone questioned it who believed there was a devil, that had any agency with mankind): I say, if so, it is demonstrably evident, that a created power may extend to all kinds of external appearances and ideas in the mind. From hence it again clearly appears, that no such things have anything in them that is spiritual, supernatural, and divine, in the sense in which it has been proved that all truly gracious experiences have. And though external ideas, through man's make and frame, do ordinarily in some degree attend spiritual experiences, yet these ideas are no part of their spiritual experience, any more than the motion of the blood, and beating of the pulse, that attend experiences, are a part of spiritual experience. And though undoubtedly, through men's infirmity in the present state, and especially through the weak constitution of some persons, gracious affections which are very strong, do excite lively ideas in the imagination; yet it is also

undoubted, that when persons' affections are founded on imaginations, which is often the case, those affections are merely natural and common, because they are built on a foundation that is not spiritual; and so are entirely different from gracious affections, which, as has been proved, do evermore arise from those operations that are spiritual and divine.

These imaginations do oftentimes raise the carnal affections of men to an exceeding great height:[There is a remarkable passage of Mr. John Smith, in his discourse on the shortness of a Pharisaic righteousness, p. 370, 371, of his select discourses, describing that sort of religion which is built on such s foundation as I am here speaking of. I cannot forbear transcribing the whole of it. Speaking of a sort of Christians, whose life is nothing but a strong energy of fancy, he says: "Lest their religion might too grossly discover itself to be nothing else but a piece of art, there may be sometimes such extraordinary motions stirred up within them, which may prevent all their own thoughts, that they may seem to be a true operation of the divine life; when yet all this is nothing else but the energy of their own self-love touched with some fleshly apprehensions of divine things, and excited by them. There are such things in our Christian religion when a carnal, unhallowed mind takes the chair and gets the expounding of them, may seem very delicious to the fleshly appetites of men; some doctrines and notions of free grace and justification, the magnificent titles of sons of God and heirs of heaven, ever flowing streams of joy and pleasure that blessed souls shall swim in to all eternity, a glorious paradise in the world to come always springing up with well scented and fragrant beauties, a new Jerusalem paved with gold, and bespangled with stars, comprehending in its vast circuit such numberless varieties, that a busy curiosity may spend itself about to all eternity. I doubt not but that sometimes the most fleshly and earthly men, that fly in their ambition to the pomp of this world, may be so ravished with the conceits of such things as these, that they may seem to be made partakers of the powers of the world to come. I doubt not but that they might be much exalted with them, as the souls of crazed or distracted persons seem to be sometimes, when their fancies play with those quick and nimble spirits, which a distempered frame of body, and unnatural heat in their heads, beget within them. Thus may these blazing comets rise up above the moon, and climb higher than the sun, which yet, because they have no solid consistence of their own, and are of a base and earthly alloy, will soon vanish and fall down again, being only borne up by all external force. They may seem to themselves to have attained higher than those noble Christians that are gently moved by the natural force of true goodness: they seem to be pleniores Deo (i.e., more full of God) than those that are really informed and actuated by the divine Spirit, and do move on steadily and constantly in the way towards heaven. As the seed that was sown in stony ground, grew up, and lengthened out its blade faster, than that which was sown in the good and fruitful soil. And as the motions of our sense, and fancy, and passions, while our souls are in this mortal condition, sunk down deeply into the body, are many times more vigorous, and make stronger impressions upon us, than those of the higher powers of the soul, which are more subtle, and remote from these mixed animal perceptions: that devotion which is there seated, may seem to have more energy and life in it, than that which gently and with a more delicate kind of touch spreads itself upon the understanding, and from thence mildly derives itself through our wills and affections. But however the former may be more boisterous for a time, yet this is of a more consistent, spermatical and thriving nature. For that proceeding indeed from nothing but a sensual and fleshly apprehension of God and true happiness, is but of a flitting and fading nature, and as the sensible powers and faculties grow more languid, or the sun of divine light shines more brightly upon us, these earthly devotions, like

our culinary fires, will abate their heat and fervor. But a true celestial warmth will never be extinguished, because it is of an immortal nature; and being once seated vitally in the souls of men, it will regulate and order all the motions of it in a due manner the natural heat, radicated in the hearts of living creatures, hath the dominion and economy of the whole body under it. True religion is no piece of artifice, it is no boiling up of our imaginative powers, nor the glowing heats of passion, though these are too often mistaken for it, when in our jugglings in religion we cast a mist before our own eyes: but it is a new nature, informing the souls of men; it is a Godlike frame of spirit, discovering itself most of all in serene and clear minds, in deep humility, meekness, self-denial, universal love to God and all true goodness, without partiality, and without hypocrisy, whereby we are taught to know God, and knowing him to love him, and conform ourselves as much as may be to all that perfection which shines in him.] and no wonder, when the subjects of them have an ignorant, but undoubting persuasion, that they are divine manifestations, which the great Jehovah immediately makes to their souls, therein giving them testimonies in an extraordinary manner, of his high and peculiar favor.

Again, it is evident from what has been observed and proved of the manner in which gracious operations and effects in the heart are spiritual, supernatural and divine, that the immediate suggesting of the words of Scripture to the mind has nothing in it which is spiritual.

I have had occasion to say something of this already; and what has been said may be sufficient to evince it; but if the reader bears in mind what has been said concerning the nature of spiritual influences and effects, it will be more abundantly manifest that this is no spiritual effect. For I suppose there is no person of common understanding, who will say or imagine that the bringing words (let them be what words they will) to the mind is an effect of that nature which it is impossible the mind of a natural man, while he remains in a state of nature, should be the subject of, or anything like it; or that it requires any new divine sense in the soul; or that the bringing sounds or letters to the mind, is an effect of so high, holy, and excellent a nature, that it is impossible any created power should be the cause of it. As the suggesting words of Scripture to the mind, is only the exciting in the mind ideas of certain sounds or letters; so it is only one way of exciting ideas in the imagination; for sounds and letters are external things, that are the objects of the external senses of seeing and hearing. Ideas of certain marks upon paper, such as any of the twenty-four letters, in whatever order, or any sounds of the voice, are as much external ideas, as of any other shapes or sounds whatsoever; and therefore, by what has been already said concerning these external ideas, it is evident they are nothing spiritual; and if at any time the Spirit of God suggests these letters or sounds to the mind, this is a common, and not any special or gracious influence of that Spirit. And therefore it follows from what has been already proved, that those affections which have this effect for their foundation, are no spiritual or gracious affections. But let it be observed what it is that I say, viz., when this effect, even the immediate and extraordinary manner of words of Scripture's coming to the mind, is that which excites the affections, and is properly the foundation of them, then these affections are not spiritual. It may be so, that persons may have gracious affections going with Scriptures which come to their minds, and the Spirit of God may make use of those Scriptures to excite them; when it is some spiritual sense, taste or relish they have of the divine and excellent things contained in those Scriptures, that is the thing which excites their affections, and not the extraordinary and sudden manner of words being brought to their minds. They are affected with the instruction they receive from the

words, and the view of the glorious things of God or Christ, and things appertaining to them, that they contain and teach; and not because the words came suddenly, as though some person had spoken them to them, thence concluding that God did as it were immediately speak to them. Persons oftentimes are exceedingly affected on this foundation; the words of some great and high promises of Scripture came suddenly to their minds, and they look upon the words as directed immediately by God to them, as though the words that moment proceeded out of the mouth of God as spoken to them: so that they take it as a voice from God, immediately revealing to them their happy circumstances, and promising such and such great things to them: and this it is that effects and elevates them. There is no near spiritual understanding of the divine things contained in the Scripture, or new spiritual sense of the glorious things taught in that part of the Bible going before their affection, and being the foundation of it. All the new understanding they leave, or think they have, to be the foundation of their affection, is this, that the words are spoken to them, because they come so suddenly and extraordinarily. And so this affection is built wholly on the sand! Because it is built on a conclusion for which they have no foundation. For, as has been shown, the sudden coming of the words to their minds, is no evidence that the bringing them to their minds in that manner was from God. And if it was true that God brought the words to their minds, and they certainly knew it, that would not be spiritual knowledge; it may be without any spiritual sense: Balaam might know that the words which God suggested to him, were indeed suggested to him by God, and yet have no spiritual knowledge. So that these affections which are built on that notion, that texts of Scripture are sent immediately from God, are built on no spiritual foundation, and are vain and delusive. Persons who have their affections thus raised, if they should be inquired of, whether they have and new sense of the excellency of things contained in those Scriptures, would probably say, Yes, without hesitation: but it is true no otherwise than thus, that then they have taken up that notion, that the words are spoken immediately to them, that makes them seem sweet to them, and they own the things which these Scriptures say to them, for excellent things and wonderful things. As for instance supposing these were the words which were suddenly brought to their minds, Fear not, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom; they having confidently taken up a notion that the words were as it were immediately spoken from heaven to them, as an immediate revelation that God was their Father, and had given the kingdom to them, they are greatly affected by it, and the words seem sweet to them; and oh, they say, "they are excellent things that are contained in those words!" But the reason why the promise seems excellent to them, is only because they think it is made to them immediately; all the sense they have of any glory in them, is only from self-love, and from their own imagined interest in the words; not that they had any view or sense of the holy and glorious nature of the kingdom of heaven and the spiritual glory of that God who gives it, and of his excellent grace to sinful men, it offering and giving them this kingdom, of his own good pleasure preceding their imagined interest in these things, and their being affected by them, and being the foundation of their affection, and hope of an interest in them. On the contrary, they first imagine they are interested, and then are highly affected with that, and then can own these things to be excellent. So that the sudden and extraordinary way of the Scripture’s coming to their mind is plainly the first foundation of the whole; which is a clear evidence of the wretched delusion they are under. The first comfort of many persons, and what they call their conversion, is after this manner: after awakening and terror, some comfortable sweet promise comes suddenly and wonderfully to their minds; and the manner of its coming makes them conclude it comes from God to them; and this is the very thing that is all

the foundation of their faith, and hope, and comfort: from hence they take their first encouragement to trust in God and in Christ, because they think that God, by some Scripture so brought, has now already revealed to them that he loves them, and has already promised them eternal life, which is very absurd; for every one of common knowledge of the principles of religion, knows that it is God's manner to reveal his love to men, and their interest in the promises, after they have believed, and not before, because they must first believe before they have any interest in the promises to be revealed. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of truth and not of lies: he does not bring Scriptures to men's minds, to reveal to them that they have an interest in God's favor and promises, when they have none, having not yet believed: which would be the case, if God's bringing texts of Scripture to men's minds, to reveal to them that their sins were forgiven, or that it was God's pleasure to give them the kingdom, or anything of that nature, went before, and was the foundation of their first faith. No promise of the covenant of grace belongs to any man, until he has first believed in Christ; for it is by faith alone that we become interested in Christ, and the promises of the new covenant made in him: and therefore whatever spirit applies the promises of that covenant to a person who has not first believed, as being already his, must be a lying spirit, and that faith which is first built on such an application of promises is built upon a lie. God's manner is not to bring comfortable texts of Scripture to give men assurance of his love, and that they shall be happy, before they have had a faith of dependence.[Mr. Stoddard in his Guide to Christ, p. 8, says, that "sometimes men, after they have been in trouble a while, have some promises come to them, with a great deal of refreshing; and they hope God has accepted them:" and says that, "In this case, the minister may tell them, that God never gives a faith of assurance, before he gives a faith of dependence; for he never manifests his love, until men are in a state of favor and reconciliation, which is by faith of dependence. When men have comfortable Scriptures come to them, they are apt to take them as tokens of God's love: but men must be brought into Christ, by accepting the offer of the gospel, before they are fit for such manifestations. God's method is first to make the soul accept of the offers of grace, and then to manifest his good estate unto him." And p. 76, speaking of them "that seem to be brought to lie at God's foot, and give an account of their closing with Christ, and that God has revealed Christ to them, and drawn their hearts to him, and they do accept of Christ," he says: "In this case, it is best to examine whether by that light that was given him, he saw Christ and salvation offered to him, or whether he saw that God loved him, or pardoned him: for the offer of grace and our acceptance goes before pardon, and therefore, much more before the knowledge of it."

Mr. Shepard, in his Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part II. p. 15, says, that "Grace and the love of Christ (the fairest colors under the sun) may be pretended; but if you shall receive, under this appearance, that God witnesseth his love, first by an absolute promise, take heed there; for under this appearance you may as well bring in immediate revelations, and from thence come to forsake the Scriptures." And in Part I. p. 86, he says, "Is Christ yours? Yes, I see it. How? By any word or promise? No; this is delusion." And p. 136, speaking of them that have no solid ground of peace, he reckons "those that content themselves with the revelation of the Lord's love without the sight of any work, or not looking to it." And says presently after, "The testimony of the Spirit does not make a man more a Christian, but only evidenceth it; as it is the nature of a witness not to make a thing to be true, but to clear and evidence it." And p. 140, speaking of them that say they have the witness of the spirit, that makes a difference between them and hypocrites, he says, "the witness of the Spirit makes not the first difference: for first a man is a believer, and in Christ, and justified,

called and sanctified, before the spirit does witness it; else the spirit should witness to an untruth and lie."] And if the Scripture which comes to a person's mind, be not so properly a promise, as an invitation; yet if he makes the sudden or unusual manner of the invitations coming to his mind, the ground on which he believes that he is invited, it is not true faith; because it is built on that which is not the true ground of faith. True faith is built on no precarious foundation: but a determination that the words of such a particular text were, by the immediate power of God, suggested to the mind, at such a time, as though then spoken and directed by God to him, because the words came after such a manner, is wholly an uncertain and precarious determination, as has been now shown; and therefore is a false and sandy foundation for faith; and accordingly that faith which is built upon it is false. The only certain foundation which any person has to believe that he is invited to partake of the blessings of the gospel, is, that the word of God declares that persons so qualified as he is, are invited, and God who declares it, is true, and cannot lie. If a sinner be once convinced of the veracity of God, and that the Scriptures are his word, he will need no more to convince and satisfy him that he is invited; for the Scriptures are full of invitations to sinners, to the chief of sinners, to come and partake of the benefits of the gospel; he will not want any never speaking of God to him; what he hath spoken already will be enough with him. As the first comfort of many persons, and their affections at the time of their supposed conversion, are built on such grounds as these which have been mentioned; so are their joys and hopes and other affections, from time to time afterwards. They have often particular words of Scripture, sweet declarations and promises suggested to them, which by reason of the manner of their coming, they think are immediately sent from God to them, at that time, which they look upon as their warrant to take them, and which they actually make the main ground of their appropriating them to themselves, and of the comfort they take in them, and the confidence they receive from them. Thus they imagine a kind of conversation is carried on between God and them; and that God, from time to time, does, as it were, immediately speak to them, and satisfy their doubts, and testifies his love to them, and promises them supports and supplies, and his blessing in such and such cases, and reveals to them clearly their interest in eternal blessings. And thus they are often elevated, and have a course of a sudden and tumultuous kind of joys, mingled with a strong confidence, and high opinion of themselves; when indeed the main ground of these joys, and this confidence, is not anything contained in, or taught by these Scriptures, as they lie in the Bible, but the manner of their coming to them; which is a certain evidence of their delusion. There is no particular promise in the word of God that is the saint's, or is any otherwise made to him, or spoken to him, than all the promises of the covenant of grace are his, and are made to him and spoken to him;[Mr. Shepard, in his Sound Believer, p. 159, of the late impression at Boston, says, "Embrace in thy bosom, not only some few promises, but all." And then he asks the question, "When may a Christian take a promise without presumption, as spoken to him?" He answers, "The rule is very sweet, but certain; when he takes all the scripture, and embraces it as spoken unto him, he may then take any particular promise boldly. My meaning is, when a Christian takes hold, and wrestles with God for the accomplishment of all the promises of the New Testament, when he sets all the commands before him, as a compass and guide to walk after, when he applies all the threatenings to drive him nearer to Christ, the end of them. This no hypocrite can do; this the saints shall do; and by this they may know when the Lord speaks in particular unto them."] though it be true that some of these promises may be more peculiarly adapted to his case than others, and God by his Spirit may enable him better to understand some than others, and to have a greater sense of the preciousness, and glory, and

suitableness of the blessings contained in them. But here some may be ready to say, What, is there no such thing as any particular spiritual application of the promises of Scripture by the Spirit of God? I answer, there is doubtless such a thing as a spiritual and saving application of the invitations and promises of Scripture to the souls of men; but it is also certain, that the nature of it is wholly misunderstood by many persons, to the great ensnaring of their own souls, and the giving Satan a vast advantage against them, and against the interest of religion, and the church of God. The spiritual application of a Scripture promise does not consist in its being immediately suggested to the thoughts by some extrinsic agent, and being borne into the mind with this strong apprehension, that it is particularly spoken and directed to them at that time; there is nothing of the evidence of the hand of God in this effect, as events have proved, in many notorious instances; and it is a mean notion of a spiritual application of Scripture; there is nothing in the nature of it at all beyond the power of the devil, if he be not restrained by God; for there is nothing in the nature of the effect that is spiritual, implying any vital communication of God. A truly spiritual application of the word of God is of a vastly higher nature; as much above the devil's power, as it is, so to apply the word of God to a dead corpse, as to raise it to life; or to a stone, to turn it into an angel. A spiritual application of the word of God consists in applying it to the heart, in spiritually enlightening, sanctifying influences. A spiritual application of an invitation or offer of the gospel consists, in giving the soul a spiritual sense or relish of the holy and divine blessings offered, and the sweet and wonderful grace of the offerer, in making so gracious an offer, and of his holy excellency and faithfulness to fulfill what he offers, and his glorious sufficiency for it; so leading and drawing forth the heart to embrace the offer; and thus giving the man evidence of his title to the thing offered. And so a spiritual application of the promises of Scripture, for the comfort of the saints, consists in enlightening their minds to see the holy excellency and sweetness of the blessings promised, and also the holy excellency of the promiser, and his faithfulness and sufficiency; thus drawing forth their hearts to embrace the promiser, and thing promised; and by this means, giving the sensible actings of grace, enabling them to see their grace, and so their title to the promise. An application not consisting in this divine sense and enlightening of the mind, but consisting only in the word's being borne into the thoughts, as if immediately then spoken, so making persons believe, on no other foundation, that the promise is theirs, is a blind application, and belongs to the spirit of darkness, and not of light. When persons have their affections raised after this manner, those affections are really not raised by the word of God; the Scripture is not the foundation of them; it is not anything contained in those Scriptures which come to their minds, that raise their affections; but truly that effect, viz., the strange manner of the word's being suggested to their minds, and a proposition from thence taken up by them, which indeed is not contained in that Scripture, nor any other; as that his sins are forgiven him, or that it is the Father's good pleasure to give him in particular the kingdom, or the like. There are propositions to be found in the Bible, declaring that persons of such and such qualifications are forgiven and beloved of God: but there are no propositions to be found in the Bible declaring that such and such particular persons, independent on any previous knowledge of any qualifications, are forgiven and beloved of God: and therefore, when any person is comforted, and affected by any such proposition, it is by another word, a word newly coined, and not any word of God contained in the Bible.[Some Christians have rested with a work without Christ, which is abominable: but after a man is in Christ, not to judge by the work, is first not to judge from a word. For though there is a word, which may give a man a dependence on Christ, without feeling any work, nay when he feels none as absolute

promises: yet no word giving assurance, but that which is made to some work, he that believeth or is poor in spirit, &c., until that work is seen, has no assurance from that promise." Shepard's Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 86.

"If God should tell a saint that he has grace, he might know it by believing the word of God: but it is not in this way that godly men do know that they have grace: it is not revealed in the word, and the Spirit of God doth not testify it to particular persons." Stoddard's Nature of Saving Conversion, p. 84, 85.] And thus many persons are vainly affected and deluded.

Again, it plainly appears from what has been demonstrated, that no revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestion, is anything spiritual and divine, in that sense wherein gracious effects and operations are so. By secret facts, I mean things that have been done, or are come to pass, or shall hereafter come to pass, which are secret in that sense that they do not appear to the senses, nor are known by any argumentation, or any evidence to reason, nor any other way, but only by that revelation by immediate suggestion of the ideas of them to the mind. Thus for instance, if it should be revealed to me, that the next year this land would be invaded by a fleet from France, or that such and such persons would then be converted, or that I myself should then be converted; not by enabling me to argue out these events from anything which now appears in providence, but immediately suggesting and bearing in upon my mind, in an extraordinary manner, the apprehension or ideas of these facts, with a strong suggestion or impression on my mind, that I had no hand in myself, that these things would come to pass: or if it should be revealed to me, that this day there is a battle fought between the armies of such and such powers in Europe; or that such a prince in Europe was this day converted, or is now in a converted state, having been converted formerly, or that one of my neighbors is converted, or that I myself am converted; not by having any other evidence of any of these facts, from whence I argue them, but an immediate extraordinary suggestion or excitation of these ideas, and a strong impression of them upon my mind: this is a revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestion, as much as if the facts were future; for the facts being past, present, or future, alters not the case, as long as they are secret and hidden from my senses and reason, and not spoken of in Scripture, nor known by me any other way than by immediate suggestion. If I have it revealed to me, that such a revolution is come to pass this day in the Ottoman Empire, it is the very same sort of revelation, as if it were revealed to me that such a revolution would come to pass there this day come twelvemonth; because, though one is present and the other future, yet both are equally hidden from me, any other way than by immediate revelation. When Samuel told Saul that the asses which he went to seek were found, and that his father had left caring for the asses and sorrowed for him; this was by the same kind of revelation, as that by which he told Saul, that in the plain of Tabor there should meet him three men going up to God to Bethel (1 Samuel 10:2-3), though one of these things was future, and the other was not. So when Elisha told the king of Israel the words that the king of Syria spake in his bed-chamber, it was by the same kind of revelation with that by which he foretold many things to come.

It is evident that this revelation of secret facts by immediate suggestions, has nothing of the nature of a spiritual and divine operation, in the sense forementioned; there is nothing at all in the nature of the perceptions or ideas themselves, which are excited in the mind, that is divinely excellent, and so, far above all the ideas of natural men; though the manner of exciting the ideas be extraordinary. In those things which are spiritual, as has been shown, not only the manner of

producing the effect, but the effect wrought is divine, and so vastly above all that can be in an unsanctified mind. Now simply the having an idea of facts, setting aside the manner of producing those ideas, is nothing beyond what the minds of wicked men are susceptible of, without any goodness in them; and they all, either have or will have, the knowledge of the truth of the greatest and most important facts, that have been, are, or shall be. And as to the extraordinary manner of producing the ideas or perception of facts, even by immediate suggestion, there is nothing in it, but what the minds of natural men, while they are yet natural men, are capable of, as is manifest in Balaam, and others spoken of in the Scripture. And therefore it appears that there is nothing appertaining to this immediate suggestion of secret facts that is spiritual, in the sense in which it has been proved that gracious operations are so. If there be nothing in the ideas themselves, which is holy and divine, and so nothing but what may be in a mind not sanctified, then God can put them into the mind by immediate power without sanctifying it. As there is nothing in the idea of a rainbow itself that is of a holy and divine nature; so that nothing hinders but that an unsanctified mind may receive that idea; so God, if he pleases, and when he pleases, immediately, and in an extraordinary manner, may excite that idea in an unsanctified mind. So also, as there is nothing in the idea or knowledge that such and such particular persons are forgiven and accepted of God, and entitled to heaven, but what unsanctified minds may have and will have concerning many at the day of judgment; so God can, if he pleases, extraordinarily and immediately, suggest this to, and impress it upon an unsanctified mind now: there is no principle wanting in an unsanctified mind, to make it capable of such a suggestion or impression, nor is there anything in it to exclude, or necessarily to prevent such a suggestion. And if these suggestions of secret facts be attended with texts of Scripture, immediately and extraordinarily brought to mind, about some other facts that seem in some respects similar, that does not make the operation to be of a spiritual and divine nature. For that suggestion of words of Scripture is no more divine, than the suggestion of the facts themselves; as has been just now demonstrated: and two effects together, which are neither of them spiritual cannot make up one complex effect, that is spiritual.

Hence it follows, from what has been already shown, and often repeated, that those affections which are properly founded on such immediate suggestions, or supposed suggestions, of secret facts, are not gracious affections. Not but that it is possible that such suggestions may be the occasion, or accidental cause of gracious affections; for so may a mistake and delusion; but it is never properly the foundation of gracious affections: for gracious affections, as has been shown, are all the effects of an influence and operation which is spiritual, supernatural, and divine. But there are many affections, and high affections, which some have, that have such kind of suggestions or revelations for their very foundation: they look upon these as spiritual discoveries, which is a gross delusion, and this delusion is truly the spring whence their affections flow.

Here it may be proper to observe, that it is exceedingly manifest from what has been said, that what many persons call the witness of the Spirit, that they are the children of God, has nothing in it spiritual and divine; and consequently that the affections built upon it are vain and delusive. That which many call the witness of the Spirit, is no other than an immediate suggestion and impression of that fact, otherwise secret, that they are converted, or made the children of God, and so that their sins are pardoned, and that God has given them a title to heaven. This kind of knowledge, viz., knowing that a certain person is converted, and delivered from hell, and entitled to heaven, is no divine sort of knowledge in itself. This sort of fact, is not that which requires any higher or more

divine kind of suggestion, in order to impress it on the mind, than any other fact which Balaam had impressed on his mind. It requires no higher sort of idea or sensation, for a man to have the apprehension of his own conversion impressed upon him, than to have the apprehension of his neighbor's conversion, in like manner impressed: but God, if he pleased, might impress the knowledge of this fact, that he had forgiven his neighbor's sins, and given him a title to heaven, as well as any other fact, without any communication of his holiness: the excellency and importance of the fact, do not at all hinder a natural man's mind being susceptible of an immediate suggestion and impression of it. Balaam had as excellent, and important, and glorious facts as this, immediately impressed on his mind, without any gracious influence; as particularly, the coming of Christ, and his setting up his glorious kingdom, and the blessedness of the spiritual Israel in his peculiar favor, and their happiness living and dying. Yea, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, had God's special favor to a particular person, even Abraham, revealed to him, Genesis 20:6-7. So it seems that he revealed to Laban his special favor to Jacob, see Genesis 31:24, and Psalms 105:15. And if a truly good man should have an immediate revelation or suggestion from God, after the like manned concerning his favor to his neighbor or himself; it would be no higher kind of influence; it would be no more than a common sort of influence of God's Spirit; as the gift of prophecy, and all revelation by immediate suggestion is; see 1 Corinthians 13:2. And though it be true, that it is not possible that a natural man should have that individual suggestion from the Spirit of God, that he is converted, because it is not true; yet that does not arise from the nature of the influence, or because that kind of influence which suggests such excellent facts, is too high for him to be the subject of; but purely from the defect of a fact to be revealed. The influence which immediately suggests this fact, when it is true, is of no different kind from that which immediately suggests other true facts: and so the kind and nature of the influence is not above what is common to natural men, with good men. But this is a mean, ignoble notion of the witness of the Spirit of God given to his dear children, to suppose that there is nothing in the kind and nature of that influence of the Spirit of God, in imparting this high and glorious benefit, but what is common to natural men, or which men are capable of, and be in the mean time altogether unsanctified and the children of hell; and that therefore the benefit or gift itself has nothing of the holy nature of the Spirit of God in it, nothing of a vital communication of that Spirit. This notion greatly debases that high and most exalted kind of influence and operation of the Spirit, which there is in the true witness of the Spirit.[The late venerable Stoddard, in his younger time, falling in with the opinion of some others, received this notion of the witness of the Spirit, by way of immediate suggestion; but, in the latter part of his life, when he had more thoroughly weighed things, and had more experience, he entirely rejected it; as appears by his treatise of the Nature of Saving Conversion, p. 84: "The Spirit of God doth not testify to particular persons, that they are godly.-Some think that the Spirit of God doth testify to some; and they ground it on Romans 8:16, 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.' They think the Spirit reveals it by giving an inward testimony to it; and some godly men think they have had experience of it: but they may easily mistake when the Spirit of God doth eminently stir up the spirit of faith, and sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, it is easy to take it for a testimony. And that is not the meaning of Paul's words. The Spirit reveals things to us, by opening our eyes to see what is revealed in the word; but the Spirit doth not reveal new truths, not revealed in the word. The Spirit discovers the grace of God in Christ, and thereby draws forth special actings of faith and love, which are evidential; but it doth not work in way of testimony. If God but help us to receive the revelations in

the word we shall have comfort enough without new revelations."] That which is called the witness of the Spirit, Romans 8:1-39, is elsewhere in the New Testament called the seal of the Spirit, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, and Ephesians 4:13, alluding to the seal of princes, annexed to the instrument, by which they advanced any of their subjects to some high honor and dignity, or peculiar privilege in the kingdom, as a token of their special favor. Which is an evidence that the influence of the Spirit, of the Prince of princes, in sealing his favorites, is far from being of a common kind; and that there is no effect of God's Spirit whatsoever, which is in its nature more divine; nothing more holy, peculiar, inimitable and distinguishing of divinity: as nothing is more royal than the royal seal; nothing more sacred, that belongs to a prince, and more peculiarly denoting what belongs to him; it being the very end and design of it, to be the most peculiar stamp and confirmation of the royal authority, and great note of distinction, whereby that which proceeds from the king, or belongs to him, may be known from everything else. And therefore undoubtedly the seal of the great King of heaven and earth enstamped on the heart, is something high and holy in its own nature, some excellent communication from the infinite fountain of divine beauty and glory; and not merely a making known a secret fact by revelation or suggestion; which is a sort of influence of the Spirit of God, that the children of the devil have often been the subjects of. The seal of the Spirit is a kind of effect of the Spirit of God on the heart, which natural men, while such, are so far from a capacity of being the subjects of; that they can have no manner of notion or idea of it, agreeable to Revelation 2:17 : "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it." There is all reason to suppose that what is here spoken of, is the same mark, evidence, or blessed token of special favor, which is elsewhere called the seal of the Spirit.

What has misled many in their notion of that influence of the Spirit of God we are speaking of, is the word witness, its being called the witness of the Spirit. Hence they have taken it, not to be any effect or work of the Spirit upon the heart, giving evidence, from whence men may argue that they are the children of God; but an inward immediate suggestion, as though God inwardly spoke to the man, and testified to him, and told him that he was his child, by a kind of a secret voice, or impression: not observing the manner in which the word witness, or testimony, is often used in the New Testament, where such terms often signify, not only a mere declaring and asserting a thing to be true, but holding forth evidence from whence a thing may be argued, and proved to be true. Thus Hebrews 2:4, God is said to "bear witness, with signs and wonders and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Now these miracles, here spoken of, are called God's witness, not because they are of the nature of assertions, but evidences and proofs. So Acts 14:3 : "Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands." And John 5:36 : "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent of me." Again, John 10:25 : "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." So the water and the blood are said to bear witness, 1 John 5:8, not that they spoke or asserted anything, but they were proofs and evidences. So God's works of providence, in the rain and fruitful seasons, are spoken of as witnesses of God's being and goodness, i.e., they are evidences of these things. And when the Scripture speaks of the seal of the Spirit, it is an expression which properly denotes, not an immediate voice or suggestion, but some work or effect of the Spirit, that is left as a divine mark upon the soul, to be an evidence by which God's children might be known. The seals of princes were the

distinguishing marks of princes: and thus God's seal is spoken of as God's mark, Revelation 7:3 : "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads;" together with Ezekiel 9:4, "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof." When God sets his seal on a man's heart by his Spirit, there is some holy stamp, some image impressed and left upon the heart by the Spirit, as by the seal upon the wax. And this holy stamp, or impressed image, exhibiting clear evidence to the conscience, that the subject of it is the child of God, is the very thing which in Scripture is called the seal of the Spirit, and the witness, or evidence of the Spirit. And this image enstamped by the Spirit on God's children's hearts, is his own image; that is the evidence by which they are known to be God's children, that they have the image of their Father stamped upon their hearts by the Spirit of adoption. Seals anciently had engraven on them two things, viz., the image and the name of the person whose seal it was. Therefore when Christ says to his spouse, Song of Solomon 8:6, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm;" it is as much as to say, let my name and image remain impressed there. The seals of princes were wont to bear their image; so that what they set their seal and royal mark upon, had their image left on it. It was the manner of princes of old to have their image engraven on their jewels and precious stones; and the image of Augustus engraven on a precious stone, was used as the seal of the Roman emperors, in Christ's and the Apostle's times.[See Chamber's Dictionary, under the word Engraving.] And the saints are the jewels of Jesus Christ, the great potentate, who has the possession of the empire of the universe; and these jewels have his image enstamped upon them by his royal signet, which is the Holy Spirit. And this is undoubtedly what the Scripture means by the seal of the Spirit; especially when it is stamped in so fair and clear a manner, as to be plain to the eye of conscience; which is what the Scripture calls our spirit. This is truly an effect that is spiritual, supernatural and divine. This is in itself of a holy nature, being a communication of the divine nature and beauty. That kind of influence of the Spirit which gives and leaves this stamp upon the heart, is such that no natural man can be the subject of anything of the like nature with it. This is the highest sort of witness of the Spirit, which it is possible the soul should be the subject of: if there were any such thing as a witness of the Spirit by immediate suggestion or revelation, this would be vastly more noble and excellent, and as much above it as the heaven is above the earth. This the devil cannot imitate; as to an inward suggestion of the Spirit of God, by a kind of secret voice speaking, and immediately asserting and revealing a fact, he can do that which is a thousand times so like to this, as he can to that holy and divine effect, or work of the Spirit of God, which has now been spoken of.

Another thing which is a full proof that the seal of the Spirit is no revelation of any fact by immediate suggestion, but is grace itself in the soul, is, that the seal of the Spirit is called in the Scripture, the earnest of the Spirit. It is very plain that the seal of the Spirit is the same thing with the earnest of the Spirit, by 2 Corinthians 1:22 : "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts;" and Ephesians 1:13-14, "In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory." Now the earnest is part of the money agreed for, given in hand, as a token of the whole, to be paid in due time; a part of the promised inheritance granted now, in token of full possession of the whole hereafter. But surely that kind of communication of the Spirit of God, which is of the nature of eternal glory, is the highest and most excellent kind of communication, something that is in its own nature spiritual, holy and divine, and

far from anything that is common: and therefore high above anything of the nature of inspiration, or revelation of hidden facts by suggestion of the Spirit of God, which many natural men have had. What is the earnest, and beginning of glory, but grace itself, especially in the more lively and clear exercises of it? It is not prophecy, nor tongues, nor knowledge, but that more excellent divine thing, "charity that never faileth," which is a prelibation and beginning of the light, sweetness and blessedness of heaven, that world of love or charity. It is grace that is the seed of glory and dawning of glory in the heart, and therefore it is grace that is the earnest of the future inheritance. What is it that is the beginning or earnest of eternal life in the soul, but spiritual life; and what is that but grace? The inheritance that Christ has purchased for the elect, is the Spirit of God; not in any extraordinary gifts, but in his vital indwelling in the heart, exerting and communicating himself there, in his own proper, holy, or divine nature; and this is the sum total of the inheritance that Christ purchased for the elect. For so are things constituted in the affair of our redemption, that the Father provides the Savior or purchaser, and the purchase is made of him; and the Son is the purchaser and the price; and the Holy Spirit is the great blessing or inheritance purchased, as is intimated, Galatians 3:13-14; and hence the Spirit often is spoken of as the sum of the blessings promised in the gospel, Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4, and Acts 2:38-39, Galatians 3:14, Ephesians 1:13. This inheritance was the grand legacy which Christ left his disciples and church, in his last will and testament, John 14:15-16. This is the sum of the blessings of eternal life, which shall be given in heaven. (Compare John 7:37-39, and John 4:14, with Revelation 21:6, and Revelation 22:1, Revelation 22:17.) It is through the vital communications and indwelling of the Spirit that the saints have all their light, life, holiness, beauty, and joy in heaven; and it is through the vital communications and indwelling of the same Spirit that the saints have all light, life, holiness, beauty and comfort on earth; but only communicated in less measure. And this vital indwelling of the Spirit in the saints, in this less measure and small beginning is, "the earnest of the Spirit, the earnest of the future inheritance, and the first fruits of the Spirit," as the apostle calls it, Romans 8:22, where, by "the first fruits of the Spirit," the apostle undoubtedly means the same vital, gracious principle that he speaks of in all the preceding part of the chapter, which he calls Spirit, and sets in opposition to flesh or corruption.-Therefore this earnest of the Spirit, and first fruits of the Spirit, which has been shown to be the same with the seal of the Spirit, is the vital, gracious, sanctifying communication and influence of the Spirit, and not any immediate suggestion or revelation of facts by the Spirit.["After a man is in Christ, not to judge the work, is not to judge by the Spirit. For the apostle makes the earnest of the Spirit to be the seal.-Now earnest is part of the money bargained for, the beginning of heaven, of the light and life of it. He that sees not that the Lord is his by that, sees no God of his at all. Oh, therefore, do not look for a Spirit, without a word to reveal, nor a word to reveal, without seeing and feeling of some work first. I thank the Lord, I do but pity those that think otherwise. If a sheep of Christ, Oh, wonder not." Shepard's Par. Part I. p. 26.] And indeed the apostle, when in that, Romans 8:16, he speaks of the Spirit's bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, does sufficiently explain himself, if his words were but attended to. What is here expressed is connected with the two preceding verses, as resulting from what the apostle had said there as every reader may see. The three verses together are thus: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God: for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Here, what the apostle says, if we take it together, plainly shows that what he has respect to, when

he speaks of the Spirit's giving us witness or evidence that we are God's children, is his dwelling in us, and leading us, as a spirit of adoption, or spirit of a child, disposing us to behave towards God as to a Father. This is the witness or evidence which the apostle speaks of that we are children, that we have the spirit of children, or spirit of adoption. And what is that but the spirit of love? There are two kinds of spirits the apostle speaks of, the spirit of a slave or the spirit of bondage, that is fear; and the spirit of a child, or spirit of adoption, and that is love. The apostle says, we have not received the spirit of bondage, or of slaves, which is a spirit of fear; but we have received the more ingenuous noble spirit of children, a spirit of love, which naturally disposes us to go to God as children to a father, and behave towards God as children. And this is the evidence or witness which the Spirit of God gives us that we are his children. This is the plain sense of the apostle; and so undoubtedly he here is speaking of the very same way of casting out doubting and fear and the spirit of bondage, which the Apostle John speaks of, 1 John 4:18, viz., by the prevailing of love, that is the spirit of a child. The spirit of bondage works by fear, the slave fears the rod: but love cries, Abba, Father; it disposes us to go to God, and behave ourselves towards God as children; and it gives us clear evidence of our union to God as his children, and so casts out fear. So that it appears that the witness of the Spirit the apostle speaks of, is far from being any whisper, or immediate suggestion or revelation; but that gracious holy effect of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the saints, the disposition and temper of children, appearing in sweet childlike love to God, which casts out fear, or a spirit of a slave. And the same thing is evident from all the context: it is plain the apostle speaks of the Spirit, over and over again, as dwelling in the hearts of the saints as a gracious principle, set in opposition to the flesh or corruption: and so he does in the words that immediately introduce this passage we are upon, Romans 8:13, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live."

Indeed it is past doubt with me, that the apostle has a more special respect to the spirit of grace, or the spirit of love, or spirit of a child, in its more lively actings; for it is perfect love, or strong love only, which so witnesses or evidences that we are children as to cast out fear, and wholly deliver from the spirit of bondage. The strong and lively exercises of a spirit of childlike, evangelical, humble love to God, give clear evidence of the soul's relation to God as his child; which does very greatly and directly satisfy the soul. And though it be far from being true, that the soul in this case, judges only by an immediate witness without any sign or evidence; for it judges and is assured by the greatest sign and clearest evidence; yet in this case the saint stands in no need of multiplied signs, or any long reasoning upon them. And though the sight of his relative union with God, and his being in his favor, is not without a medium, because he sees it by that medium, viz., his love; yet his sight of the union of his heart to God is immediate: love, the bond of union, is seen intuitively: the saint sees and feels plainly the union between his soul and God; it is so strong and lively, that he cannot doubt of it. And hence he is assured that he is a child. How can he doubt whether he stands in a childlike relation to God, when he plainly sees a childlike union between God and his soul, and hence does boldly, and as it were naturally and necessarily cry, Abba, Father? And whereas the apostle says, the Spirit bears witness with our spirits; by our spirit here, is meant our conscience, which is called the spirit of man, Proverbs 20:17, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." We elsewhere read of the witness of this spirit of ours: 2 Corinthians 1:12, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." And 1 John 3:19-21 : "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." When the Apostle Paul speaks of the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, he is not to be understood of two spirits that are two separate, collateral, independent witnesses; but it is by one that we receive the witness of the other: the Spirit of God gives the evidence by infusing and shedding abroad the love of God, the spirit of a child, in the heart, and our spirit, or our conscience, receives and declares this evidence for our rejoicing.

Many have been the mischiefs that have arisen from that false and delusive notion of the witness of the Spirit, that it is a kind of inward voice, suggestion, or declaration from God to man, that he is beloved of him, and pardoned, elected, or the like, sometimes with, and sometimes without a text of Scripture; and many have been the false and vain (though very high) affections that have arisen from hence. And it is to be feared that multitudes of souls have been eternally undone by it. I have therefore insisted the longer on this head. But I proceed now to a second characteristic of gracious affections.

II. The first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things as they are themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest.

I say, that the supremely excellent nature of divine things, is the first, or primary and original objective foundation of the spiritual affections of true saints; for I do not suppose that all relation which divine things bear to themselves, and their own particular interest, is wholly excluded from all influence in their gracious affections. For this may have, and indeed has, a secondary and consequential influence in those affections that are truly holy and spiritual, as I shall show how by and by.

It was before observed that the affection of love is, as it were, the fountain of all affection; and particularly that Christian love is the fountain of all gracious affections: now the divine excellency and glory of God and Jesus Christ the word of God, the works of God, and the ways of God, &c., is the primary reason why a true saint loves these things; and not any supposed interest that he has in them, or any conceived benefit that he has received from them, or shall receive from them, or any such imagined relation which they bear to his interest, that self-love can properly be said to be the first foundation of his love to these things.

Some say that all love arises from self-love; and that it is impossible in the nature of things, for any man to have any love to God, or any other beings, but that love to himself must be the foundation of it. But I humbly suppose it is for want of consideration that they say so. They argue, that whoever loves God, and so desires his glory or the enjoyment of him, he desires these things as his own happiness; the glory of God, and the beholding and enjoying his perfections are considered as things agreeable to him, tending to make him happy; he places his happiness in them, and desires them as things, which (if they were obtained) would be delightful to him, or would fill him with delight and joy, and so make him happy. And so, they say, it is from self-love, or a desire of his own happiness, that he desires God should be glorified, and desires to behold and enjoy his glorious perfections. But then they ought to consider a little further, and inquire how the man came to place his happiness in God’s being glorified, and in contemplating and enjoying God’s perfections.-There is no doubt but that after God’s glory, and the beholding his perfections, are become so agreeable to him, that he places his highest happiness in these thinks then he will

desire them, as he desires his own happiness. But how came these things to be so agreeable to him, that he esteems it his highest happiness to glorify God, &c.? Is not this the fruit of love? A man must first love God or have his heart united to him, before he will esteem God's good his own, and before he will desire the glorifying, and enjoying of God as his happiness. It is not strong arguing, that because after a man has his heart united to God in love, as a fruit of this, he desires his glory and enjoyment, as his own happiness, that therefore a desire of this happiness of his own must needs be the cause and foundation of his love; unless it be a strong arguing, that because a father begat a son, therefore his son certainly begat him. If after a man loves God, and has his heart so united to him, as to look upon God as his chief good, and on God's good as his own, it will be a consequence and fruit of this, that even self-love, or love to his own happiness, will cause him to desire the glorifying and enjoying of God; it will not thence follow, that this very exercise of self-love, went before his love to God, and that his love to God was a consequence and fruit of that. Something else, entirely distinct from self-love, might be the cause of this, viz., a change made in the views of his mind, and relish of his heart; whereby he apprehends a beauty, glory, and supreme good, in God's nature, as it is in itself. This may be the thing that first draws his heart to him, and causes his heart to be united to him, prior to all considerations of his own interest or happiness, although after this, and as a fruit of this, he necessarily seeks his interest and happiness in God.

There is such a thing as a kind of love or affection that a man may have towards persons or things, which does properly arise from self-love; a preconceived relation to himself, or some respect already manifested by another to him, or some benefit already received or depended on, is truly the first foundation of his love, and what his affection does wholly arise from; and is what precedes any relish of, or delight in the nature and qualities inherent in the being beloved, as beautiful and amiable. When the first thing that draws a man's benevolence to another, is the beholding those qualifications and properties in him, which appear to him lovely in themselves; and the subject of them, on this account, worthy of esteem and good will, love arises in a very different manners than when it first arises from some gift bestowed by another or depended on from him, as a judge loves and favors a man that has bribed him; or from the relation he supposes another has to him, as a man who loves another, because he looks upon him as his child. When love to another arises thus, it does truly and properly arise from self-love. That kind of affection to God or Jesus Christ, which does thus properly arise from self-love, cannot be a truly gracious and spiritual love, as appears from what has been said already: for self-love is a principle entirely natural, and as much in the hearts of devils as angels; and therefore surely nothing that is the mere result of it can be supernatural and divine, in the manner before described.["There is a natural love to Christ, as to one that doth thee good, and for thine own ends; and spiritual, for himself, whereby the Lord only is exalted." Shepard's Par. of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 25.] Christ plainly speaks of this kind of love, as what is nothing beyond the love of wicked men: Luke 6:32, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them." And the devil himself knew that that kind of respect to God which was so mercenary, as to be only for benefits received or depended on (which is all one), is worthless in the sight of God; otherwise he never would have made use of such a slander before God, against Job, as in Job 1:9-10 : "Doth Job serve God for nought? Has not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house," &c. Nor would God ever have implicitly allowed the objection to have been good, in case the accusation had been true, by allowing that that matter should be tried, and that Job should be so dealt with, that it might appear

in the event, whether Job's respect to God was thus mercenary or no, and by putting the proof of the sincerity and goodness of his respect upon that issue.

It is unreasonable to think otherwise, than that the first foundation of a true love to God, is that whereby he is in himself lovely, or worthy to be loved, or the supreme loveliness of his nature. This is certainly what makes him chiefly amiable. What chiefly makes a man, or any creature lovely, is his excellency; and so what chiefly renders God lovely, and must undoubtedly be the chief ground of true love, is his excellency. God's nature, or the divinity, is infinitely excellent; yea it is infinite beauty, brightness, and glory itself. But how can that be true love of this excellent and lovely nature, which is not built on the foundation of its true loveliness? How can that be true love of beauty and brightness which is not for beauty and brightness' sake? How can that be a true prizing of that which is in itself infinitely worthy and precious, which is not for the sake of its worthiness and preciousness? This infinite excellency of the divine nature, as it is in itself, is the true ground of all that is good in God in any respect; but how can a man truly and rightly love God, without loving him for that excellency in him, which is the foundation of all that is in any manner of respect good or desirable in him? They whose affection to God is founded first on his profitableness to them, their affection begins at the wrong end; they regard God only for the utmost limit of the stream of divine good, where it touches them, and reaches their interest; and have no respect to that infinite glory of God's nature, which is the original good, and the true fountain of all good, the first fountain of all loveliness of every kind, and so the first foundation of all true love. A natural principle of self-love may be the foundation of great affections towards God and Christ, without seeing anything of the beauty and glory of the divine nature. There is a certain gratitude that is a mere natural thing. Gratitude is one of the natural affections of the soul of man, as well as anger, and there is a gratitude that arises from self-love, very much in the same manner that anger does. Anger in men is an affection excited against another, or in opposition to another, for something in him that crosses self-love: gratitude is an affection one has towards another, for loving him, or gratifying him, or for something in him that suits self-love. And there may be a kind of gratitude, without any true or proper love: as there may be anger without any proper hatred, as in parents towards their children, that they may be angry with, and yet at the same time have a strong habitual love to them. This gratitude is the principle which is an exercise in wicked men, in that which Christ declares concerning them, in the 6th of Luke, where he says, sinners love those that love them; and which he declares concerning even the publicans, who were some of the most carnal and profligate sort of men, Matthew 5:46. This is the very principle that is wrought upon by bribery, in unjust judges; and it is a principle that even the brute beasts do exercise; a dog will love his master that is kind to him. And we see in innumerable instances, that mere nature is sufficient to excite gratitude in men, or to affect their hearts with thankfulness to others for kindnesses received; and sometimes towards them, whom at the same time they have a habitual enmity against. Thus Saul was once and again greatly affected, and even dissolved with gratitude towards David, for sparing his life, and yet remained a habitual enemy to him. And as men, from mere nature, may be thus affected towards men; so they may towards God. There is nothing hinders but that the same self-love may work after the same manner towards God as towards men. And we have manifest instances of it in Scripture; as indeed the children of Israel, who sang God's praises at the Red Sea, but soon forgot God's works: and in Naaman the Syrian, who was greatly affected with the miraculous cure of his leprosy, so as to have his heart engaged thenceforward to worship the God that had healed him, and him only, excepting when it would

expose him to be ruined in his temporal interest. So was Nebuchadnezzar greatly affected with God's goodness to him, in restoring him to his reason and kingdom, alter his dwelling with the beasts.

Gratitude being thus a natural principle, it renders ingratitude so much the more vile and heinous; because it shows a dreadful prevalence of wickedness, when it even overbears and suppresses the better principles of human nature: as it is mentioned as an evidence of the high degree of the wickedness of many of the heathen, that they were without natural affection, Romans 1:31. But that the want of gratitude, or natural affection, is evidence of a high degree of vice, is no argument that all gratitude and natural affection has the nature of virtue, or saving grace.

01.08. PART III(c)

Self-love, through the exercise of mere natural gratitude, may be the foundation of a sort of love to God many ways. A kind of love may arise from a false notion of God, that men have been educated in, or have some way imbibed; as though he were only goodness and mercy, and not revenging justice; or as though the exercises of his goodness were necessary, and not free and sovereign; or as though his goodness were dependent on what is in them, and as it were constrained by them. Men on such grounds as these, may love a God of their own forming in their imaginations, when they are far from loving such a God as reigns in heaven.

Again, self-love may be the foundation of an affection in men towards God, through a great insensibility of their state with regard to God, and for want of conviction of conscience to make them sensible how dreadfully they have provoked God to anger; they have no sense of the heinousness of sin, as against God, and of the infinite and terrible opposition of the holy nature of God against it: and so, having formed in their minds such a God as suits them, and thinking God. to be such a one as themselves, who favors and agrees with them, they may like him very well, and feel a sort of love to him, when they are far from loving the true God. And men's affections may be much moved towards God, from self-love, by some remarkable outward benefits received from God; as it was with Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar, and the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

Again, a very high affection towards God may, and often does, arise in men, from an opinion of the favor and love of God to them, as the first foundation of their love to him. After awakenings and distress, through fears of hell, they may suddenly get a notion, through some impression on their imagination, or immediate suggestion with or without texts of Scripture, or by some other means, that God loves them, and has forgiven their sins, and made them his children; and this is the first thing that causes their affections to flow towards God and Jesus Christ: and then after this, and upon this foundation, many things in God may appear lovely to them, and Christ may seem excellent. And if such persons are asked, whether God appears lovely and amiable in himself, they would perhaps readily answer, yes; when indeed, if the matter be strictly examined, this good opinion of God was purchased and paid for before ever they afforded it, in the distinguishing and infinite benefits they imagined they received from God: and they allow God to be lovely in himself, no otherwise than that he has forgiven them, and accepted them, and loves them above most in the world, and has engaged to improve all his infinite power and wisdom in preferring, dignifying, and exalting them, and will do for them just as they would have him. When once they are firm in this apprehension, it is easy to own God and Christ to be lovely and glorious, and to admire and extol them. It is easy for them to own Christ to be a lovely person, and the best in the world, when they are first firm in it, that he, though Lord of the universe, is captivated with love to them, and has his heart swallowed up in them, and prizes them far beyond most of their neighbors, and loved them from eternity, and died for them, and will make them reign in eternal glory with him in heaven. When this is the case with carnal men, their very lusts will make him seem lovely: pride itself will prejudice them in favor of that which they call Christ: selfish, proud man naturally calls that lovely that greatly contributes to his interest, and gratifies his ambition. And as this sort of

persons begin, so they go on. Their affections are raised from time to time, primarily on this foundation of self-love and a conceit of God's love to them. Many have a false notion of communion with God, as though it were carried on by impulses, and whispers, and external representations, immediately made to their imagination. These things they often have; which they take to be manifestations of God's great love to them, and evidences of their high exaltation above others of mankind; and so their affections, we often renewedly set agoing.

Whereas the exercises of true and holy love in the saints arise in another way. They do not first see that God loves them, and then see that he is lovely, but they first see that God is lovely, and that Christ is excellent and glorious, and their hearts are first captivated with this view, and the exercises of their love are wont from time to time to begin here, and to arise primarily from these views; and then, consequentially, they see God's love, and great favor to them.["There is a seeing of Christ after a man believes, which is Christ in his love, &c. But I speak of that first sight of him that precedes the second act of faith, and it is an intuitive, or real sight of him as he is in his glory." Shepard's Par. of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 74.] The saint's affections begin with God; and self-love has a hand in these affections consequentially, and secondarily only. On the contrary, those false affections begin with self, and an acknowledgment of an excellency in God, and an affectedness with it, is only consequential and dependent. In the love of the true saint God is the lowest foundation; the love of the excellency of his nature is the foundation of all the affections which come afterwards wherein self-love is concerned as a handmaid: on the contrary, the hypocrite lays himself at the bottom of all, as the first foundation, and lays on God as the superstructure; and even his acknowledgment of God's glory itself depends on his regard to his private interest.

Self-love may not only influence men, so as to cause them to be affected with God's kindness to them separately; but also with God's kindness to them as parts of a community: as a natural principle of self-love, without any other principle, may be sufficient to make a man concerned for the interest of the nation to which he belongs: as for instance, in the present war, self-love may make natural men rejoice at the successes of our nation, and sorry for their disadvantages, they being concerned as members of the body. So the same natural principle may extend further, and even to the world of mankind, and might be affected with the benefits the inhabitants of the earth have, beyond those of the inhabitants of other planets, if we knew that such there were, and how it was with them. So this principle may cause men to be affected with the benefits that mankind have received beyond the fallen angels. And hence men, from this principle, may be much affected with the wonderful goodness of God to mankind, his great goodness in giving his Son to die for fallen man, and the marvellous love of Christ in suffering such great things for us, and with the great glory they hear God has provided in heaven for us; looking on themselves as persons concerned and interested, as being some of this species of creatures so highly favored: the same principle of natural gratitude may influence men here, as in the case of personal benefits. But these things that I have said do by no means imply, that all gratitude to God is a mere natural thing, and that there is no such thing as a spiritual gratitude, which is a holy and divine affection: they imply no more, than that there is a gratitude which is merely natural, and that when persons have affections towards God only or primarily for benefits received, their affection is only the exercise of a natural gratitude. There is doubtless such a thing as a gracious gratitude, which does greatly differ from all that gratitude which natural men experience. It differs in the following respects:

1. True gratitude or thankfulness to God for his kindness to us, arises from a foundation laid before, of love to God for what he is in himself, whereas a natural gratitude has no such antecedent foundation. The gracious stirrings of grateful affection to God, for kindness received, always are from a stock of love already in the heart, established in the first place on other grounds, viz., God's own excellency; and hence the affections are disposed to flow out on occasions of God's kindness. The saint, having seen the glory of God, and his heart being overcome by it, and captivated with love to him on that account, his heart hereby becomes tender, and easily affected with kindnesses received. If a man has no love to another, yet gratitude be moved by some extraordinary kindness; as in Saul towards David: but this is not the same kind of thing, as a man's gratitude to a dear friend, that his heart was before possessed with a high esteem of, and love to; whose heart by this means became tender towards him, and more easily affected with gratitude, and affected in another manner. Self-love is not excluded from a gracious gratitude; the saints love God for his kindness to them: Psalms 116:1, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication." But something else is included; and another love prepares the way, and lays the foundation for these grateful affections.

2. In a gracious gratitude men are affected with the attribute of God's goodness and free grace not only as they are concerned in it, or as it affects their interest, but as a part of the glory and beauty of God's nature. That wonderful and unparalleled grace of God, which is manifested in the work of redemption, and shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ, is infinitely glorious in itself, and appears so to the angels; it is a great part of the moral perfection and beauty of God's nature. This would be glorious, whether it were exercised towards us or no; and the saint who exercises a gracious thankfulness for it, sees it to be so, and delights in it as such: though his concern in it serves the more to engage his mind and raise the attention and affection; and self-love here assists as a handmaid, being subservient to higher principles, to lead forth the mind to the view and contemplation, and engage and fix the attention, and heighten the joy and love.-God's kindness to them is a glass that God sets before them, wherein to behold the beauty of the attribute of God's goodness: the exercises and displays of this attribute, by this means, are brought near to them, and set right before them. So that in a holy thankfulness to God, the concern our interest has in God's goodness is not the first foundation of our being affected with it; that was laid in the heart before, in that stock of love which was to God, for his excellency in himself, that makes the heart tender and susceptive of such impressions from his goodness to us. Poor is our own interest, or the benefits we have received, the only, or the chief objective ground of the present exercises of the affection, but God's goodness, as part of the beauty of his nature; although the manifestations of that lovely attribute, set immediately before our eyes, in the exercises of it for us, be the special occasion of the mind's attention to that beauty, at that time, and serves to fix the attention, and heighten the affection.

Some may perhaps be ready to object against the whole that has been said, that text, 1 John 4:19 : "We love him, because he first loved us," as though this implied that God's love to the true saints were the first foundation of their love to him. In answer to this, I would observe, that the apostle's drift in these words, is to magnify the love of God to us from hence, that he loved us, while we had no love to him; as will be manifest to anyone who compares 1 John 4:19 and 1 John 4:20-21 following with 1 John 4:9-11. And that God loved us, then we had no love to him, the apostle proves by this argument, that God's love to the elect is the ground of their love to him. And that it is

three ways.-1. The saints' love to God is the fruit of God's love to them, as it is the gift of that love. God gave them a spirit of love to him, because he loved them from eternity. And in this respect God's love to his elect is the first foundation of their love to him as it is the foundation of their regeneration, and the whole of their redemption. 2. The exercises and discoveries that God has made of his wonderful love to sinful men, by Jesus Christ, in the work of redemption, is one of the chief manifestations, which God has made of the glory of his moral perfection, to both angels and men; and so is one main objective ground of the love of both to God; in a good consistence with what was said before. 3. God's love to a particular elect person, discovered by his conversion, is a great manifestation of God's moral perfection and glory to him, and a proper occasion of the excitation of the love of holy gratitude, agreeable to what was before said. And that the saints do in these respects love God, because he first loved them, fully answers the design of the apostle's argument in that place. So that no good argument can be drawn from hence, against a spiritual and gracious love in the saints, arising primarily from the excellency of divine things, as they are in themselves, and not from any conceived relation they bear to their interest. And as it is with the love of the saints, so it is with their joy, and spiritual delight and pleasure: the first foundation of it is not any consideration or conception of their interest in divine things; but it primarily consists in the sweet entertainment their minds have in the view of contemplation of the divine and holy beauty of these things, as they are in themselves. And this is indeed the very main difference between the joy of the hypocrite, and the joy of the true saint. The former rejoices in himself; self is the first foundation of his joy: the latter rejoices in God. The hypocrite has his mind pleased and delighted, in the first place, with his own privilege, and the happiness which he supposes he has attained to, or shall attain to. True saints have their minds, in the first place, inexpressibly pleased and delighted with the sweet ideas of the glorious and amiable nature of the things of God. And this is the spring of all their delights, and the cream of all their pleasures: it is the joy of their joy. This sweet and ravishing entertainment they have in the view of the beautiful and delightful nature of divine things, is the foundation of the joy that they have afterwards, in the consideration of their being theirs. But the dependence of the affections of hypocrites is in a contrary order: they first rejoice and are elevated with it, that they are made so much of by God; and then on that ground he seems, in a sort, lovely to them. The first foundation of the delight a true saint has in God, is his own perfection; and the first foundation of the delight he has in Christ, is his own beauty; he appears in himself the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. The way of salvation by Christ is a delightful way to him, for the sweet and admirable manifestations of the divine perfections in it: the holy doctrines of the gospel, by which God is exalted and man abased, holiness honored and promoted, and sin greatly disgraced and discouraged, and free and sovereign love manifested, are glorious doctrines in his eyes, and sweet to his taste, prior to any conception of his interest in these things. Indeed the saints rejoice in their interest in God, and that Christ is theirs: and so they have great reason, but this is not the first spring of their joy. They first rejoice in God as glorious and excellent in himself, and then secondarily rejoice in it, that so glorious a God is theirs.-They first have their hearts filled with sweetness, from the view of Christ's excellency, and the excellency of his grace and the beauty of the way of salvation by him, and then they have a secondary joy in that so excellent a Savior, and such excellent grace are theirs.[Dr. Owen, on the spirit, p. 199, speaking of a common work of the spirit, says, "The effects of this work on the mind, which is the first subject affected with it, proceeds not so far as to give delight, complacency and satisfaction, in the lovely spiritual nature and excellency of the things

revealed unto it. The true nature of saving illumination consists in this, that it gives the mind such a direct intuitive insight and prospect into spiritual things, as that in their own spiritual nature they suit, please, and satisfy it; so that it is transformed into them, cast into the mould of them, and rests in them."] But that which is the true saint's superstructure is the hypocrite's foundation. When they hear of the wonderful things of the gospel, of God's great love in sending his Son, of Christ's diving love to sinners, and the great things Christ has purchased and promised to the saints, and hear these things livelily and eloquently set forth; they may bear with a great deal of pleasure, and be lifted up with what they hear; but if their joy be examined, it will be found to have no other foundation than this, that they look upon these things as theirs, all this exalts them, they love to hear of the great love of Christ, so vastly distinguishing some from others; for self-love, and even pride itself makes them affect great distinction from others. No wonder, in this confident opinion of their own good estate, that they feel well under such doctrine, and are pleased in the highest degree, in hearing how much God and Christ makes of them. So that their joy is really a joy in themselves, and not in God. And because the joy of hypocrites is in themselves, hence it comes to pass that in their rejoicings and elevations, they are wont to keep their eye upon themselves: having received what they call spiritual discoveries or experience, their minds are taken up about them, admiring their own experiences; and what they are principally taken and elevated with, is not the glory of God, or beauty of Christ, but the beauty of their experiences. They keep thinking with themselves, What a good experience is this! What a great discovery is this! What wonderful things have I met with! And so they put their experiences in the place of Christ, and his beauty and fullness; and instead of rejoicing in Christ Jesus, they rejoice in their admirable experiences; instead of feeding and fasting their souls in the view of what is without them, viz., the innate, sweet refreshing amiableness of the things exhibited in the gospel, their eyes are off from these things, or at least they view them only as it were sideways; but the object that fixes their contemplation, is their experience; and they are feeding their souls, and feasting a selfish principle, with a view of their discoveries: they take more comfort in their discoveries than in Christ discovered, which is the true notion of living upon experiences and frames, and not a using experiences as the signs on which they rely for evidence of their good estate, which some call living on experiences; though it be very observable, that some of them who do so are most notorious for living upon experiences, according to the true notion of it. The affections of hypocrites are very often after this manner; they are first much affected with some impression on their imagination, or some impulse which they take to be an immediate suggestion or testimony from God of his love and their happiness, and high privileges in some respect, either with or without a text of Scripture; they are mightily taken with this as a great discovery, and hence arise high affections. And when their affections are raised, then they view those high affections, and call them great and wonderful experiences; and they have a notion that God is greatly pleased with those affections; and this affects them more; and so they are affected with their affections. And thus their affections rise higher and higher, until they sometimes are perfectly swallowed up: and self-conceit, and a fierce zeal rises withal; and all is built like a castle in the air, on no other foundation but imagination, self-love, and pride. And as the thoughts of this sort of persons are, so is their talk; for out of the abundance of their heart their mouth speaketh. As in their high affections they keep their eye upon the beauty of their experiences, and greatness of their attainments; so they are great talkers about themselves.-The true saint, when under great spiritual affections, from the fullness of his heart, is ready to be speaking much of God, and his glorious perfections and works, and of the beauty and

amiableness of Christ, and the glorious things of the gospel: but hypocrites, in their high affections, talk more of the discovery, than they do of the thing discovered; they are full of talk about the great things they have met with, the wonderful discoveries they have had, how sure they are of the love of God to them, how safe their condition is, and how they know they shall go to heaven, &c. A true saint, when in the enjoyment of true discoveries of the sweet glory of God and Christ, has his mind too much captivated and engaged by what he views without himself, to stand at that time to view himself, and his own attainments: it would be a diversion and loss which he could not bear, to take his eye off from the ravishing object of his contemplation, to survey his own experience, and to spend time in thinking with himself, what a high attainment this is, and what a good story I now have to tell others. Nor does the pleasure and sweetness of his mind at that time chiefly arise from the consideration of the safety of his state, or anything he has in view of his own qualifications, experiences, or circumstances; but from the divine and supreme beauty of what is the object of his direct views without himself; which sweetly entertains, and strongly holds his mind. As the love and joy of hypocrites are all from the source of self love, so it is with their other affections, their sorrow for sin, their humiliation and submission, their religious desires and zeal: everything is, as it were, paid tail beforehand, in God's highly gratifying their self-love, and their lusts, by making so much of them, and exalting them so highly, as things are in their imagination. It is easy for nature, as corrupt as it is, under a notion of being already some of the highest favorites of heaven, and having a God who does so protect them and favor them in their sins, to love this imaginary God that suits them so well, and to extol him, and submit to him, and to be fierce and zealous for him. The high affections of many are all built on the supposition of their being eminent saints. If that opinion which they have of themselves were taken away, if they thought they were some of the lower form of saints (though they should yet suppose themselves to be real saints), their high affections would fall to the ground. If they only saw a little of the sinfulness and vileness of their own hearts, and their deformity, in the midst of their best duties and their best affections, it would knock their affections on the head; because their affections are built upon self, therefore self-knowledge would destroy them. But as to truly gracious affections, they are built elsewhere; they have their foundation out of self in God and Jesus Christ; and therefore a discovery of themselves, of their own deformity, and the meanness of their experiences, though it will purify their affections, yet it will not destroy them, but in some respects sweeten and heighten them.

III. Those affections that are truly holy, are primarily founded on the loveliness of the moral excellency of divine things. Or (to express it otherwise) a love to divine things for the beauty and sweetness of their moral excellency is the first beginning and spring of all holy affections.

Here, for the sake of the more illiterate reader, I will explain what I mean by the moral excellency of divine things. And it may be observed, that the word moral is not to be understood here according to the common and vulgar acceptation of the word when men speak of morality, and a moral behavior; meaning an outward conformity to the duties of the moral law, and especially the duties of the second table; or intending no more at farthest, than such seeming virtues, as proceed from natural principles, in opposition to those virtues that are more inward, spiritual, and divine; as the honesty, justice, generosity, good nature, and public spirit of many of the heathen are called moral virtues, in distinction from the holy faith, love, humility, and heavenly-mindedness of true Christians: I say, the word moral is not to be understood thus in this place. But in order to a right understanding what is meant, it must be observed, that divines commonly make a distinction

between moral good and evil, and natural good and evil. By moral evil, they mean the evil of sin, or that evil which is against duty, and contrary to what is right and ought to be. By natural evil, they do not mean that evil which is properly opposed to duty; but that which is contrary to mere nature, without any respect to a rule of duty. So the evil of suffering is called natural evil, such as pain and torment, disgrace, and the like: these things are contrary to mere nature, contrary to the nature of both bad and good, hateful to wicked men and devils, as well as good men and angels. So likewise natural defects are called natural evils, as if a child be monstrous or a natural fool; these are natural evils, but are not moral evils, because they have not properly the nature of the evil of sin. On the other hand, as by moral evil, divines mean the evil of sin, or that which is contrary to what is right; so by moral good, they mean that which is contrary to sin, or that good in beings who have will and choice, whereby, as voluntary agents, they are, and act, as it becomes them to be and to act, or so as is most fit, and suitable, and lovely. By natural good, they mean that good that is entirely of a different kind from holiness or virtue, viz., that which perfects or suits nature, considering nature abstractly from any holy or unholy qualifications, and without any relation to any rule or measure of right and wrong.

Thus pleasure is a natural good; so is honor, so is strength; so is speculative knowledge, human learning, and policy.-Thus there is a distinction to be made between the natural good that men are possessed of, and their moral good; and also between the natural and moral good of the angels in heaven: the great capacity of their understandings, and their great strength, and the honorable circumstances they are in as the great ministers of God’s kingdom, whence they are called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, is the natural good which they are possessed of; but their perfect and glorious holiness and goodness, their pure and flaming love to God, and to the saints and to one another, is their moral good. So divines make a distinction between the natural and moral perfections of God: by the moral perfections of God, they mean those attributes which God exercises as a moral agent, or whereby the heart and will of God are good, right, and infinitely becoming and lovely; such as his righteousness, truth, faithfulness, and goodness; or, in one word, his holiness. By God’s natural attributes or perfections, they mean those attributes, wherein, according to our way of conceiving of God, consists, not the holiness or moral goodness of God, but his greatness, such as his power, his knowledge, whereby he knows all things, and his being eternal, from everlasting to everlasting, his omnipresence, and his awful and terrible majesty. The moral excellency of an intelligent voluntary being is more immediately seated in the heart or will of moral agents. That intelligent being, whose will is truly right and lovely, is morally good or excellent. This moral excellency of an intelligent being, when it is true and real, and not only external or merely seeming and counterfeit, is holiness. Therefore holiness comprehends all the true moral excellency of intelligent beings: there is no other true virtue, but real holiness. Holiness comprehends all the true virtue of a good man, his love to God, his gracious love to men, his justice, his charity, and bowels of mercies, his gracious meekness and gentleness, and all other true Christian virtues that he has, belong to his holiness. So the holiness of God in the more extensive sense of the word, and the sense in which the word is commonly, if not universally used concerning God in Scripture, is the same with the moral excellency of the divine nature, or his purity and beauty as a moral agent, comprehending all his moral perfections, his righteousness faithfulness, and goodness. As in holy men, their charity, Christian kindness and mercy, belong to their holiness; so the kindness and mercy of God belong to his holiness. Holiness in man is but the image of God’s holiness; there are not more virtues belonging to the image than are in the original:

derived holiness has not more in it than is in that underived holiness which is its fountain: there is no more than grace for grace, or grace in the image, answerable to grace in the original. As there are two kinds of attributes in God, according to our way of conceiving of him, his moral attributes, which are summed up in his holiness, and his natural attributes of strength, knowledge, &c., that constitute the greatness of God; so there is a twofold image of God in man, his moral or spiritual image, which is his holiness, that is the image of God's moral excellency (which image was lost by the fall), and God's natural image, consisting in man's reason and understanding, his natural ability, and dominion over the creatures, which is the image of God's natural attribute. From what has been said, it may easily be understood what I intend, when I say that a love to divine things for the beauty of their moral excellency, is the beginning and spring of all holy affections. It has been already shown, under the former head, that the first objective ground of all holy affections is the supreme excellency of divine things as they are in themselves, or in their own nature; I now proceed further, and say more particularly, that that kind of excellency of the nature of divine things, which is the first objective ground of all holy affections, is their moral excellency, or their holiness. Holy persons, in the exercise of holy affections, do love divine things primarily for their holiness: they love God, in the first place, for the beauty of his holiness or moral perfection, as being supremely amiable in itself. Not that the saints, in the exercise of gracious affections, do love God only for his holiness; all his attributes are amiable and glorious in their eyes; they delight in every divine perfection; the contemplation of the infinite greatness, power, knowledge, and terrible majesty of God, is pleasant to them. But their love to God for his holiness is what is most fundamental and essential in their love. Here it is that true love to God begins; all other holy love to divine things flows from hence: this is the most essential and distinguishing thing that belongs to a holy love to God, with regard to the foundation of it. A love to God for the beauty of his moral at tributes leads to, and necessarily causes a delight in God for all his attributes; for his moral attributes cannot be without his natural attributes: for infinite holiness supposes infinite wisdom, and an infinite capacity and greatness; and all the attributes of God do as it were imply one another. The true beauty and loveliness of all intelligent beings does primarily and most essentially consist in their moral excellency or holiness. Herein consists the loveliness of the angels, without which, with all their natural perfections, their strength, and their knowledge, they would have no more loveliness than devils. It is a moral excellency alone, that is in itself, and on its own account, the excellency of intelligent beings: it is this that gives beauty to, or rather is the beauty of their natural perfections and qualifications. Moral excellency is the excellency of natural excellencies. Natural qualifications are either excellent or otherwise, according as they are joined with moral excellency or not. Strength and knowledge do not render any being lovely, without holiness, but more hateful; though they render them more lovely, when joined with holiness. Thus the elect angels are the more glorious for their strength and knowledge, because these natural perfections of theirs are sanctified by their moral perfection. But though the devils are very strong, and of great natural understanding, they be not the more lovely: they are more terrible indeed, but not the more amiable; but on the contrary, the more hateful. The holiness of an intelligent creature, is the beauty of all his natural perfections. And so it is in God, according to our way of conceiving of the divine Being: holiness is in a peculiar manner the beauty of the divine nature. Hence we often read of the beauty of holiness, Psalms 29:2, Psalms 96:9, and Psalms 110:3. This renders all his other attributes glorious and lovely. It is the glory of God's wisdom, that it is a holy wisdom, and not a wicked subtlety and craftiness. This makes his majesty lovely; and not merely dreadful and

horrible, that it is a holy majesty. It is the glory of God’s immutability, that it is a holy immutability, and not an flexible obstinacy in wickedness. And therefore it must needs be, that a sight of God’s loveliness must begin here. A true love to God must begin with a delight in his holiness, and not with a delight in any other attribute; for no other attribute is truly lovely without this, and no otherwise than as (according to our way of conceiving of God) it derives its loveliness from this; and therefore it is impossible that other attributes should appear lovely, in their true loveliness, until this is seen; and it impossible that any perfection of the divine nature should be loved with true love until this is loved. If the true loveliness of all God’s perfections arises from the loveliness of his holiness; then the true love of all his perfections arises from the love of his holiness. They that do not see the glory of God’s holiness, cannot see anything of the true glory of his mercy and grace: they see nothing of the glory of those attributes, as any excellency of God’s nature, as it is in itself; though they may be affected with them, and love them, as they concern their interest: for these attributes are no part of the excellency of God’s nature, as that is excellent in itself, any otherwise than as they are included in his holiness, more largely taken; or as they are a part of his moral perfection. As the beauty of the divine nature does primarily consist in God’s holiness, so does the beauty of all divine things. Herein consists the beauty of the saints, that they are saints, or holy ones; it is the moral image of God in them, which is their beauty; and that is their holiness. Herein consists the beauty and brightness of the angels of heaven, that they are holy angels, and so not devils. Daniel 4:13, Daniel 4:17, Daniel 4:23; Matthew 25:31, Mark 8:38, Acts 10:22, Revelation 14:10. Herein consists the beauty of the Christian religion, above all other religions, that it is so holy a religion. Herein consists the excellency of the word of God, that it is so holy: Psalms 119:140, "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." Psalms 119:128, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." Psalms 119:138, "Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous, and very faithful." Psalms 119:172, "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." And Psalms 19:7-10, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb." Herein does primarily consist the amiableness and beauty of the Lord Jesus, whereby he is the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely, even in that he is the holy one of God, Acts 3:14, and God’s holy child, Acts 4:27, and he that is holy, and he that is true, Revelation 3:7. All the spiritual beauty of his human nature, consisting in his meekness, lowliness, patience, heavenliness, love to God, love to men, condescension to the mean and vile, and compassion to the miserable, &c., all is summed up in his holiness. And the beauty of his divine nature, of which the beauty of his human nature is the image and reflection, does also primarily consist in his holiness. Herein primarily consists the glory of the gospel, that it is a holy gospel, and so bright an emanation of the holy beauty of God and Jesus Christ: herein consists the spiritual beauty of its doctrines, that they are holy doctrines, or doctrines according to goodness. And herein does consist the spiritual beauty of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, that it is so holy a way. And herein chiefly consists the glory of heaven, that it is the holy city, the holy Jerusalem, the habitation of God’s holiness, and so of his glory, Isaiah 63:15. All the beauties of the new Jerusalem, as it is described in Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-20, are but various representations of this. See Revelation 21:2, Revelation

21:10-11, Revelation 21:18, Revelation 21:21, Revelation 21:27, Revelation 22:1, Revelation 22:3. And therefore it is primarily on account of this kind of excellency, that the saints do love all these things. Thus they love the word of God, because it is very pure. It is on this account they love the saints; and on this account chiefly it is, that heaven is lovely to them, and those holy tabernacles of God amiable in their eyes: it is on this account that they love God; and on this account primarily it is, that they love Christ, and that their hearts delight in the doctrines of the gospel, and sweetly acquiesce in the way of salvation therein revealed.["To the right closing with Christ's person, this is always required, to taste the bitterness of sin, as the greatest evil: else a man will never close with Christ, for his holiness in him, and from him, as the greatest good. For we told you, that that is the right closing with Christ for himself, when it is for his holiness. For ask a whorish heart, what beauty he sees in the person of Christ; he will, after he has looked over his kingdom, his righteousness, and all his works, see a beauty in them, because they do serve his turn, to comfort him only. Ask a virgin, he will see his happiness in all; but that which makes the Lord amiable is his holiness, which is in him to make him holy too. As in marriage, it is the personal beauty draws the heart. And hence I have thought it reason, that he that loves the brethren for a little grace, will love Christ much more." Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 84.]

Under the head of the first distinguishing characteristic of gracious affections, I observed, that there is given to those that are regenerated, a new supernatural sense, that is as it were a certain divine spiritual taste, which is, in its whole nature, diverse from any former kinds of sensation of the mind, as tasting is diverse from saint in the exercise of this new sense of mind, in spiritual and divine things as entirely different from anything that is perceived in them by natural men, as the sweet taste of honey is diverse from the ideas men get of honey by looking on it or feeling it. Now this that I have been speaking of, viz., the beauty of holiness, is that thing in spiritual and divine things, which is perceived by this spiritual sense, that is so diverse from all that natural men perceive in them; this kind of beauty is the quality that is the immediate object of this spiritual sense; this is the sweetness that is the proper object of this spiritual taste. The Scripture often represents the beauty and sweetness of holiness as the grand object of a spiritual taste and spiritual appetite. This was the sweet food of the holy soul of Jesus Christ, John 4:32, John 4:34 : "I have meat to eat that ye know not of-My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." I know of no part of the holy Scriptures, where the nature and evidences of true and sincere godliness are so much of set purpose and so fully and largely insisted on and delineated, as Psalms 119:1-176; the Psalmist declares his design in the first verses of the Psalm, and he keeps his eye on this design all along, and pursues it to the end: but in this Psalm the excellency of holiness is represented as the immediate object of a spiritual taste, relish, appetite, and delight of God's law; that grand expression and emanation of the holiness of God's natures and prescription of holiness to the creature, is all along represented as the food and entertainment, and as the great object of the love, the appetite, the complacence and rejoicing of the gracious nature, which prizes God's commandments above gold, yea, the finest gold, and to which they are sweeter than the honey and honey comb; and that upon account of their holiness, as I observed before. The same Psalmist declares, that this is the sweetness that a spiritual taste relishes in God's law: Psalms 19:7-10, "The law of the Lord is perfect; the commandment of the Lord is pure; the fear of the Lord is clean; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;-the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether; more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb." A holy love has a holy object. The

holiness of love consists especially in this, that it is the love of that which is holy, as holy, or for its holiness; so that it is the holiness of the object, which is the quality whereon it fixes and terminates. A holy nature must needs love that in holy things chiefly, which is most agreeable to itself; but surely that in divine things, which above all others is agreeable to a holy nature, is holiness, because holiness must be above all other things agreeable to holiness; for nothing can be more agreeable to any nature than itself; holy nature must be above all things agreeable to holy nature: and so the holy nature of God and Christ, and the word of God, and other divine things, must be above all other things agreeable to the holy nature that is in the saints. And again, a holy nature doubtless loves holy things, especially on the account of that for which sinful nature has enmity against them; but that for which chiefly sinful nature is at enmity against holy things, is their holiness; it is for this, that the carnal mind is at enmity against God, and against the law of God, and the people of God. Now it is just arguing from contraries; from contrary causes to contrary effects; from opposite natures to opposite tendencies. We know that holiness is of a directly contrary nature to wickedness; as therefore it is the nature of wickedness chiefly to oppose and hate holiness; so it must be the nature of holiness chiefly to tend to, and delight in holiness. The holy nature in the saints and angels in heaven (where the true tendency of it best appears) is principally engaged by the holiness of divine things. This is the divine beauty which chiefly engages the attention, admiration, and praise of the bright and burning seraphim: Isaiah 6:3, "One cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." And Revelation 4:8, "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." So the glorified saints Revelation 15:4, "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy." And the Scriptures represent the saints on earth as adoring God primarily on this account, and admiring and extolling all God’s attributes, either as deriving loveliness from his holiness, or as being a part of it. Thus when they praise God for his power, his holiness is the beauty that engages them: Psalms 98:1, "O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory." So when they praise him for his justice and terrible majesty: Psalms 99:2, Psalms 99:3, "The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy." Psalms 99:5, "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy." Psalms 99:8-9, "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his holy hill: for the Lord our God, is holy." So when they praise God for his mercy and faithfulness: Psalms 97:11-12, "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." 1 Samuel 2:2, "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none besides thee; neither is there any rock like our God." By this therefore all may try their affections, and particularly their love and joy. Various kinds of creatures show the difference of their natures, very much in the different things they relish as their proper good, one delighting in that which another abhors. Such a difference is there between true saints, and natural men: natural men have no sense of the goodness and excellency of holy things at least for their holiness; they have no taste for that kind of good; and so may be said not to know that divine good, or not to see it; it is wholly hid from them; but the saints, by the mighty power of God, have it discovered to them; they have that supernatural, most noble and divine sense given them, by which they perceive it; and it is this that captivates their hearts, and delights them above all things; it is the most amiable and sweet thing to the heart of a true saint, that is to be found in

heaven or earth; that which above all others attracts and engages his soul; and that whereby above all things, he places his happiness, and which he lots upon for solace and entertainment to his mind, in this world, and full satisfaction and blessedness in another. By this, you may examine your love to God, and to Jesus Christ, and to the word of God, and your joy in them, and also your love to the people of God, and your desires after heaven; whether they be from a supreme delight in this sort of beauty, without being primarily moved from your imagined interest in them, or expectations from them. There are many high affections, great seeming love and rapturous joys, which have nothing of this holy relish belonging to them.

Particularly, by what has been said you may try your discoveries of the glory of God's grace and love, and your affections arising from them. The grace of God may appear lovely two ways; either as bonum utile, a profitable good to me, that which greatly serves my interest, and so suits my self-love; or as bonum formosum, a beautiful good in itself, and part of the moral and spiritual excellency of the divine nature. In this latter respect it is that the true saints have their hearts affected, and love captivated by the free grace of God in the first place. From the things that have been said, it appears, that if persons have a great sense of the natural perfections of God, and are greatly affected with them, or have any other sight or sense of God than that which consists in, or implies a sense of the beauty of his moral perfections, it is no certain sign of grace; as particularly men's having a great sense of the awful greatness and terrible majesty of God; for this is only God's natural perfection, and what men may see and yet be entirely blind to the beauty of his moral perfection, and have nothing of that spiritual taste which relishes this divine sweetness.

It has been shown already, in what was said upon the first distinguishing mark of gracious affections, that that which is spiritual, is entirely different in its nature, from all that it is possible any graceless person should be the subject of, while he continues graceless. But it is possible that those who are wholly without grace should have a clear sight and very great and affecting sense of God's greatness, his mighty power, and awful majesty; for this is what the devils have, though they have lost the spiritual knowledge of God, consisting in a sense of the amiableness of his moral perfections; they are perfectly destitute of any sense or relish of that kind of beauty, yet they have a very great knowledge of the natural glory of God (if I may so speak), or his awful greatness and majesty; this they behold, and are affected with the apprehensions of, and therefore tremble before him. This glory of God all shall behold at the day of judgment; God will make all rational beings to behold it to a great degree indeed, angels and devils, saints and sinners: Christ will manifest his infinite greatness, and awful majesty, to everyone, in a most open, clear, and convincing manner, and in a light that none can resist, "when he shall come in the glory of his Father, and every eye shall see him;" when they shall cry to the mountains to fall upon them, to hide them from the face of him that sits upon the throne, they are represented as seeing the glory of God's majesty, Isaiah 2:10, Isaiah 2:19, Isaiah 2:21. God will make all his enemies to behold this, and to live in a most clear and affecting view of it, in hell, to all eternity. God hath often declared his immutable purpose to make all his enemies to know him in this respect, in so often annexing these words to the threatenings he denounces against them: "And they shall know that I am the Lord;" yea he hath sworn that all men shall see his glory in this respect: Numbers 14:21, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." And this kind of manifestation of God is very often spoken of in Scripture, as made, or to be made, in the sight of God's enemies in this world, Numbers 9:16, and Exodus 14:18, and Exodus 15:16, Psalms 66:3,

and Psalms 46:10, and other places innumerable. This was a manifestation which God made of himself in the sight of that wicked congregation at Mount Sinai; deeply affecting them with it; so that all the people in the camp trembled. Wicked men and devils will see, and have a great sense of everything that appertains to the glory of God, but only the beauty of his moral perfection; they will see his infinite greatness and majesty, his infinite power, and will be fully convinced of his omniscience, and his eternity and immutability; and they will see and know everything appertaining to his moral attributes themselves, but only the beauty and amiableness of them; they will see and know that he is perfectly just, and righteous, and true, and that he is a holy God, of purer eyes than to behold evil, who cannot look on iniquity; and they will see the wonderful manifestations of his infinite goodness and free grace to the saints; and there is nothing will be hid from their eyes, but only the beauty of these moral attributes, and that beauty of the other attributes, which arises from it. And so natural men in this world are capable of having a very affecting sense of everything else that appertains to God, but this only. Nebuchadnezzar had a great and very affecting sense of the infinite greatness and awful majesty of God, of his supreme and absolute dominion, and mighty and irresistible power, and of his sovereignty, and that he, and all the inhabitants of the earth were nothing before him; and also had a great conviction in his conscience of his justice, and an affecting sense of his great goodness, Daniel 4:1-3, Daniel 4:34-35, Daniel 4:37. And the sense that Darius had of God's perfections, seems to be very much like his, Daniel 6:25, &c. But the saints and angels do behold the glory of God consisting in the beauty of his holiness; and it is this sight only that will melt and humble the hearts of men, and wean them from the world, and draw them to God, and effectually change them. A sight of the awful greatness of God, may overpower men's strength, and be more than they can endure; but if the moral beauty of God be hid, the enmity of the heart will remain in its full strength, no love will be enkindled, all will not be effectual to gain the will, but that will remain inflexible; whereas the first glimpse of the moral and spiritual glory of God shining into the heart, produces all these effects as it were with omnipotent power, which nothing can withstand. The sense that natural men may have of the awful greatness of God may affect them various ways; it may not only terrify them, but it may elevate them, and raise their joy and praise, as their circumstances may be. This will be the natural effect of it, under the real or supposed receipt of some extraordinary mercy from God, by the influence of mere principles of nature. It has been shown already, that the receipt of kindness may, by the influence of natural principles, affect the heart with gratitude and praise to God; but if a person, at the same time that he receives remarkable kindness from God, has a sense of his infinite greatness, and that he is but nothing in comparison of him, surely this will naturally raise his gratitude and praise the higher, for kindness to one so much inferior. A sense of God's greatness had this effect upon Nebuchadnezzar, under the receipt of that extraordinary favor of his restoration, after he had been driven from men, and had his dwelling with the beasts: a sense of God's exceeding greatness raises his gratitude very high; so that he does, in the most lofty terms, extol and magnify God, and calls upon all the world to do it with him; and much more if a natural man, at the same time that he is greatly affected with God's infinite greatness and majesty, entertains a strong conceit that this great God has made him his child and special favorite, and promised him eternal glory in his highest love, will this have a tendency, according to the course of nature, to raise his joy and praise to a great height.

Therefore, it is beyond doubt that too much weight has been laid, by many persons of late, on discoveries of God's greatness, awful majesty, and natural perfection, operating after this manner,

without any real view of the holy majesty of God. And experience does abundantly witness to what reason and Scripture declare as to this matter; there having been very many persons, who have seemed to be overpowered with the greatness and majesty of God, and consequently elevated in the manner that has been spoken of, who have been very far from having appearances of a Christian spirit and temper, in any manner of proportion, or fruits in practice in any wise agreeable; but their discoveries have worked in a way contrary to the operation of truly spiritual discoveries. Not that a sense of God's greatness and natural attributes is not exceeding useful and necessary. For, as I observed before, this is implied in a manifestation of the beauty of God's holiness. Though that be something beyond it, it supposes it, as the greater supposes the less. And though natural men may have a sense of the natural perfections of God; yet undoubtedly this is more frequent and common with the saints than with natural men; and grace tends to enable men to see these things in a better manner than natural men do; and not only enables them to see God's natural attributes, but that beauty of those attributes, which (according to our way of conceiving of God) is derived from his holiness.

IV. Gracious affections do arise from the mind's being enlightened, richly and spiritually to understand or apprehend divine things.

Holy affections are not heat without light; but evermore arise from the information of the understanding, some spiritual instruction that the mind receives, some light or actual knowledge. The child of God is graciously affected, because he sees and understands something more of divine things than he did before, more of God or Christ, and of the glorious things exhibited in the gospel; he has some clearer and better view than he had before, when he was not affected: either he receives some understanding of divine things that is new to him; or has his former knowledge renewed after the view was decayed: 1 John 4:7, "Everyone that loveth, knoweth God." Php 1:9, "I pray that your love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment." Romans 10:2, "They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Colossians 3:10, "The new man, which is renewed in knowledge." Psalms 43:3-4, "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy hill." John 6:45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Knowledge is the key that first opens the hard heart, and enlarges the affections, and so opens the way for men into the kingdom of heaven; Luke 11:52, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge."

Now there are many affections which do not arise from any light in the understanding. And when it is thus, it is a sure evidence that these affections are not spiritual, let them be ever so high.["Many that have had mighty strong affections at first conversion, afterwards become dry and wither, and consume, and pine, and die away: and now their hypocrisy is manifest; if not to all the world by open profaneness, yet to the discerning eye of living Christians by a formal, barren, unsavory, unfruitful heart and course; because they never had light to conviction enough as yet."] Indeed they have some new apprehensions which they had not before. Such is the nature of man, that it is impossible his mind should be affected, unless it be by something that he apprehends, or that his mind conceives of. But in many persons those apprehensions or conceptions that they have, wherewith they are affected, have nothing of the nature of knowledge or instruction in them. As for instance, when a person is affected with a lively idea, suddenly excited in his mind, of some shape or very beautiful pleasant form of countenance, or some shining light, or other glorious outward

appearance: here is something apprehended or conceived by the mind; but there is nothing of the nature of instruction in it; persons become never the wiser by such things, or more knowing about God, or a Mediator between God and man, or the way of salvation by Christ, or anything contained in any of the doctrines of the gospel. Persons by these external ideas have no further acquaintance with God, as to any of the attributes or perfections of his nature; nor have they any further understanding of his word, or any of his ways or works. Truly spiritual and gracious affections are not raised after this manner; these arise from the enlightening of the understanding to understand the things that are taught of God and Christ, in a new manner, the coming to a new understanding of the excellent nature of God, and his wonderful perfections, some new view of Christ in his spiritual excellencies and fullness, or things opened to him in a new manner, that appertain to the way of salvation by Christ, whereby he now sees how it is, and understands those divine and spiritual doctrines which once were foolishness to him. Such enlightenings of the understanding as these, are things entirely different in their nature from strong ideas of shapes and colors, and outward brightness and glory, or sounds and voices. That all gracious affections do arise from some instruction or enlightening of the understanding, is therefore a further proof, that affections which arise from such impression on the imagination, are not gracious affections, besides the things observed before, which make this evident.

Hence also it appears, that affections arising from texts of Scripture coming to the mind: are vain, when no instruction received in the understanding from those texts, or anything taught in those texts, is the ground of the affection, but the manner of their coming to the mind. When Christ makes the Scripture a means of the heart’s burning with gracious affection, it is by opening the Scriptures to their understandings; Luke 24:32, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" It appears also that the affection which is occasioned by the coming of a text of Scripture must be vain, when the affection is founded on some thing that is supposed to be taught by it, which really is not contained in it nor in any other Scripture; because such supposed instruction is not real instruction, but a mistake and misapprehension of the mind. As for instance, when persons suppose that they are expressly taught by some Scripture coming to their minds, that they in particular are beloved of God, or that their sins are forgiven, that God is their Father, and the like, this is a mistake or misapprehension; for the Scripture nowhere reveals the individual persons who are be loved, expressly; but only by consequence, by revealing the qualifications of persons that are beloved of God: and therefore this matter is not to be learned from Scripture any other way than by consequence, and from these qualifications; for things are not to be learned from the Scripture any other way than they are taught in the Scripture.

Affections really arise from ignorance, rather than instruction, in these instances which have been mentioned; as likewise in some others that might be mentioned. As some, when they find themselves free of speech in prayer, they call it God’s being with them; and this affects them more; and so their affections are set agoing and increased; when they look not into the cause of this freedom of speech, which may arise many other ways besides God’s spiritual presence. So some are much affected with some apt thoughts that come into their minds about the Scripture, and call it the Spirit of God teaching them. So they ascribe many of the workings of their own minds, which they have a high opinion of, and are pleased and taken with, to the special immediate influences of God’s Spirit; and so are mightily affected with their privilege. And there are some instances of

persons, in whom it seems manifest, that the first ground of their affection is some bodily sensation. The animal spirits, by some cause (and probably sometimes by the devil) are suddenly and unaccountably put into a very agreeable motion, causing persons to feel pleasantly in their bodies; the animal spirits are put into such a motion as is wont to be connected with the exhilaration of the mind; and the soul, by the laws of the union of soul and body, hence feels pleasure. The motion of the animal spirits does not first arise from any affection or apprehension of the mind whatsoever; but the very first thing that is felt, is an exhilaration of the animal spirits, and a pleasant external sensation it may be in their breasts. Hence through ignorance the person being surprised, begins to think, surely this is the Holy Ghost coming into him. And then the mind begins to be affected and raised. There is first great joy; and then many other affections, in a very tumultuous manner putting all nature, both body and mind, into a mighty ruffle. For though, as I observed before, it is the soul only that is the seat of the affections; yet this hinders not but that bodily sensations may, in this manner, be an occasion of affections in the mind. And if men's religious affections do truly arise from some instruction or light in the understanding; yet the affection is not gracious, unless the light which is the ground of it be spiritual. Affections may be excited by that understanding of things, which they obtain merely by human teaching, with the common improvement of the faculties of the mind. Men may be much affected by knowledge of things of religion that they obtain this way; as some philosophers have been mightily affected and almost carried beyond themselves, by the discoveries they have made in mathematics and natural philosophy. So men may be much affected from common illuminations of the Spirit of God, in which God assists men's faculties to a greater degree of that kind of understanding of religious matters, which they have in some degree, by only the ordinary exercise and improvement of their own faculties. Such illuminations may much affect the mind; as in many whom we read of in Scripture, that were once enlightened; but these affections are not spiritual.

There is such a thing, if the Scriptures are of any use to teach us anything, as a spiritual, supernatural understanding of divine things, that is peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints have nothing of. It is certainly a kind of understanding, apprehending or discerning of divine things, that natural men have nothing of, which the apostle speaks of, 1 Corinthians 2:14 : "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It is certainly a kind of seeing or discerning spiritual things peculiar to the saints, which is spoken of, 1 John 3:6 : "Whosoever sinneth, hath not been him, neither known him." 3 John 1:11, "He that doeth evil, hath not seen God." And John 6:40, "This is the will of him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." John 14:19, "The world seeth me no more; but ye see me." John 17:3, "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Matthew 11:27, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." John 12:45, "He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me." Psalms 9:10, "They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee." Php 3:8, "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:"- Php 3:10, "That I may know him." And innumerable other places there are, all over the Bible, which show the same. And that there is such a thing as an understanding of divine things, which in its nature and kind is wholly different from all knowledge that natural men have, is evident from this, that there is an understanding of divine things, which the scripture calls spiritual understanding, Colossians 1:9 : "We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you may be

filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." It has been already shown, that that which is spiritual, in the ordinary use of the word in the New Testament, is entirely different in nature and kind, from all which natural men are, or can be the subjects of. From hence it may be surely inferred wherein spiritual understanding consists. For if there be in the saints a kind of apprehension or perception, which is in its nature perfectly diverse from all that natural men have, or that it is possible they should have, until they have a new nature; it must consist in their having a certain kind of ideas or sensations of mind, which are simply diverse from all that is or can be in the minds of natural men. And that is the same thing as to say, that it consists in the sensations of a new spiritual sense, which the souls of natural men have not; as is evident by what has been before, once and again observed. But I have already shown what that new spiritual sense is which the saints have given them in regeneration, and what is the object of it. I have shown that the immediate object of it is the supreme beauty and excellency of the nature of divine things, as they are in themselves. And this is agreeable to the Scripture; the apostle very plainly teaches, that the great thing discovered by spiritual light, and understood by spiritual knowledge, is the glory of divine things, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 : "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;" together with 2 Corinthians 4:6 : "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." And 2 Corinthians 3:18, preceding: "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And it must needs be so, for, as has been before observed, the Scripture often teaches that all true religion summarily consists in the love of divine things. And therefore that kind of understanding or knowledge, which is the proper foundation of true religion, must be the knowledge of the loveliness of divine things. For doubtless, that knowledge which is the proper foundation of love, is the knowledge of loveliness. What that beauty of divine things is, which is the proper and immediate object of a spiritual sense of mind, was showed under the last head insisted on, viz., that it is the beauty of their moral perfection. Therefore it is in the view or sense of this, that spiritual understanding does more immediately and primarily consist. And indeed it is plain it can be nothing else; for (as has been shown) there is nothing pertaining to divine things besides the beauty of their moral excellency, and those properties and qualities of divine things which this beauty is the foundation of, but what natural men and devils can see and know, and will know fully and clearly to all eternity. From what has been said, therefore, we come necessarily to this conclusion, concerning that wherein spiritual understanding consists, viz., that it consists in "a sense of the heart, of the supreme beauty and sweetness of the holiness or moral perfection of divine things, together with all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion, that depends upon, and flows from such a sense."

Spiritual understanding consists primarily in a sense of heart of that spiritual beauty. I say, a sense of heart; for it is not speculation merely that is concerned in this kind of understanding; nor can there be a clear distinction made between the two faculties of understanding and will, as acting distinctly and separately, in this matter. When the mind is sensible of the sweet beauty and amiableness of a thing, that implies a sensibleness of sweetness and delight in the presence of the idea of it: and this sensibleness of the amiableness or delightfulness of beauty, carries in the very nature of it the sense of the heart; or an effect and impression the soul is the subject of, as a

substance possessed of taste, inclination and will.

There is a distinction to be made between a mere notional understanding wherein the mind only beholds things in the exercise of a speculative faculty; and the sense of the heart, wherein the mind does not only speculate and behold, but relishes and feels. That sort of knowledge, by which a man has a sensible perception of amiableness and loathsomeness, or of sweetness and nauseousness, is not just the same sort of knowledge with that by which he knows what a triangle is, and what a square is. The one is mere speculative knowledge, the other sensible knowledge, in which more than the mere intellect is concerned; the heart is the proper subject of it, or the soul, as a being that not only beholds, but has inclination, and is pleased or displeased. And yet there is the nature of instruction in it; as he that has perceived the sweet taste of honey, knows much more about it, than he who has only looked upon, and felt of it. The apostle seems to make a distinction between mere speculative knowledge of the things of religion, and spiritual knowledge, in calling that the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law, Romans 2:20, "Which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." The latter is often represented by relishing, smelling, or tasting 2 Corinthians 2:14, "Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ Jesus, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge in every place." Matthew 16:23, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those things that be of men." 1 Peter 2:2-3, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Song of Solomon 1:3, "Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee;" compared with 1 John 2:20, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

Spiritual understanding primarily consists in this sense, of taste of the moral beauty of divine things; so that no knowledge can be called spiritual, any further than it arises from this, and has this in it. But secondarily it includes all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion, which depend upon and flow from such a sense. When the true beauty and amiableness of the holiness or true moral good that is in divine things is discovered to the soul, it as it were opens a new world to its views. This shows the glory of all the perfections of God, and of everything appertaining to the divine Being. For, as was observed before, the beauty of all arises from God’s moral perfection. This shows the glory of all God’s works, both of creation and providence. For it is the special glory of them, that God’s holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, and goodness, are so manifested in them; and without these moral perfections, there would be no glory in that power and skill with which they are wrought. The glorifying of God’s moral perfections, is the special end of all the works of God’s hands. By this sense of the moral beauty of divine things, is understood the sufficiency of Christ as a mediator; for it is only by the discovery of the beauty of the moral perfection of Christ, that the believer is let into the knowledge of the excellency of his person, so as to know anything more of it than the devils do; and it is only by the knowledge of the excellency of Christ’s person, that any know his sufficiency as a mediator; for the latter depends upon, and arises from the former. It is by seeing the excellency of Christ’s person, that the saints are made sensible of the preciousness of his blood, and its sufficiency to atone for sin; for therein consists the preciousness of Christ’s blood, that it is the blood of so excellent and amiable a person. And on this depends the meritoriousness of his obedience, and sufficiency and prevalence of his intercession. By this sight of the moral beauty of divine things, is seen the beauty of the way of salvation by Christ; for that consists in the beauty of the moral perfections of God, which

wonderfully shines forth in every step of this method of salvation, from beginning to end. By this is seen the fitness and suitableness of this way: for this wholly consists in its tendency to deliver us from sin and hell, and to bring us to the happiness which consists in the possession and enjoyment of moral good, in a way sweetly agreeing with God's moral perfections. And in the way's being contrived so as to attain these ends, consists the excellent wisdom of that way. By this is seen the excellency of the word of God. Take away all the moral beauty and sweetness in the word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry, lifeless, tasteless thing. By this is seen the true foundation of our duty, the worthiness of God to be so esteemed, honored, loved, submitted to, and served, as he requires of us, and the amiableness of the duties themselves that are required of us. And by this is seen the true evil of sin; for he who sees the beauty of holiness, must necessarily see the hatefulness of sin, its contrary. By this men understand the true glory of heaven, which consists in the beauty and happiness that is in holiness. By this is seen the amiableness and happiness of both saints and angels. He that sees the beauty of holiness, or true moral good, sees the greatest and most important thing in the world, which is the fullness of all things, without which all the world is empty, no better than nothing, yea, worse than nothing. Unless this is seen, nothing is seen that is worth the seeing; for there is no other true excellency or beauty. Unless this be understood, nothing is understood that is worthy of the exercise of the noble faculty of understanding. This is the beauty of the Godhead, and the divinity of divinity (if I may so speak), the good of the infinite fountain of good; without which, God himself (if that were possible) would be an infinite evil; without which we ourselves had better never have been; and without which there had better have been no being. He therefore in effect knows nothing, that knows not this; his knowledge is but the shadow of knowledge, or the form of knowledge, as the apostle calls it. Well therefore may the Scriptures represent those who are destitute of that spiritual sense by which is perceived the beauty of holiness, as totally blind, deaf, and senseless, yea, dead. And well may regeneration, in which this divine sense is given to the soul by its Creator, be represented as opening the blind eyes, and raising the dead, and bringing a person into a new world. For if what has been said be considered, it will be manifest, that when a person has this sense and knowledge given him, he will view nothing as he did before; though before he knew all things "after the flesh, yet henceforth he will know them so no more; and he is become a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;" agreeable to 2 Corinthians 5:16-17. And besides the things that have been already mentioned, there arises from this sense of spiritual beauty, all true experimental knowledge of religion, which is of itself as it were a new world of knowledge. He that sees not the beauty of holiness, knows not what one of the graces of God's Spirit is, he is destitute of any idea or conception of all gracious exercises of the soul, and all holy comforts and delights, and all effects of the saving influences of the Spirit of God on the heart; and so is ignorant of the greatest works of God, the most important and glorious effects of his power upon the creature; and also is wholly ignorant of the saints as saints, he knows not what they are; and in effect is ignorant of the whole spiritual world.

Things being thus, it plainly appears, that God's implanting that spiritual supernatural sense which has been spoken of, makes a great change in a man. And were it not for the very imperfect degree, in which this sense is commonly given at first, or the small degree of this glorious light, that first dawns upon the soul; the change made by this spiritual opening of the eyes in conversion, would be much greater and more remarkable every way, than if a man, who had been born blind, and with only the other four senses, should continue so a long time, and then at once should have

the sense of seeing imparted to him, in the midst of the clear light of the sun, discovering a world of visible objects. For though sight be more noble than any of the other external senses, yet this spiritual sense which has been spoken of, is infinitely more noble than that, or any other principle of discerning that a man naturally has, and the object of this sense infinitely greater and more important. This sort of understanding or knowledge, is that knowledge of divine things from whence all truly gracious affections do proceed; by which therefore all affections are to be tried. Those affections that arise wholly from any other kind of knowledge, or do result from any other kind of apprehensions of mind, are vain.

01.09. PART III(d)

From what has been said, may be learned wherein the most essential difference lies between that light or understanding which is given by the common influences of the Spirit of God, on the hearts of natural men, and that saving instruction which is given to the saints. The latter primarily and most essentially lies in beholding the holy beauty that is in divine things; which is the only true moral good, and which the soul of fallen man is by nature totally blind to. The former consists only in a further understanding, through the assistance of natural principles, of those things which men may know, in some measure, by the alone ordinary exercise of their faculties. And this knowledge consists only in the knowledge of those things pertaining to religion, which are natural. Thus for instance, in those awakenings of the conscience, that natural men are often subject to, the Spirit of God gives no knowledge of the true moral beauty which is in divine things; but only assists the mind to a clearer idea of the guilt of sin, or its relation to punishment, and connection with the evil of suffering (without any sight of its moral evil, or odiousness as sin), and a clearer idea of the natural perfections of God, wherein consists, not his holy beauty and glory, but his awful and terrible greatness. It is a clear sight of this, that will fully awaken the consciences of wicked men at the day of judgment, without any spiritual light. And it is a less degree of the same that awakens the consciences of natural men, without spiritual light in this world. The same discoveries are in some measure given in the conscience of an awakened sinner in this world, which will be given more fully, in the consciences of sinners at the day of judgment. The same kind of sight or apprehension of God, in a less degree, makes awakened sinners in this world sensible of the dreadful guilt of sin, against so great and terrible a God, and sensible of its amazing punishment, and fills them with fearful apprehensions of divine wrath, that will thoroughly convince all wicked men, of the infinitely dreadful nature and guilt of sin, and astonish them with apprehensions of wrath, when Christ shall come in the glory of his power and majesty, and every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. And in those common illuminations which are sometimes given to natural men, exciting in them some kind of religious desire, love, and joy, the mind is only assisted to a clearer apprehension of the natural good that is in divine things. Thus sometimes, under common illuminations, men are raised with the ideas of the natural good that is in heaven; as its outward glory; its ease, its honor and advancement, a being there the object of the high favor of God, and the great respect of men, and angels, &c. So there are many things exhibited in the gospel concerning God and Christ, and the way of salvation, that have a natural good in them, which suits the natural principle of self-love. Thus in that great goodness of God to sinners, and the wonderful dying love of Christ, there is a natural good which all men love, as they love themselves; as well as a spiritual and holy beauty, which is seen only by the regenerate. Therefore there are many things appertaining to the word of God’s grace delivered in the gospel, which may cause natural men, when they hear it, anon with joy to receive it. All that love which natural men have to God and Christ, and Christian virtues, and good men, is not from any sight of the amiableness of the holiness, or true moral excellency of these things; but only for the sake of the natural good there is in them. All natural men’s hatred of sin, is as much from principles of nature, as men’s hatred of a tiger for his rapaciousness, or their aversion to a serpent

for his poison and hurtfulness; and all their love of Christian virtue, is from no higher principle, than their love of a man’s good nature, which appears amiable to natural men; but no otherwise than silver and gold appears amiable in the eyes of a merchant, or than the blackness of the soil is beautiful in the eyes of the farmer. From what has been said of the nature of spiritual understanding, it appears that spiritual understanding does not consist in any new doctrinal knowledge or in having suggested to the mind any new proposition, not before read or heard of; for it is plain that this suggesting of new propositions, is a thing entirely diverse from giving the mind a new taste or relish of beauty and sweetness.[Calvin, in his Institutions, Book I. Chap. 9, says, "It is not the office of the Spirit that is promised to us, to make new and before unheard of revelations, or to coin some new kind of doctrine, which tends to draw us away from the received doctrine of the gospel; but to seal and confirm to us that very doctrine which is by the gospel." And in the same place he speaks of some that in those days maintained the contrary notion, "pretending to be immediately led by the Spirit, as persons that were governed by a most haughty self-conceit: and not so properly to be looked upon as only laboring under a mistake, as driven by a sort of raving madness."] It is also evident that spiritual knowledge does not consist in any new doctrinal explanation of any part of the Scripture; for still, this is but doctrinal knowledge, or the knowledge of propositions; the doctrinal explaining of an part of Scripture, is only giving us to understand what are the propositions contained or taught in that part of Scripture.

Hence it appears, that the spiritual understanding of the Scripture, does not consist in opening to the mind the mystical meaning of the Scripture, in its parables, types, and allegories; for this is only a doctrinal explication of the Scripture. He that explains what is meant by the stony ground, and the seed’s springing up suddenly, and quickly withering away, only explains what propositions or doctrines are taught in it. So he that explains what is typified by Jacob’s ladder, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it, or what was typified by Joshua’s leading Israel through Jordan, only shows what propositions are hid in these passages. And many men can explain these types who have no spiritual knowledge. It is possible that a man might know how to interpret all the types, parables, enigmas, and allegories in the Bible, and not have one beam of spiritual light in his mind; because he may not have the least degree of that spiritual sense of the holy beauty of divine things which has been spoken of, and may see nothing of this kind of glory in anything contained in any of these mysteries, or any other part of the Scripture. It is plain, by what the apostle says, that a man might understand all such mysteries, and have no saving grace, 1 Corinthians 13:2 : "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." They therefore are very foolish, who are exalted in an opinion of their own spiritual attainments, from notions that come into their minds, of the mystical meaning of these and those passages of Scripture, as though it was a spiritual understanding of these passages, immediately given them by the Spirit of God, and hence have their affections highly raised; and what has been said shows the vanity of such affections. From what has been said, it is also evident, that it is not spiritual knowledge for persons to be informed of their duty, by having it immediately suggested to their minds, that such and such outward actions or deeds are the will of God. If we suppose that it is truly God’s manner thus to signify his will to his people, by immediate inward suggestions, such suggestions have nothing of the nature of spiritual light. Such kind of knowledge would only be one kind of doctrinal knowledge; a proposition concerning the will of God, is as properly a doctrine of religion, as a proposition concerning the nature of God, or a work of God; and a having either of these kinds of propositions,

or any other proposition, declared to a man, either by speech, or inward suggestion, differs vastly from a having the holy beauty of divine things manifested to the soul, wherein spiritual knowledge does most essentially consist. Thus there was no spiritual light in Balaam; though he had the will of God immediately suggested to him by the Spirit of God from time to time, concerning the way that he should go, and what he should do and say.

It is manifest, therefore, that a being led and directed in this manner, is not that holy and spiritual leading of the Spirit of God, which is peculiar to the saints, and a distinguishing mark of the sons of God, spoken of, Romans 8:14 : "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God." Galatians 5:18, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." And if persons have the will of God concerning their actions, suggested to them by some text of Scripture, suddenly and extraordinarily brought to their minds, which text, as the words lay in the Bible before they came to their minds, related to the action and behavior of some other person, but they suppose, as God sent the words to them, he intended something further by them, and meant such a particular action of theirs; I say, if persons should have the will of God thus suggested to them with texts of Scripture, it alters not the case. The suggestion being accompanied with an apt text of Scripture, does not make the suggestion to be the nature of spiritual instruction. As for instance, if a person in New England, on some occasion, were at a loss whether it was his duty to go into some popish or heathenish land, where he was like to be exposed to many difficulties and dangers, and should pray to God that he would show him the way of his duty; and after earnest prayer, should have those words which God spake to Jacob, Genesis 46:1-34, suddenly and extraordinarily brought to his mind, as if they were spoken to him; "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will go with thee; and I will also surely bring you up again." In which words, though as they lay in the Bible before they came to his mind, they related only to Jacob, and his behavior; yet he supposes that God has a further meaning, as they were brought and applied to him; that thus they are to be understood in a new sense, that by Egypt is to be understood this particular country he has in his mind, and that the action intended is his going thither, and that the meaning of the promise is, that God would bring him back into New England again. There is nothing of the nature of a spiritual or gracious leading of the Spirit in this; for there is nothing of the nature of spiritual understanding in it. Thus to understand texts of Scripture, is not to have a spiritual understanding of them. Spiritually to understand the Scriptures, is rightly to understand what is in the Scripture, and what was in it before it was understood: it is to understand rightly, what used to be contained in the meaning of it, and not the making of a new meaning. When the mind is enlightened spiritually and rightly to understand the Scripture, it is enabled to see that in the Scripture, which before was not seen by reason of blindness. But if it was by reason of blindness, that is an evidence that the same meaning was in it before, otherwise it would have been no blindness not to see it; it is no blindness not to see a meaning which is not there. Spiritually enlightening the eyes to understand the Scripture, is to open the eyes: Psalms 119:18, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law;" which argues that the reason why the same was not seen in the Scripture before, was that the eyes were shut; which would not be the case, if the meaning that is now understood was not there before, but is now newly added to the Scripture, by the manner of the Scripture's coming to my mind. This making a new meaning to the Scripture, is the same thing as making a new Scripture; it is properly adding to the word, which is threatened with so dreadful a curse. Spiritually to understand the Scripture, is to have the eyes of the mind opened, to behold the wonderful spiritual excellency of the glorious things contained in the true meaning of it, and

that always were contained in it, ever since it was written; to behold the amiable and bright manifestations of the divine perfections, and of the excellency and sufficiency of Christ, and the excellency and suitableness of the way of salvation by Christ, and the spiritual glory of the precepts and promises of the Scripture, &c., which things are, and always were in the Bible, and would have been seen before, if it had not been for blindness, without having any new sense added, by the words being sent by God to a particular person, and spoken anew to him, with a new meaning. And as to a gracious leading of the Spirit, it consists in two things: partly in instructing a person in his duty by the Spirit, and partly in powerfully inducing him to comply with that instruction. But so far as the gracious leading of the Spirit lies in instruction, it consists in a person's being guided by a spiritual and distinguishing taste of that which has in it true moral beauty. I have shown that spiritual knowledge primarily consists in a taste or relish of the amiableness and beauty of that which is truly good and holy: this holy relish is a thing that discerns and distinguishes between good and evil, between holy and unholy, without being at the trouble of a train of reasoning. As he who has a true relish of external beauty, knows what is beautiful by looking upon it; he stands in no need of a train of reasoning about the proportion of the features, in order to determine whether that which he sees be a beautiful countenance or no; he needs nothing, but only the glance of his eye. He who has a rectified musical ear, knows whether the sound he hears be true harmony; he does not need first to be at the trouble of the reasonings of a mathematician about the proportion of the notes. He that has a rectified palate knows what is good food, as soon as he tastes it, without the reasoning of a physician about it. There is a holy beauty and sweetness in words and actions, as well as a natural beauty in countenances and sounds, and sweetness in food: Job 12:11, "Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taste his meat?" When a holy and amiable action is suggested to the thoughts of a holy soul, that soul, if in the lively exercise of its spiritual taste, at once sees a beauty in it, and so inclines to it, and closes with it. On the contrary, if an unworthy, unholy action be suggested to it, its sanctified eye sees no beauty in it, and is not pleased with it; its sanctified taste relishes no sweetness in it, but on the contrary, it is nauseous to it. Yea, its holy taste and appetite leads it to think of that which is truly lovely, and naturally suggests it; as a healthy taste and appetite naturally suggests the idea of its proper object. Thus a holy person is led by the Spirit, as he is instructed and led by his holy taste and disposition of heart; whereby, in the lively exercise of grace, he easily distinguishes good and evil, and knows at once what is a suitable amiable behavior towards God, and towards man, in this case and the other, and Judges what is right, as it were spontaneously, and of himself, without a particular deduction, by any other arguments than the beauty that is seen, and goodness that is tasted. Thus Christ blames the Pharisees, that they "did not, even of their own selves, judge what was right," without needing miracles to prove it, Luke 12:57. The apostle seems plainly to have respect to this way of judging of spiritual beauty, in Romans 12:2 : "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God."

There is such a thing as good taste of natural beauty (which learned men often speak of) that is exercised about temporal things, in judging of them, as about the justness of a speech, the goodness of style, the beauty of a poem, the gracefulness of deportment, &c. A late great philosopher of our nation writes thus upon it:[Chambers' Dictionary, under the word Taste.] "To have a taste, is to give things their real value, to be touched with the good, to be shocked with the ill; not to be dazzled with false lusters, out in spite of all colors, and everything that might deceive

or amuse, to judge soundly. Taste and judgment, then, should be the same thing; and yet it is easy to discern a difference. The judgment forms its opinions from reflection: the reason on this occasion fetches a kind of circuit, to arrive at its end; it supposes principles, it draws consequences, and it judges; but not without a thorough knowledge of the case; so that after it has pronounced, it is ready to render a reason of its decrees. Good taste observes none of these formalities; ere it has time to consult, it has taken its side; as soon as ever the object is presented, the impression is made, the sentiment formed, ask no more of it. As the ear is wounded with a harsh sound, as the smell is soothed with an agreeable odor, before ever the reason have meddled with those objects to judge of them, so the taste opens itself at once, and prevents all reflection. They may come afterwards to confirm it, and discover the secret reasons of its conduct; but it was not in its power to wait for them. Frequently it happens not to know them at all, and what pains soever it uses, cannot discover what it was determined it to think as it did. This conduct is very different from what the judgment observes in its decisions: unless we choose to say, that good taste is, as it were, a first motion, or a kind of instinct of right reason, which hurries on with rapidity and conducts more securely, than all the reasonings she could make; it is a first glance of the eye, which discovers to us the nature and relations of things in a moment.

Now as there is such a kind of taste of the mind as this, which philosophers speak of, whereby persons are guided in their judgment, of the natural beauty, gracefulness, propriety, nobleness, and sublimity of speeches and action, whereby they judge as it were by the glance of the eye, or by inward sensation, and the first impression of the object; so there is likewise such a thing as a divine taste, given and maintained by the Spirit of God, in the hearts of the saints, whereby they are in like manner led and guided in discerning and distinguishing the true spiritual and holy beauty of actions; and that more easily, readily, and accurately, as they have more or less of the Spirit of God dwelling in them. And thus "the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God, in their behavior in the world." A holy disposition and spiritual taste, where grace is strong and lively, will enable the soul to determine what actions are right and becoming Christians, not only more speedily, but far more exactly, than the greatest abilities without it. This may be illustrated by the manner in which some habits of mind, and dispositions of heart, of a nature inferior to true grace, will teach and guide a man in his actions. As for instance, if a man be a very good natured man, his good nature will teach him better how to act benevolently amongst mankind, and will direct him, on every occasion, to those speeches and actions, which are agreeable to rules of goodness, than the strongest reason will a man of a morose temper. So if a man’s heart be under the influence of an entire friendship, and most endeared affection to another; though he be a man of an indifferent capacity, yet this habit of his mind will direct him, far more readily and exactly, to a speech and deportment, or manner of behavior, which shall in all respects be sweet and kind, and agreeable to a benevolent disposition of heart, than the greatest capacity without it. He has as it were a spirit within him, that guides him; the habit of his mind is attended with a taste, by which he immediately relishes that air and mien which is benevolent, and disrelishes the contrary, and causes him to distinguish between one and the other in a moment, more precisely, than the most accurate reasonings can find out in many hours. As the nature and inward tendency of a stone, or other heavy body, that is let fall from aloft, shows the way to the center of the earth, more exactly in an instant, than the ablest mathematician, without it, could determine, by his most accurate observations, in a whole day. Thus it is that a spiritual disposition and taste teaches and guides a man in his behavior in the world. So an eminently humble, or meek, or charitable disposition, will

direct a person of mean capacity to such a behavior, as is agreeable to Christian rules of humility, meekness and charity far more readily and precisely than the most diligent study, and elaborate reasonings, of a man of the strongest faculties, who has not a Christian spirit within him. So also will a spirit of love to God, and holy fear and reverence towards God, and filial confidence in God, and a heavenly disposition, teach and guide a man in his behavior.

It is an exceedingly difficult thing for a wicked man, destitute of Christian principles in his heart to guide him, to know how to demean himself like a Christian with the life and beauty, and heavenly sweetness of a truly holy, humble, Christ like behavior. He knows not how to put on these garments, neither do they fit him: Ecclesiastes 10:2-3, "A wise man’s heart is at his right hand; but a fool’s heart is at his left. Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the ways his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to everyone that he is a fool;" with Ecclesiastes 10:15, "The labor of the foolish wearieth everyone of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." Proverbs 10:32, "The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable." Proverbs 15:2, "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." And Proverbs 16:23, "The heart of the righteous teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." The saints in thus judging of actions by a spiritual taste, have not a particular recourse to express rules of God’s word, with respect to every word and action that is before them, the good or evil of which they thus judge: but yet their taste itself, in general, is subject to the rule of God’s word, and must be tried by that, and a right reasoning upon it. As a man of a rectified palate judges of particular morsels by his taste; but yet his palate itself must be judged of, whether it be right or no, by certain rules and reasons. But a spiritual taste of soul mightily helps the soul in its reasonings on the word of God, and in judging of the true meaning of its rules: as it removes the prejudices of a depraved appetite, and naturally leads the thoughts in the right channel, casts a light on the word of God, and causes the true meaning most naturally to come to mind, through the harmony there is between the disposition and relish of a sanctified soul, and the true meaning of the rules of God’s word. Yea, this harmony tends to bring the texts themselves to mind, on proper occasions; as the particular state of the stomach and palate tends to bring such particular meats and drinks to mind, as are agreeable to that state. "Thus the children of God are led by the Spirit of God," in judging of actions themselves, and in their meditations upon, and judging of, and applying the rules of God’s holy word: and so God "teaches them his statutes, and causes them to understand the way of his precepts;" which the Psalmist so often prays for. But this leading of the Spirit is a thing exceedingly diverse from that which some call so; which consists not in teaching them God’s statutes and precepts, that he has already given; but in giving them new precepts, by immediate inward speech or suggestion, and has in it no tasting the true excellency of things, or judging or discerning the nature of things at all. They do not determine what is the will of God by any taste or relish, or any manner of judging of the nature of things, but by an immediate dictate concerning the thing to be done; there is no such thing as any judgment or wisdom in the case. Whereas in that leading of the Spirit which is peculiar to God’s children, is imparted that true wisdom, and holy discretion, so often spoken of in the word of God; which is high above the other way, as the stars are higher than a glow worm; and that which Balaam and Saul (who sometimes were led by the Spirit in that other way) never had, and no natural man can have, without a change of nature.

What has been said of the nature of spiritual understanding, as consisting most essentially in a divine supernatural sense and relish of the heart, not only shows that there is nothing of it in this

falsely supposed leading of the Spirit, which has been now spoken of; but also shows the difference between spiritual understanding, and all kinds and forms of enthusiasm, all imaginary sights of God, and Christ, and heaven, all supposed witnessing of the Spirit, and testimonies of the love of God by immediate inward suggestion: and all impressions of future events, and immediate revelations of any secret facts whatsoever; all enthusiastical impressions and applications of words of Scripture, as though they were words now immediately spoken by God to a particular person, in a new meaning, and carrying something more in them, than the words contain as they lie in the Bible; and all interpretations of the mystical meaning of the Scripture, by supposed immediate revelation. None of these things consists in a divine sense and relish of the heart, of the holy beauty and excellency of divine things; nor have they anything to do with such a sense; but all consists in impressions in the head; all are to be referred to the head of impressions on the imagination, and consist in the exciting external ideas in the mind, either in ideas of outward shapes and colors, or words spoken, or letters written, or ideas of things external and sensible, belonging to actions done, or events accomplished or to be accomplished. An enthusiastical supposed manifestation of the love of God, is made by the exciting an idea of a smiling countenance, or some other pleasant outward appearance, or by the idea of pleasant words spoken, or written, excited in the imagination, or some pleasant bodily sensation. So when persons have an imaginary revelation of some secret fact, it is by exciting external ideas; either of some words, implying a declaration of that fact, or some visible or sensible circumstances of such a fact. So the supposed leading of the Spirit, to do the will of God, in outward behavior, is either by exciting the idea of words (which are outward things) in their minds, either the words of Scripture, or other words, which they look upon as an immediate command of God; or else by exciting and impressing strongly the ideas of the outward actions themselves. So when an interpretation of a Scripture type or allegory, is immediately, in an extraordinary way, strongly suggested, it is by suggesting words, as though one secretly whispered and told the meaning, or by exciting other ideas in the imagination.

Such sort of experiences and discoveries as these, commonly raise the affections of such as are deluded by them, to a great height, and make a mighty uproar in both soul and body. And a very great part of the false religion that has been in the world, from one age to another, consists in such discoveries as these, and in the affections that flow from them. In such things consisted the experiences of the ancient Pythagoreans among the heathen, and many others among them, who had strange ecstasies and raptures, and pretended to a divine afflatus, and immediate revelations from heaven. In such things as these seem to have consisted the experiences of the Essenes, an ancient sect among the Jews, at and after the time of the apostles. In such things as these consisted the experiences of many of the ancient Gnostics, and the Montanists, and many Other sects of ancient heretics, in the primitive ages of the Christian church. And in such things as these consisted the pretended immediate converse with God and Christ, and saints and angels of heaven, of the Monks, Anchorites, and Recluses, that formerly abounded in the Church of Rome. In such things consisted the pretended high experiences and great spirituality of many sects of enthusiasts, that swarmed in the world after the Reformation; such as the Anabaptists, Antinomians, and Familists, the followers of N. Stork, Th. Muncer, Jo. Becold, Henry Pfeiser, David George, Casper Swenckfield, Henry Nicolas Johannes Agrcola Eislebius; and the many wild enthusiasts that were in England in the days of Oliver Cromwell; and the followers of Mrs. Hutchison in New England; as appears by the particular and large accounts given of all these

sects by that eminently holy man, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, in his "Display of the Spiritual Antichrist." And in such things as these consisted the experiences of the late French prophets, and their followers. And in these things seems to lie the religion of the many kinds of enthusiasts of the present day. It is by such sort of religion as this, chiefly, that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light: and it is that which he has ever most successfully made use of to confound hopeful and happy revivals of religion, from the beginning of the Christian church to this day. When the Spirit of God is poured out, to begin a glorious work, then the old serpent, as fast as possible, and by all means, introduces this bastard religion, and mingles it with the true; which has from time to time soon brought all things into confusion. The pernicious consequence of it is not easily imagined or conceived of, until we see and are amazed with the awful effects of it, and the dismal desolation it has made. If the revival of true religion be very great in its beginning, yet if this bastard comes in, there is danger of its doing as Gideon's bastard Abimelech did, who never left until he had slain all his threescore and ten true-born sons, excepting one, that was forced to fly. Great and strict therefore should be the watch and guard that ministers maintain against such things, especially at a time of great awakening: for men, especially the common people, are easily bewitched with such things; they having such a glaring and glistering show of high religion; and the devil biding his own shape, and appearing as an angel of light, that men may not be afraid of him, but may adore him. The imagination or phantasy seems to be that wherein are formed all those delusions of Satan, which those are carried away with, who are under the influence of false religion, and counterfeit graces and affections. Here is the devil's grand lurking place, the very nest of foul and delusive spirits. It is very much to be doubted, whether the devil can come at the soul of man at all to affect it, or to excite any thought, or motion, or produce any effect whatsoever in it, any other way, than by the phantasy; which is that power of the soul, by which it receives, and is the subject of the species, or ideas of outward and sensible things. As to the laws and means which the Creator has established, for the intercourse and communication of unbodied spirits, we know nothing about them; we do not know by what medium they manifest their thoughts to each other, or excite thoughts in each other. But as to spirits that are united to bodies, those bodies God has united them to, are their medium of communication. They have no other medium of acting on other creatures, or being acted on by them, than the body. Therefore it is not to be supposed that Satan can excite any thought, or produce any effect in the soul of man, any otherwise, than by some motion of the animal spirits, or by causing some motion or alteration in some thing which appertains to the body. There is this reason to think that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the soul immediately, or any other way than by the medium of the body, viz., that he cannot immediately see or know the thoughts of the soul: it is abundantly declared in the Scripture, to be peculiar to the omniscient God to do that. But it is not likely that the devil can immediately produce an effect, which is out of the reach of his immediate view. It seems unreasonable to suppose, that his immediate agency should be out of his own sight, or that it should be impossible for him to see what he himself immediately does. Is it not unreasonable to suppose, that any spirit or intelligent agent, should by the act of his will, produce effects according to his understanding, or agreeable to his own thoughts, and that immediately, and yet the effects produced be beyond the reach of his understanding, or where he can have no immediate perception or discerning at all? But if this be so, that the devil cannot produce thoughts in the soul immediately, or any other way than by the animal spirits, or by the body, then it follows, that he never brings to pass anything in the soul, but by the imagination or phantasy, or by exciting external ideas. For we know that alterations in the

body do immediately excite no other sort of ideas in the mind, but external ideas, or ideas of the outward senses, or ideas which are of the same outward nature. As to reflection, abstraction, reasoning, &c., and those thoughts and inward motions which are the fruits of these acts of the mind, they are not the next effects of impressions on the body. So that it must be only by the imagination, that Satan has access to the soul, to tempt and delude it, or suggest anything to it.["The imagination is that room of the soul wherein the devil doth often appear. Indeed (to speak exactly) the devil hath no efficient power over the rational part of a man: he cannot change the will, he cannot alter the heart of a man. So that the utmost he can do, in tempting a man to sin, is by suasion and suggestion only. But how doth the devil do this? Even by working upon the imagination. He observeth the temper, and bodily constitution of a man; and thereupon suggests to his fancy, and injects his fiery darts thereinto, by which the mind will come to be wrought upon. The devil then, though he hath no imperious efficacy over thy will, yet because he can thus stir and move thy imagination, and thou being naturally destitute of grace, canst not withstand these suggestions: hence it is that any sin in thy imagination, though but in the outward works of the soul, yet doth quickly lay hold on all. And indeed, by this means, do arise those horrible delusions that are in many erroneous ways of religion; all is because their imaginations are corrupted. Yea, how often are these diabolical delusions of the imagination taken for the gracious operation of God's Spirit! It is from hence that many have pretended to enthusiasms: they leave the Scriptures and wholly attend to what they perceive and feel within them." Burgess on Original Sin, p. 369. The great Turretine, speaking on that question, What is the power of angels? says, "As to bodies there is no doubt but that they can do a great deal upon all sorts of elementary and sublunary bodies, to move them locally and variously to agitate them. It is also certain, that they can act upon the external and internal senses, to excite them or to bind them. But as to the rational soul itself, they can do nothing immediately upon that; for to God alone, who knows and searches the hearts, and who has them in his hands, does it also appertain to bow and move them whithersoever he will. But angels can act upon the rational soul, only mediately, by imaginations." Theolog. Elench. Loc. VII. Quest. 7.] And this seems to be the reason why persons that are under the disease of melancholy, are commonly so visibly and remarkably subject to the suggestions and temptations of Satan; that being a disease which peculiarly affects the animal spirits, and is attended with weakness of that part of the body which is the fountain of the animal spirits, even the brain, which is, as it were, the seat of the phantasy. It is by impressions made on the brain, that any ideas are excited in the mind, by the motion of the animal spirits, or any changes made in the body. The brain being thus weakened and diseased, it is less under the command of the higher faculties of the soul, and yields the more easily to extrinsic impressions, and is overpowered by the disordered motions of the animal spirits; and so the devil has greater advantage to affect the mind, by working on the imagination. And thus Satan, when he casts in those horrid suggestions into the minds of many melancholy persons, in which they have no hand themselves, he does it by exciting imaginary ideas, either of some dreadful words or sentences, or other horrid outward ideas. And when he tempts other persons who are not melancholy, he does it by presenting to the imagination, in a lively and alluring manner, the objects of their lusts, or by exciting ideas of words, and so by them exciting thoughts; or by promoting an imagination of outward actions, events, circumstances, &c. Innumerable are the ways by which the mind might be led on to all kind of evil thoughts, by exciting external ideas in the imagination.

If persons keep no guard at these avenues of Satan, by which he has access to the soul, to tempt and delude it, they will be likely to have enough of him. And especially, if instead of guarding against him, they lay themselves open to him, and seek and invite him, because he appears as an angel of light, and counterfeits the illuminations and graces of the Spirit of God, by inward whispers, and immediate suggestions of facts and events, pleasant voices, beautiful images, and other impressions on the imagination. There are many who are deluded by such things, and are lifted up with them, and seek after them, that have a continued course of them, and can have them almost when they will; and especially when their pride and vainglory has most occasion for them, to make a show of them before company. It is with them, something as it is with those who are professors of the art of telling where lost things are to be found, by impressions made on their imaginations; they laying themselves open to the devil, he is always on hand to give them the desired impression.

Before I finish what I would say on this head of imaginations, counterfeiting spiritual light, and affections arising from them, I would renewedly (to prevent misunderstanding of what has been said) desire it may be observed, that I am far from determining, that no affections are spiritual which are attended with imaginary ideas. Such is the nature of man, that he can scarcely think of anything intensely, without some kind of outward ideas. They arise and interpose themselves unavoidably, in the course of a man’s thoughts; though oftentimes they are very confused, and are not what the mind regards. When the mind is much engaged, and the thoughts intense, oftentimes the imagination is more strong, and the outward idea more lively, especially in persons of some constitutions of body. But there is a great difference between these two things viz., lively imaginations arising from strong affections, and strong affections arising from lively imaginations. The former may be, and doubtless often is, in case of truly gracious affections. The affections do not arise from the imagination, nor have any dependence upon it; but on the contrary, the imagination is only the accidental effect, or consequent of the affection, through the infirmity of human nature. But when the latter is the case, as it often is, that the affection arises from the imagination, and is built upon it, as its foundation, instead of a spiritual illumination or discovery, then is the affection, however elevated, worthless and vain. And this is the drift of what has been now said, of impressions on the imagination. Having observed this, I proceed to another mark of gracious affections.

V. Truly gracious affections are attended with a reasonable and spiritual conviction of the judgment, of the reality and certainty of divine things. This seems to be implied in the text that was laid as the foundation of this discourse: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

All those who are truly gracious persons have a solid, full, thorough and effectual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel; I mean, that they no longer halt between two opinions; the great doctrines of the gospel cease to be any longer doubtful things, or matters of opinion, which, though probable, are yet disputable; but with them, they are points settled and determined, as undoubted and indisputable, so that they are not afraid to venture their all upon their truth. Their conviction is an effectual conviction; so that the great spiritual mysterious and invisible things of the gospel, have the influence of real and certain things upon them; they have the weight and power of real things in their hearts; and accordingly rule in their affections, and govern them through the course of their lives. With respect to Christ’s being the Son of God, and Savior of the

world, and the great things he has revealed concerning himself, and his Father, and another world, they have not only a predominating opinion that these things are true, and so yield their assent, as they do in many other matters of doubtful speculation; but they see that it is really so; their eyes are opened, so that they see that really Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And as to the things which Christ has revealed, of God's eternal purposes and designs, concerning fallen man, and the glorious and everlasting things prepared for the saints in another world, they see that they are so indeed; and therefore these things are of great weight with them, and have a mighty power upon their hearts, and influence over their practice, in some measure answerable to their infinite importance. That all true Christians have such a kind of conviction of the truth of the things of the gospel, is abundantly manifest from the Holy Scriptures. I will mention a few places of many: Matthew 16:15-17, "But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona;-My Father which is in heaven hath revealed it unto thee." John 6:68-69 "Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the son of the living God." John 17:6-8, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Acts 8:37, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." 2 Corinthians 4:11-14, "We which live, are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake.-Death worketh in us.-We having the spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." Together with 2 Corinthians 4:16, "For which cause we faint not." And 2 Corinthians 4:18 "While we look not at the things which are seen," &c. And 2 Corinthians 5:1, "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God." And 2 Corinthians 5:6-8, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." 2 Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Hebrews 3:6, "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;" together with that whole chapter. 1 John 4:13-16, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us." 1 John 5:4-5, "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Therefore truly gracious affections are attended with such a kind of conviction and persuasion of the truth of the things of the gospel, and sight of their evidence and reality, as these and other Scriptures speak of.

There are many religious affections, which are not attended with such a conviction of the judgment. There are many apprehensions and ideas which some have, that they call divine discoveries, which are affecting, but not convincing. Though for a little while they may seem to be more persuaded of the truth of the things of religion than they used to be, and may yield a forward assent, like many of Christ's hearers, who believed for a while; yet they have no thorough and effectual conviction; nor is there any great abiding change in them, in this respect, that whereas formerly they did not realize the great things of the gospel, now these things, with regard to reality and certainty, appear new to them, and they behold them, quite in another view than they used to do. There are many persons who have been exceedingly raised with religious affections, and think they have been converted, that do not go about the world any more convinced of the truth of the gospel, than they used to be; or at least, there is no remarkable alteration: they are not men who live under the influence and power of a realizing conviction of the infinite and eternal things which the gospel reveals; if they were, it would be impossible for them to live as they do. Because their affections are not attended with a thorough conviction of the mind, they are not at all to be depended on; however great a show and noise they make, it is like the blaze of tow, or crackling of thorns, or like the forward flourishing blade on stony ground, that has no root, nor deepness of earth to maintain its life.

Some persons, under high affections, and a confident persuasion of their good estate, have that, which they very ignorantly call a seeing the truth of the word of God, and which is very far from it, after this manner; they have some text of Scripture coming to their minds in a sudden and extraordinary manner, immediately declaring unto them (as they suppose) that their sins are forgiven, or that God loves them, and will save them; and it may be, have a chain of Scriptures coming one after another, to the same purpose; and they are convinced that it is truth; i.e., they are confident that it is certainly so, that their sins are forgiven, and God does love them, &c.-they say they know it is so; and when the words of Scripture are suggested to them, and as they suppose immediately spoken to them by God, in this meaning, they are ready to cry out, Truth, truth! It is certainly so! The word of God is true! And this they call a seeing the truth of the word of God. Whereas the whole of their faith amounts to no more, than only a strong confidence of their own good estate, and so a confidence that these words are true, which they suppose tell them they are in a good estate: when indeed (as was shown before) there is no Scripture which declares that any person is in a good estate directly, or any other way than by consequence. So that this, instead of being a real sight of the truth of the word of God, is a sight of nothing but a phantom, and is wholly a delusion. Truly to see the truth of the word of God, is to see the truth of the gospel; which is the glorious doctrine the word of God contains, concerning God, and Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and the world of glory that he is entered into, and purchased for all them who believe; and not a revelation that such and such particular persons are true Christians, and shall go to heaven. Therefore those affections which arise from no other persuasion of the truth of the word of God than this, arise from delusion, and not true conviction; and consequently are themselves delusive and vain. But if the religious affections that persons have, do indeed arise from a strong persuasion of the truth of the Christian religion, their affections are not the better, unless their persuasion be a reasonable persuasion or conviction. By a reasonable conviction, I mean, a conviction founded on real evidence, or upon that which is a good reason, or just ground of conviction. Men may have a strong persuasion that the Christian religion is true, when their persuasion is not at all built on evidence, but altogether on education,

and the opinion of others; as many Mahometans are strongly persuaded of the truth of the Mahometan religion, because their fathers, and neighbors, and nation believe it. That belief of the troth of the Christian religion, which is built on the very same grounds with a Mahometan's belief of the Mahometan religion, is the same sort of belief. And though the thing believed happens to be better, yet that does not make the belief itself to be of a better sort; for though the thing believed happens to be true, yet the belief of it is not owing to this truth, but to education. So that as the conviction is no better than the Mahometan's conviction; so the affections that flow from it, are no better in themselves, than the religious affections of Mahometans. But if that belief of Christian doctrines, which persons' affections arise from, be not merely from education, but indeed from reasons and arguments which are offered, it will not from thence necessarily follow, that their affections are truly gracious: for in order to that, it is requisite not only that the belief which their affections arise from, should be a reasonable, but also a spiritual belief or conviction. I suppose none will doubt but that some natural men do yield a kind of assent of their judgments to the truth of the Christian religion, from the rational proofs or arguments that are offered to evince it. Judas, without doubt, thought Jesus to be the Messiah, from the things which he saw and heard; but yet all along was a devil. So in John 2:23-25, we read of many that believed in Christ's name, when they saw the miracles that he did; whom yet Christ knew had not that within them, which was to be depended on. So Simon the sorcerer believed, when he beheld the miracles and signs which were done; but yet remained in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, Acts 8:13, Acts 8:23. And if there is such a belief or assent of the judgment in some natural men, none can doubt but that religious affections may arise from that assent or belief; as we read of some who believed for a while, that were greatly affected, and anon with joy received the word.

It is evident that there is such a thing as a spiritual belief or conviction of the truth of the things of the gospel, or a belief that is peculiar to those who are spiritual, or who are regenerated, and have the Spirit of God, in his holy communications, and dwelling in them as a vital principle. So that the conviction they have, does not only differ from that which natural men have, in its concomitants, in that it is accompanied with good works; but the belief itself is diverse, the assent and conviction of the judgment is of a kind peculiar to those who are spiritual, and that which natural men are wholly destitute of. This is evident by the Scripture, if anything at all is so: John 17:8, "They have believed that thou didst send me." Titus 1:1, "According to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." John 16:27, "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." 1 John 4:15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 1 John 5:1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." 1 John 5:10, "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself."

What a spiritual conviction of the judgment is, we are naturally led to determine from what has been said already under the former head of a spiritual understanding. The conviction of the judgment arises from the illumination of the understanding; the passing of a right judgment on things, depends on having aright apprehension or idea of things. And therefore it follows, that a spiritual conviction of the truth of the great things of the gospel, is such a conviction, as arises from having a spiritual view or apprehension of those things in the mind. And this is also evident from the Scripture, which often represents, that a saving belief of the reality and divinity of the things proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel, is from the Spirit of God's enlightening the mind, to

have right apprehensions of the nature of those things, and so as it were unveiling things, or revealing them, and enabling the mind to view them and see them as they are. Luke 10:21-22, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." John 6:40, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." Where it is plain, that true faith arises from a spiritual sight of Christ. And John 17:6-8, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send one." Where Christ's manifesting God's name to the disciples, or giving them a true apprehension and view of divine things, was that whereby they knew that Christ's doctrine was of God, and that Christ himself was of him, and was sent by him: Matthew 16:16-17, "Simon Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." 1 John 5:10, "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." Galatians 1:14-16, "Being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood."

If it be so, that that is a spiritual conviction of the divinity and reality of the things exhibited in the gospel, which arises from a spiritual understanding of those things; I have shown already what that is, viz., a sense and taste of the divine, supreme, and holy excellency and beauty of those things. So that then is the mind spiritually convinced of the divinity and truth of the great things of the gospel, when that conviction arises, either directly or remotely, from such a sense or view of their divine excellency and glory as is there exhibited. This clearly follows, from things that have been already said: and for this the Scripture is very plain and express, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 : "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." Together with the last verse of the foregoing chapter, which introduces this, "but we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Nothing can be more evident, than that a saving belief of the gospel is here spoken of, by the apostle, as arising from the mind's being enlightened to behold the divine glory of the things it exhibits. This view or sense of the divine glory, and unparalleled beauty of the things exhibited to us in the gospel, has a tendency to convince the mind of their divinity, two ways; directly, and more indirectly, and remotely. 1. A view of this divine glory directly convinces the mind of the divinity of these things, as this glory is in itself a direct, clear, and all-conquering evidence of it; especially when clearly discovered, or when this supernatural sense is given in a good degree.

He that has his judgment thus directly convinced and assured of the divinity of the things of the gospel, by a clear view of their divine glory, has a reasonable conviction; his belief and assurance is altogether agreeable to reason; because the divine glory and beauty of divine things is, in itself, real evidence of the divinity, and the most direct and strong evidence. He that truly sees the divine transcendent, supreme glory of those things which are divine, does as it were know their divinity intuitively: he not only argues that they are divine, but he sees that they are divine; he sees that in them wherein divinity chiefly consists, for in this glory which is so vastly and inexpressibly distinguished from the glory of artificial things, and all other glory, does mainly consist the true notion of divinity. God is God, and distinguished from all other beings, and exalted above them, chiefly by his divine beauty, which is infinitely diverse from all other beauty.-They therefore that see the stamp of this glory in divine things, they see divinity in them, they see God in them, and see them to be divine; because they see that in them wherein the truest idea of divinity does consist. Thus a soul may have a kind of intuitive knowledge of the divinity of the things exhibited in the gospel; not that he judges the doctrines of the gospel to be from God, without any argument or deduction at all; but it is without any long chain of arguments; the argument is but one, and the evidence direct; the mind ascends to the truth of the gospel but by one step, and that is its divine glory.

It would be very strange, if any professing Christian should deny it to be possible, that there should be an excellency in divine things, which is so transcendent, and exceedingly different from what is in other things, that if it were seen, would evidently distinguish them. We cannot rationally doubt, but that things that are divine, that appertain to the Supreme Being, are vastly different from things that are human: that there is a Godlike, high, and glorious excellency in them, that does so distinguish them from the things which are of men, that the difference is inevitable; and therefore such as, if seen, will have a most convincing, satisfying influence upon anyone, that they are what they are, viz., divine. Doubtless there is that glory and excellency in the divine Being, by which he is so infinitely distinguished from all other beings, that if it were seen, he might be known by it. It would therefore be very unreasonable to deny, that it is possible for God to give manifestations of this distinguishing excellency, in things by which he is pleased to make himself known; and that this distinguishing excellency may be clearly seen in them. There are natural excellencies, that are very evidently distinguishing of the subjects or authors, to anyone who beholds them. How vastly is the speech of an understanding man different from that of a little child! And how greatly distinguished is the speech of some men of great genius, as Homer, Cicero, Milton, Locke, Addison, and others, from that of many other understanding men! There are no limits to be set to the degrees of manifestation of mental excellency, that there may be in speech. But the appearances of the natural perfections of God, in the manifestations he makes of himself, may doubtless be unspeakably more evidently distinguishing, than the appearances of those excellencies of worms of the dust, in which they differ one from another. He that is well acquainted with mankind, and their works, by viewing the sun, may know it is no human work. And it is reasonable to suppose, that when Christ comes at the end of the world, in the glory of his Father, it will be with such ineffable appearances of divinity, as will leave no doubt to the inhabitants of the world, even the most obstinate infidels, that he who appears is a divine person. But above all, do the manifestations of the moral and spiritual glory of the divine Being (which is the proper beauty of the divinity) bring their own evidence, and tend to assure the heart. Thus the disciples were assured that Jesus was the Son of God, "for they beheld his glory, as the glory of the only

begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John 1:14. When Christ appeared in the glory of his transfiguration to his disciples, with that outward glory to their bodily eyes, which was a sweet and admirable symbol and semblance of his spiritual glory, together with his spiritual glory itself, manifested to their minds; the manifestation of glory was such, as did perfectly, and with good reason, assure them of his divinity; as appears by what one of them, viz., the Apostle Peter, says concerning it, 2 Peter 1:16-18, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." The apostle calls that mount, the holy mount, because the manifestations of Christ which were there made to their minds, and which their minds were especially impressed and ravished with, were the glory of his holiness, or the beauty of his moral excellency; or, as another of these disciples, who saw it, expresses it, "his glory, as full of grace and truth."

Now this distinguishing glory of the divine Being has its brightest appearance and manifestation, in the things proposed and exhibited to us in the gospel, the doctrines there taught, the word there spoken, and the divine counsels, acts and works there revealed. These things have the clearest, most admirable, and distinguishing representations and exhibitions of the glory of God’s moral perfections, that ever were made to the world. And if there be such a distinguishing, evidential manifestation of divine glory in the gospel, it is reasonable to suppose that there may be such a thing as seeing it. What should hinder but that it may be seen? It is no argument that it cannot be seen, that some do not see it; though they may be discerning men in temporal matters. If there be such ineffable, distinguishing, evidential excellencies in the gospel, it is reasonable to suppose, that they are such as are not to be discerned, but by the special influence and enlightenings of the Spirit of God. There is need of uncommon force of mind to discern the distinguishing excellencies of the works of authors of great genius: those things in Milton, which, to mean judges, appear tasteless and imperfections, are his inimitable excellencies in the eyes of those, who are of greater discerning and better taste. And if there be a book, which God is the author of, it is most reasonable to suppose, that the distinguishing glories of his word are of such a kinds as that the corruption of men’s hearts, which above all things alienates men from the Deity, and makes the heart dull and stupid to any sense or taste of those things wherein the moral glory of the divine perfections consists: I say, it is but reasonable to suppose, that this would blind men from discerning the beauties of such a book; and that therefore they will not see them, but as God is pleased to enlighten them, and restore a holy taste, to discern and relish divine beauties. This sense of the spiritual excellency and beauty of divine things, does also tend directly to convince the mind of the truth of the gospel, as there are very many of the most important things declared in the gospel, that are hid from the eyes of natural men, the truth of which does in effect consist in this excellency, or does so immediately depend upon it, and result from it, that in this excellency’s being seen, the truth of those things is seen. As soon as ever the eyes are opened to behold the holy beauty and amiableness that is in divine things, a multitude of most important doctrines of the gospel that depend upon it (which all appear strange and dark to natural men) are at once seen to be true. As for instance, hereby appears the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding evil of sin; for the same eye that discerns the transcendent beauty of holiness, necessarily therein sees the exceeding odiousness of sin: the same taste which relishes the

sweetness of true moral good, tastes the bitterness of moral evil. And by this means a man sees his own sinfulness and loathsomeness; for he has now a sense to discern objects of this nature; and so sees the truth of what the word of God declares concerning the exceeding sinfulness of mankind, which before he did not see. He now sees the dreadful pollution of his heart, and the desperate depravity of his nature, in a new manner; for his soul has now a sense given it to feel the pain of such a disease; and this shows him the truth of what the Scripture reveals concerning the corruption of man's nature, his original sin, and the ruinous, undone condition man is in, and his need of a Savior, his need of the mighty power of God to renew his heart and change his nature. Men, by seeing the true excellency of holiness, do see the glory of all those things, which both reason and Scripture show to be in the divine Being; for it has been shown, that the glory of them depends on this: and hereby they see the truth of all that the Scripture declares concerning: God's glorious excellency and majesty, his being the fountain of all good, the only happiness of the creature, &c. And this again shows the mind the truth of what the Scripture teaches concerning the evil of sin against so glorious a God; and also the truth of what it teaches concerning sin's just desert of that dreadful punishment which it reveals; and also concerning the impossibility of our offering any satisfaction, or sufficient atonement for that which is so infinitely evil and heinous. And this again shows the truth of what the Scripture reveals concerning the necessity of a Savior, to offer an atonement of infinite value for sin. And this sense of spiritual beauty that has been spoken of, enables the soul to see the glory of those things which the gospel reveals concerning the person of Christ; and so enables to see the exceeding beauty and dignity of his person, appearing in what the gospel exhibits of his word, works, acts, and life: and this apprehension of the superlative dignity of his person shows the truth of what the gospel declares concerning the value of his blood and righteousness, and so the infinite excellency of that offering he has made to God for us, and so its sufficiency to atone for our sins, and recommend us to God. And thus the Spirit of God discovers the way of salvation by Christ; thus the soul sees the fitness and suitableness of this way of salvation, the admirable wisdom of the contrivance, and the perfect answerableness of the provision that the gospel exhibits (as made for us) to our necessities. A sense of true divine beauty being given to the soul, the soul discerns the beauty of every part of the gospel scheme. This also shows the soul the truth of what the word of God declares concerning man's chief happiness, as consisting in holy exercises and enjoyments. This shows the truth of what the gospel declares concerning the unspeakable glory of the heavenly state. And what the prophecies of the Old Testaments and the writings of the apostles declare concerning the glory of the Messiah's kingdom, is now all plain; and also what the Scripture teaches concerning the reasons and grounds of our duty. The truth of all these things revealed in the Scripture, and many more that might be mentioned, appears to the soul, only by imparting that spiritual taste of divine beauty, which has been spoken of; they being hidden things to the soul before. And besides all this, the truth of all those things which the Scripture says about experimental religion, is hereby known; for they are now experienced. And this convinces the soul, that one who knew the heart of man, better than we know our own hearts, and perfectly knew the nature of virtue and holiness, was the author of the Scriptures. And the opening to view, with such clearness, such a world of wonderful and glorious truth in the gospel, that before was unknown, being quite above the view of a natural eye, but now appearing so clear and bright, has a powerful and invincible influence on the soul, to persuade of the divinity of the gospel.

01.10. PART III(e)

Unless men may come to a reasonable, solid persuasion and conviction of the truth of the gospel, by the internal evidences of it, in the way that has been spoken, viz., by a sight of its glory; it is impossible that those who are illiterate, and unacquainted with history, should have any thorough and effectual conviction of it at all. They may without this, see a great deal of probability of it; it may be reasonable for them to give much credit to what learned men and historians tell them; and they may tell them so much, that it may look very probable and rational to them, that the Christian religion is true; and so much that they would be very unreasonable not to entertain this opinion. But to have a conviction, so clear, and evident, and assuring, as to be sufficient to induce them, with boldness to sell all, confidently and fearlessly to run the venture of the loss of all things, and of enduring the most exquisite and long continued torments, and to trample the world under foot, and count all things but dung for Christ, the evidence they can have from history, cannot be sufficient. It is impossible that men, who have not something of a general view of the historical world, or the series of history from age to age, should come at the force of arguments for the truth of Christianity, drawn from history, to that degree, as effectually to induce them to venture their all upon it. After all that learned men have said to them, there will remain innumerable doubts on their minds; they will be ready, when pinched with some great trial of their faith, to say, "How do I know this, or that? How do I know when these histories were written? Learned men tell me these histories were so and so attested in the day of them; but how do I know that there were such attestations then? They tell me there is equal reason to believe these facts, as any whatsoever that are related at such a distance; but how do I know that other facts which are related of those ages, ever were? Those who have not something of a general view of the series of historical events, and of the state of mankind from age to age, cannot see the clear evidence from history of the truth of facts, in distant ages; but there will endless doubts and scruples remain. But the gospel was not given only for learned men. There are at least nineteen in twenty, if not ninety-nine in a hundred, of those for whom the Scriptures were written, that are not capable of any certain or effectual conviction of the divine authority of the Scriptures, by such arguments as learned men make use of. If men who have been brought up in Heathenism, must wait for a clear and certain conviction of the truth of Christianity, until they have learning and acquaintance with the histories of politer nations, enough to see clearly the force of such kind of arguments; it will make the evidence of the gospel to then immensely cumbersome, and will render the propagation of the gospel among them infinitely difficult. Miserable is the condition of the Houssatunnuck Indians, and others, who have lately manifested a desire to be instructed in Christianity, if they can come at no evidence of the truth of Christianity, sufficient to induce them to sell all for Christ, in any other way but this.

It is unreasonable to suppose, that God has provided for his people no more than probable evidence of the truth of the gospel. He has with great care, abundantly provided, and given them, the most convicting, assuring, satisfying and manifold evidence of his faithfulness in the covenant of grace; and as David says, "made a covenant, ordered in all things and sure." Therefore it is

rational to suppose, that at the same time, he would not fail of ordering the matter so, that there should not be wanting, as great, and clear evidence, that this is his covenant, and that these promises are his promises; or, which is the same thing, that the Christian religion is true, and that the gospel is his word. Otherwise in vain are those great assurances he has given of his faithfulness in his covenant, by confirming it with his oath, and so variously establishing it by seals and pledges. For the evidence that it is his covenant, is properly the foundation on which all the force and effect of those other assurances do stand. We may therefore undoubtedly suppose and conclude, that there is some sort of evidence which God has given, that this covenant, and these promises are his, beyond all mere probability; that there are some grounds of assurance of it held forth, which, if we were not blind to them, tend to give a higher persuasion, than any arguing from history, human traditions &c., which the illiterate and unacquainted with history are capable of; yea, that which is good ground of the highest and most perfect assurance, that mankind have in any case whatsoever, agreeable to those high expressions which the apostle uses, Hebrews 10:22, "Let us draw near in full assurance of faith." And Colossians 2:2, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." It is reasonable to suppose, that God would give the greatest evidence of those things which are greatest, and the truth of which is of greatest importance to us: and that we therefore, if we are wise, and act rationally, shall have the greatest desire of having full, undoubting and perfect assurance of. But it is certain, that such an assurance is not to be attained by the greater part of them who live under the gospel, by arguments fetched from ancient traditions, histories, and monuments. And if we come to fact and experience, there is not the least reason to suppose, that one in a hundred of those who have been sincere Christians, and have had a heart to sell all for Christ, have come by their convection of the truth of the gospel this way. If we read over the histories of the many thousands that died martyrs for Christ, since the beginning of the Reformation, and have cheerfully undergone extreme tortures in a confidence of the truth of the gospel, and consider their circumstances and advantages; how few of them were there, that we can reasonably suppose, ever came by their assured persuasion this way; or indeed for whom it was possible, reasonably to receive so full and strong an assurance, from such arguments! Many of them were weak women and children, and the greater part of them illiterate persons, many of whom had been brought up in popish ignorance and darkness, and were but newly come out of it, and lived and died in times wherein those arguments for the truth of Christianity, from antiquity and history had been but very imperfectly handled. And indeed, it is but very lately that these arguments have been set in a clear and convincing light, even by learned men themselves: and since it has been done, there never were fewer thorough believers among those who have been educated in the true religion; infidelity never prevailed so much, in any age, as in this, wherein these arguments are handled to the greatest advantage. The true martyrs of Jesus Christ, are not those who have only been strong in opinion that the gospel of Christ is true, but those that have seen the truth of it; as the very name of martyrs or witnesses (by which they are called in Scripture) implies. Those are very improperly called witnesses of the truth of any them, who only declare they are very much of opinion that such a thing is true. Those only are proper witnesses, who can, and do testify, that they have seen the truth of the thing they assert: John 3:11, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." John 1:34, "And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." 1 John 4:14, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." Acts 22:14-15,

"The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth; for thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." But the true martyrs of Jesus Christ are called his witnesses; and all the saints, who by their holy practice under great trials, declare that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, are called witnesses, Hebrews 11:1, and Hebrews 12:1, because by their profession and practice, they declare their assurance of the truth and divinity of the gospel, having had the eyes of their minds enlightened to see divinity in the gospel, or to behold that unparalleled, ineffably excellent, and truly divine glory shining in it, which is altogether distinguishing, evidential, and convincing: so that they may truly be said to have seen God in it, and to have seen that it is indeed divine; and so can speak in the style of witnesses; and not only say, that they think the gospel is divine, but say, that it is divine, giving it in as their testimony, because they have seen it to be so. Doubtless Peter, James and John, after they had seen that excellent glory of Christ in the mount, would have been ready, when they came down, to speak in the language of witnesses, and to say positively that Jesus is the Son of God; as Peter says, they were eyewitnesses, 2 Peter 1:16. And so all nations will be ready positively to say this, when they shall behold his glory at the day of judgment; though what will be universally seen, will be only his natural glory, and not his moral and spiritual glory, which is much more distinguishing. But yet it must be noted, that among those who have a spiritual sight of the divine glory of the gospel, there is a great variety of decrees of strength of faith, as there is a vast variety of the degrees of clearness of views of this glory: but there is no true and saving faith, or spiritual conviction of the judgment, of the truth of the gospel, that has nothing in it, of this manifestation of its internal evidence in some degree. The gospel of the blessed God does not go abroad a begging for its evidence, so much as some think; it has its highest and most proper evidence in itself. Though great use may be made of external arguments, they are not to be neglected, but highly prized and valued; for they may be greatly serviceable to awaken unbelievers, and bring them to serious consideration, and to confirm the faith of true saints; yea, they may be in some respect subservient to the begetting of a saving faith in men. Though what was said before remains true, that there is no spiritual conviction of the judgment, but what arises from an apprehension of the spiritual beauty and glory of divine things: for, as has been observed, this apprehension or view has a tendency to convince the mind of the truth of the gospel, two ways, either directly or indirectly. Having therefore already observed how it does this directly, I proceed now, 2. To observe how a view of this divine glory does convince the mind of the truth of Christianity, more indirectly.

First, it doth so, as the prejudices of the heart against the truth of divine things are hereby removed, so that the mind thereby lies open to the force of the reasons which are offered. The mind of man is naturally full of enmity against the doctrines of the gospel; which is a disadvantage to those arguments that prove their truth, and causes them to lose their force upon the mind; but when a person has discovered to him the divine excellency of Christian doctrines, this destroys that enmity, and removes the prejudices, and sanctifies the reason, and causes it to be open and free. Hence is a vast difference, as to the force that arguments have to convince the mind. Hence was the very different effect, which Christ’s miracles had to convince the disciples, from what they had to convince the Scribes and Pharisees: not that they had a stronger reasons or had their reason more improved; but their reason was sanctified, and those blinding prejudices, which the Scribes and Pharisees were under, were removed by the sense they had of the excellency of

Christ and his doctrine.

Secondly, It not only removes the hinderances of reason, but positively helps reason. It makes even the speculative notions more lively. It assists and engages the attention of the mind to that kind of objects which causes it to have a clearer view of them, and more clearly to see their mutual relations. The ideas themselves, which otherwise are dim and obscure, by this means have a light cast upon them, and are impressed with greater strength, so that the mind can better judge of them; as he that beholds the objects on the face of the earth, when the light of the sun is cast upon them, is under greater advantage to discern them, in their true forms, and mutual relations, and to see the evidences of divine wisdom and skill in their contrivance, than he that sees them in a dim starlight, or twilight.

What has been said, may serve in some measure to show the nature of a spiritual conviction of the judgment of the truth and reality of divine things; and so to distinguish truly gracious affections from others; for gracious affections are evermore attended with such a conviction of the judgment. But before I dismiss this head, it will be needful to observe the ways whereby some are deceived, with respect to this matter; and take notice of several things, that are sometimes taken for a spiritual and saving belief of the truth of the things of religion, which are indeed very diverse from it.

1. There is a degree of conviction of the truth of the great things of religion, that arises from the common enlightenings of the Spirit of God. That more lively and sensible apprehension of the things of religion, with respect to what is natural in them, such as natural men have who are under awakenings and common illuminations, will give some degree of conviction of the truth of divine things, beyond what they had before they were thus enlightened. For hereby they see the manifestations there are, in the revelation made in the holy Scriptures, and things exhibited in that revelation, of the natural perfections of God; such as his greatness, power, and awful majesty; which tends to convince the minds that this is the word of a great and terrible God. From the tokens there are of God's greatness and majesty in his word and works, which they have a great sense of, from the common influence of the Spirit of God, they may have a much greater conviction that these are indeed the words and works of a very great invisible Being. And the lively apprehension of the greatness of God, which natural men may have, tends to make them sensible of the great guilt which sin against such a God brings, and the dreadfulness of his wrath for sin. And this tends to cause them more easily and fully to believe the revelation the Scripture makes of another world, and of the extreme misery it threatens there to be indicted on sinners. And so from that sense of the great natural good there is in the things of religion, which is sometimes given in common illuminations, men may be the more induced to believe the truth of religion. These things persons may have, and yet have no sense of the beauty and amiableness of the moral and holy excellency that is in the things of religion; and therefore no spiritual conviction of their truth. But yet such convictions are sometimes mistaken for saving convictions, and the affections flowing from them, for saving affections.

2. The extraordinary impressions which are made on the imaginations of some persons, in the visions and immediate strong impulses and suggestions that they have, as though they saw sights, and had words spoken to them, may, and often do beget a strong persuasion of the truth of invisible things. Though the general tendency of such things, in their final issue, is to draw men off

from the word of God, and to cause them to reject the gospel, and to establish unbelief and Atheism; yet for the present, they may, and often do beget a confident persuasion of the truth of some things that are revealed in the Scriptures; however their confidence is founded in delusion, and so nothing worth. As for instance, if a person has by some invisible agent, immediately and strongly impressed on his imagination, the appearance of a bright light, and glorious form of a person seated on a throne, with great external majesty and beauty, uttering some remarkable words, with great force and energy; the person who is the subject of such an operation, may be from hence confident, that there are invisible agents, spiritual beings, from what he has experienced, knowing that he had no hand himself in this extraordinary effect, which he has experienced: and he may also be confident, that this is Christ whom he saw and heard speaking: and this may make him confident that there is a Christ, and that Christ reigns on a throne in heaven, as he saw him; and may be confident that the words which he heard him speak are true, &c.-In the same manner, as the lying miracles of the Papists may, for the present, beget in the minds of the ignorant deluded people, a strong persuasion of the truth of many things declared in the New Testament. Thus when the images of Christ, in Popish churches, are on some extraordinary occasions, made by priestcraft to appear to the people as if they wept, and shed fresh blood, and moved, and uttered such and such words; the people may be verily persuaded that it is a miracle wrought by Christ himself; and from thence may be confident there is a Christ, and that what they are told of his death and sufferings, and resurrection, and ascension, and present government or the world is true; for they may look upon this miracle, as a certain evidence of all these things, and a kind of ocular demonstration of them. This may be the influence of these lying wonders for the present; though the general tendency of them is not to convince that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, but finally to promote Atheism. Even the intercourse which Satan has with witches, and their often experiencing his immediate power, has a tendency to convince them of the truth of some of the doctrines of religion; as particularly the reality of an invisible world, or world of spirits, contrary to the doctrine of the Sadducees. The general tendency of Satan's influence is delusion: but yet he may mix some truth with his lies, that his lies may not be so easily discovered.

There are multitudes that are deluded with a counterfeit faith, from impressions on their imagination, in the manner which has been now spoken of. They say they know that there is a God, for they have seen him; they know that Christ is the Son of God, for they have seen him in his glory; they know that Christ died for sinners, for they have seen him hanging on the cross, and his blood running from his wounds; they know there is a heaven and a hell, for they have seen the misery of the damned souls in hell, and the glory of saints and angels in heaven (meaning some external representations strongly impressed on their imagination); they know that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that such and such promises in particular are his word, for they have heard him speak them to them, they came to their minds suddenly and immediately from God, without their having any hand in it.

3. Persons may seem to have their belief of the truth of the things of religion greatly increased, when the foundation of it is only a persuasion they have received of their interest in them. They first, by some means or other, take up a confidence, that if there be a Christ and heaven, they are theirs; and this prejudices them more in favor of the truth of them. When they hear of the great and glorious things of religion, it is with this notion, that all these things belong to them; and hence

easily become confident that they are true; they look upon it to be greatly for their interest that they should be true. It is very obvious what a strong influence men's interest and inclinations have on their judgments. While a natural man thinks, that if there be a heaven and hell, the latter, and not the former, belongs to him; then he will be hardly persuaded that there is a heaven or hell: but when he comes to be persuaded, that hell belongs only to other folks, and not to him, then he can easily allow the reality of hell, and cry out of others' senselessness and sottishness in neglecting means of escape from it: and being confident that he is a child of God, and that God has promised heaven to him, he may seem strong in the faith of its reality, and may have a great zeal against that infidelity which denies it. But I proceed to another distinguishing sign of gracious affections.

VI. Gracious affections are attended with evangelical humiliation. Evangelical humiliation is a sense that a Christian has of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousnesss, with an answerable frame of heart.

There is a distinction to be made between a legal and evangelical humiliation. The former is what men may be the subjects of, while they are yet in a state of nature, and have no gracious affections; the latter is peculiar to true saints: the former is from the common influence of the Spirit of God, assisting natural principles, and especially natural conscience; the latter is from the special influences of the Spirit of God, implanting and exercising supernatural and divine principles: the former is from the mind's being assisted to a greater sense of the things of religion, as to their natural properties and qualities, and particularly of the natural perfections of God, such as his greatness, terrible majesty, &c., which were manifested to the congregation of Israel, in giving the law at mount Sinai; the latter is from a sense of the transcendent beauty of divine things in their moral qualities: in the former, a sense of the awful greatness, and natural perfections of God, and of the strictness of his law, convinces men that they are exceeding sinful, and guilty, and exposed to the wrath of God, as it will wicked men and devils at the day of judgment; but they do not see their own odiousness on the account of sin; they do not see the hateful nature of sin; a sense of this is given in evangelical humiliation, by a discovery of the beauty of God's holiness and moral perfection. In a legal humiliation, men are made sensible that they are little and nothing before the great and terrible God, and that they are undone, and wholly insufficient to help themselves; as wicked men will be at the day of judgment: but they have not an answerable frame of heart, consisting in a disposition to abase themselves, and exalt God alone; this disposition is given only in evangelical humiliation, by overcoming the heart, and changing its inclination, by a discovery of God's holy beauty: in a legal humiliation, the conscience is convinced; as the consciences of all will be most perfectly at the day of judgment; but because there is no spiritual understanding, the will is not bowed, nor the inclination altered: this is done only in evangelical humiliation. In legal humiliation, men are brought to despair of helping themselves; in evangelical, they are brought voluntarily to deny and renounce themselves: in the former, they are subdued and forced to the ground; in the latter, they are brought sweetly to yield, and freely and with delight to prostrate themselves at the feet of God.

Legal humiliation has in it no spiritual good, nothing of the nature of true virtue; whereas evangelical humiliation is that wherein the excellent beauty of Christian grace does very much consist. Legal humiliation is useful, as a means in order to evangelical; as a common knowledge of the things of religion is a means requisite in order to spiritual knowledge. Men may be legally humbled and have no humility: as the wicked at the day of judgment will be thoroughly convinced

that they have no righteousness, but are altogether sinful, and exceedingly guilty, and justly exposed to eternal damnation, and be fully sensible of their own helplessness, without the least mortification of the pride of their hearts: but the essence of evangelical humiliation consists in such humility, as becomes a creature, in itself exceeding sinful, under a dispensation of grace; consisting in a mean esteem of himself, as in himself nothing, and altogether contemptible and odious; attended with a mortification of a disposition to exalt himself, and a free renunciation of his own glory. This is a great and most essential thing in true religion. The whole frame of the gospel, and everything appertaining to the new covenant, and all God's dispensations towards fallen man, are calculated to bring to pass this effect in the hearts of men. They that are destitute of this, have no true religion, whatever profession they may make, and how high soever their religious affections may be: Habakkuk 2:4, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith;" i.e., he shall live by his faith on God's righteousness and grace, and not his own goodness and excellency. God has abundantly manifested in his word, that this is what he has a peculiar respect to in his saints, and that nothing is acceptable to him without it. Psalms 34:18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalms 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalms 138:6, "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." Proverbs 3:34, "He giveth grace unto the lowly." Isaiah 57:15, "Thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isaiah 66:1-2, "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Micah 6:8, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee; but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of God." Matthew 18:3-4, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Mark 10:15, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The centurion, that we have an account of, Luke 7:1-50, acknowledged that he was not worthy that Christ should enter under his roof, and that he was not worthy to come to him. See the manner of the woman's coming to Christ, that was a sinner, Luke 7:37, &c.: "And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head." She did not think the hair of her head, which is the natural crown and glory of a woman (1 Corinthians 11:15), too good to wipe the feet of Christ withal. Jesus most graciously accepted her, and says to her, "thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." The woman of Canaan submitted to Christ, in his saying, "it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs," and did as it were own that she was worthy to be called a dog; whereupon Christ says unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee, even as thou wilt," Matthew 15:26-28. The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants," Luke 15:18, &c. See also Luke 18:9, &c.: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, &c. The

publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." Matthew 28:9, "And they came, and held him by the feet and worshipped him." Colossians 3:12, "Put ye on, as the elect of God, humbleness of mind." Ezekiel 20:41-42, "I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, &c. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all your evils that ye have committed." Ezekiel 36:26-27, Ezekiel 36:31, "A new heart also will I give unto you-and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, &c. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations." Ezekiel 16:63, "That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." Job 42:6, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." As we would therefore make the holy Scriptures our rule in judging of the nature of true religion, and judging of our own religious qualifications and state; it concerns us greatly to look at this humiliation, as one of the most essential things pertaining to true Christianity.[Calvin in his Institutions, Book II chap. 2. ¤ 11, says "I was always exceedingly pleased with that saying of Chrysostom. "The foundation of our philosophy is humility;" and yet more pleased with that of Augustine: "As," says he, "the rhetorician being asked, what was the first thing in the rules of eloquence, he answered, pronunciation; what was the second, pronunciation; what was the third, still he answered, pronunciation. So if you shall ask me concerning the precept of the Christian religion, I would answer, firstly, secondly, and thirdly, and forever, humility."] This is the principal part of the great Christian duty of self-denial. That duty consists in two things, viz., first, in a man’s denying his worldly inclinations, and in forsaking and renouncing all worldly objects and enjoyments; and, secondly, in denying his natural self-exaltation, and renouncing his own dignity and glory and in being emptied of himself; so that he does freely and from his very heart, as it were renounce himself, and annihilate himself. Thus the Christian doth in evangelical humiliation. And this latter is the greatest and most difficult part of self-denial: although they always go together, and one never truly is, where the other is not; yet natural men can come much nearer to the former than the latter. Many Anchorites and Recluses have abandoned (though without any true mortification) the wealth, and pleasures, and common enjoyments of the world, who were far from renouncing their own dignity and righteousness; they never denied themselves for Christ, but only sold one lust to feed another, sold a beastly lust to pamper a devilish one; and so were never the better, but their latter end was worse than their beginning; they turned out one black devil, to let in seven white ones, that were worse than the first, though of a fairer countenance. It is inexpressible, and almost inconceivable, how strong a self-righteous, self-exalting disposition is naturally in man; and what he will not do and suffer to feed and gratify it: and what lengths have been gone in a seeming self-denial in other respects, by Essenes and Pharisees among the Jews, and by Papists, many sects of heretics, and enthusiasts, among professing Christians; and by many Mahometans; and by Pythagorean philosophers, and others among the Heathen; and all to do sacrifice to this Moloch of spiritual pride or self-righteousness; and that they may have something wherein to exalt themselves before God, and above their fellow creatures. That humiliation which has been spoken of, is what all the most glorious hypocrites, who make the most

splendid show of mortification to the world, and high religious affection, do grossly fail in. Were it not that this is so much insisted on in Scripture, as a most essential thing in true grace, one would be tempted to think that many of the heathen philosophers were truly gracious, in whom was so bright an appearance of many virtues, and also great illuminations, and inward fervors and elevations of mind, as though they were truly the subjects of divine illapses and heavenly communications.[Albeit the Pythagoreans were thus famous for Judaic mysterious wisdom, and many moral, as well as natural accomplishments, yet were they not exempted from boasting and pride; which was indeed a vice most epidemic, and as is were congenial, among all the philosophers; but in a more particular manner, among the Pythagoreans. So Hornius Hist. Philosoph. L. III. chap. 11. The manners of the Pythagoreans were not free from boasting. They were all such as abounded in the sense and commendation of their own excellencies, and boasting even almost to the degree of immodesty and impudence, as great Heinsius, ad Horat. has rightly observed. Thus indeed does proud nature delight to walk in the sparks of its own fire. And although many of these old philosophers could, by the strength of their own lights and heats, together with some common elevations and raisures of spirit (peradventure from a more than ordinary, though not special and saving assistance of the Spirit), abandon many grosser vices; yet they were all deeply immersed in that miserable cursed abyss of spiritual pride, so that all their natural, and moral, and philosophic attainments, did feed, nourish, strengthen, and render most inveterate, this hell-bred pest of their hearts. Yea, those of them that seemed most modest, as the Academics, who professed they knew nothing, and the Cynics, who greatly decried, both in words and habits, the pride of others, yet even they abounded in the most notorious and visible pride. So connatural and morally essential to corrupt nature, is this envenomed root, fountain, and plague of spiritual pride; especially where there is any natural, moral, or philosophic excellence to feed the same. Whence, Austin rightly judged all these philosophic virtues to be but splendid sins. Gale’s Court of the Gentiles, Part II. B. II. chap. 10:¤ 17.] It is true, that many hypocrites make great pretenses to humility, as well as other graces; and very often there is nothing whatsoever which they make a higher profession of. They endeavor to make a great show of humility in speech and behavior; but they commonly make bungling work of it, though glorious work in their own eyes. They cannot find out what a humble speech and behavior is, or how to speak and act so that there may indeed be a savor of Christian humility in what they say and do: that sweet humble air and mien is beyond their art, being not led by the Spirit, or naturally guided to a behavior becoming holy humility, by the vigor of a lowly spirit within them. And therefore they have no other way, many of them, but only to be much in declaring that they be humble, and telling how they were humbled to the dust at such and such times, and abounding in very bad expressions which they use about themselves; such as, "I am the least of all saints, I am a poor vile creature, I am not worthy of the least mercy, or that God should look upon me! Oh, I have a dreadful wicked heart! My heart is worse than the devil! Oh, this cursed heart of mine," &c. Such expressions are very often used, not with a heart that is broken, not with spiritual mourning, not with the tears of her that washed Jesus’s feet, not as "remembering and being confounded, and never opening their mouth more because of their shame, when God is pacified," as the expression is, Ezekiel 16:63, but with a light air, with smiles in the countenance, or with a pharisaical affectation: and we must believe that they are thus humble, and see themselves so vile, upon the credit of their say so; for there is nothing appears in them of any savor of humility, in the manner of their deportment and deeds that they do. There are many that are full of expressions of their own vileness, who yet expect to be looked

upon as eminent and bright saints by others, as their due; and it is dangerous for any, so much as to hint the contrary, or to carry it towards them any otherwise, than as if we looked upon them as some of the chief of Christians. There are many that are much in crying out of their wicked hearts, and their great short comings, and unprofitableness, and speaking as though they looked on themselves as the meanest of the saints; who yet, if a minister should seriously tell them the same things in private, and should signify, that he feared they were very low and weak Christians, and thought they had reason solemnly to consider of their great barrenness and unprofitableness, and falling so much short of many others, it would be more than they could digest; they would think themselves highly injured; and there would be a danger of a rooted prejudice in them against such a minister.

There are some that are abundant in talking against legal doctrines, legal preaching, and a legal spirit, who do but little understand the thing they talk against. A legal spirit is a more subtle thing than they imagine; it is too subtle for them. It lurks, and operates, and prevails in their hearts, and they are most notoriously guilty of it, at the same time, when they are inveighing against it. So far as a man is not emptied of himself, and of his own righteousness and goodness, in whatever form or shape, so far he is of a legal spirit. A spirit of pride of man's own righteousness, morality, holiness, affection, experience, faith, humiliation, or any goodness whatsoever, is a legal spirit. It was no pride in Adam before the fall, to be of a legal spirit; because of his circumstances, he might seek acceptance by his own righteousness. But a legal spirit in a fallen, sinful creature, can be nothing else but spiritual pride; and reciprocally, a spiritually proud spirit is a legal spirit. There is no man living that is lifted up with a conceit of his own experiences and discoveries, and upon the account of them glisters in his own eyes, but what trusts in his experiences, and makes a righteousness of them; however he may use humble terms, and speak of his experiences as of the great things God has done for him, and it may be calls upon others to glorify God for them; yet he that is proud of his experiences, arrogates something to himself, as though his experiences were some dignity of his. And if he looks on them as his own dignity, he necessarily thinks that God looks on them so too; for he necessarily thinks his own opinion of then, to be true; and consequently judges that God looks on them as he does; and so unavoidably imagines that God looks on his experiences as a dignity in him, as he looks on them himself; and that he glisters as much in God's eyes, as he does in his own. And thus he trusts in what is inherent in him, to make him shine in God's sight, and recommend him to God: and with this encouragement he goes before God in prayer; and this makes him expect much from God; and this makes him think that Christ loves him, and that he is willing clothe him with his righteousness; because he supposes that he is taken with his experiences and graces. And this is a high degree of living on his own righteousness; and such persons are in the high road to hell. Poor deluded wretches, who think they look so glistering in God's eyes, when they are smoke in his nose, and are many of them more odious to him, than the most impure beast in Sodom, that makes no pretense to religion! To do as these do, is to live upon experiences, according to the true notion of it; and not to do as those who only make use of spiritual experiences, as evidences of a state of grace, and in that way receive hope and comfort from them.

There is a sort of men, who indeed abundantly cry down works, and cry up faith in opposition to works, and set up themselves very much as evangelical persons, in opposition to those that are of a legal spirit, and make a fair show of advancing Christ and the gospel, and the way of free grace;

who are indeed some of the greatest enemies to the gospel way of free grace, and the most dangerous opposers of pure humble Christianity.

There is a pretended great humiliation, and being dead to the law, and emptied of self, which is one of the biggest and most elated things in the world. Some there are, who have made great profession of experience of a thorough work of the law on their hearts, and of being brought fully off from works; whose conversation has savored most of a self-righteous spirit of any that ever I had opportunity to observe. And some who think themselves quite emptied of themselves, and are confident that they are abased in the dust, are full as they can hold with the glory of their own humility, and lifted up to heaven with a high opinion of their own abasement. Their humility is a swelling, self-conceited, confident, showy, noisy, assuming humility. It seems to be the nature of spiritual pride to make men conceited and ostentatious of their humility. This appears in that first born of pride among the children of men, that would be called his holiness, even the man of sin, that exalts himself above all that is called God or is worshipped; he styles himself Servant of servants; and to make a show of humility, washes the feet of a number of poor men at his inauguration. For persons to be truly emptied of themselves, and to be poor in spirit, and broken in heart, is quite another thing, and has other effects, than many imagine. It is astonishing how greatly many are deceived about themselves as to this matter, imagining themselves most humble, when they are most proud, and their behavior is really the most haughty. The deceitfulness of the heart of man appears in no one thing so much as this of spiritual pride and self-righteousness. The subtlety of Satan appears in its height, in his managing of persons with respect to this sin. And perhaps one reason may be, that here he has most experience; he knows the way of its coming in; he is acquainted with the secret springs of it: it was his own sin.-Experience gives vast advantage in leading souls, either in good or evil. But though spiritual pride be so subtle and secret an iniquity, and commonly appears under a pretext of great humility; yet there are two things by which it may (perhaps universally and surely) be discovered and distinguished. The first thing is this; he that is under the prevalence of this distemper, is apt to think highly of his attainments in religion, as comparing himself with others. It is natural for him to fall into that thought of himself, that he is an eminent saint, that he is very high amongst the saints, and has distinguishingly good and great experiences. That is the secret language of his heart: Luke 18:11, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." And Isaiah 65:5, "I am holier than thou." Hence such are apt to put themselves forward among God’s people, and as it were to take a high seat among them, as if there was no doubt of it but it belonged to them. They, as it were, naturally do that which Christ condemns, Luke 14:7, &c., take the highest room. This they do, by being forward to take upon them the place and business of the chief; to guide, teach, direct, and manage; "they are confident that they are guides to the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes," Romans 2:19-20. It is natural for them to take it for granted, that it belongs to them to do the part of dictators and masters in matters of religion; and so they implicitly affect to be called of men Rabbi, which is by interpretation Master, as the Pharisees did, Matthew 23:6-7, i.e., they are yet apt to expect that others should regard them, and yield to them, as masters in matters of religion.["There be two things wherein it appears that a man has only common gifts, and no inward principle. 1. These gifts ever puff up, and make a man something in his own eyes, as the Corinthian knowledge did, and many a private man thinks himself fit to be a minister." Shepard’s Parable Part 1. p.181, 182.] But he whose heart is under the power of Christian humility, is of a contrary disposition. If the Scriptures are at all to be relied on,

such a one is apt to think his attainments in religion to be comparatively mean, and to esteem himself low among the saints, and one of the least of saints. Humility, or true lowliness of mind, disposes persons to think others better than themselves: Php 2:3, "In lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves." Hence they are apt to think the lowest room belongs to them, and their inward disposition naturally leads them to obey that precept of our Savior, Luke 14:10. It is not natural to them to take it upon them to do the part of teachers; but on the contrary, they are disposed to think that they are not the persons, that others are fitter for it than they; as it was with Moses and Jeremiah (Exodus 3:11, Jeremiah 1:6), though they were such eminent saints, and of great knowledge. It is not natural to them to think that it belongs to them to teach, but to be taught; they are much more eager to hear, and to receive instruction from others, than to dictate to others: James 1:19, "Be ye swift to hear, slow to speak." And when they do speak, it is not natural to them to speak with a bold, masterly air; but humility disposes them rather to speak, trembling. Hosea 13:1, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died." They are not apt to assume authority, and to take upon them to be chief managers and masters; but rather to be subject to others: James 3:1-2, "Be not many masters." 1 Peter 5:5, "All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility." Ephesians 5:21, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

There are some persons' experiences that naturally work that way, to make them think highly of them; and they do often themselves speak of their experiences as very great and extraordinary; they freely speak of the great things they have met with. This may be spoken and meant in a good sense. In one sense, every degree of saving mercy is a great thing: it is indeed a thing great, yea, infinitely great, for God to bestow the least crumb of children's bread on such dogs as we are in ourselves; and the more humble a person is that hopes that God has bestowed such mercy on him, the more apt will he be to call it a great thing that he has met with in this sense. But if by great things which they have experienced they mean comparatively great spiritual experiences, or great compared with others' experiences, or beyond what is ordinary, which is evidently oftentimes the case; then for a person to say, I have met with great things, is the very same thing as to say, I am an eminent saint, and have more grace than ordinary: for to have great experiences, if the experiences be true and worth the telling of, is the same thing as to have great grace: there is no true experience, but the exercise of grace; and exactly according to the degree of true experience, is the degree of grace and holiness. The persons that talk thus about their experiences, when they give an account of them, expect that others should admire them. Indeed they do not call it boasting to talk after this manner about their experiences, nor do they look upon it as any sign of pride; because they say, "they know that it was not they that did it, it was free grace, they are things that God has done for them, they would acknowledge the great mercy God has shown them, and not make light of it." But so it was with the Pharisee that Christ tells us of, Luke 18:1-43. He in words gave God the glory of making him to differ from other men; God, I thank thee, says he, that I am not as other men.[Calvin, in his Institutions, B. III. chap. 12 ¤ 7, speaking of this Pharisee, observed "That in his outward confession, he acknowledges that the righteousness that he has, is the gift of God but (says he) because he trusts that he is righteous, he goes away out of the presence of God, unacceptable and odious."] Their verbally ascribing it to the grace of God, that they are holier than other saints, does not hinder their forwardness to think so highly of their holiness, being a sure evidence of the pride and vanity of their minds. If they were under the influence of a humble spirit, their attainments in religion would not be so apt to shine in their own

eyes, nor would they be so much in admiring their own beauty. The Christians that are really the most eminent saints, and therefore have the most excellent experiences, and are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, humble themselves as a little child, Matthew 8:4; because they look on themselves as but little children in grace, and their attainments to be but the attainments of babes in Christ, and are astonished at, and ashamed of the low degrees of their love, and their thankfulness, and their little knowledge of God. Moses, when he had been conversing with God in the mount, and his face shone so bright in the eyes of others as to dazzle their eyes, wist not that his face shone. There are some persons that go by the name of high professors, and some will own themselves to be high professors: but eminently humble saints, that will shine brightest in heaven, are not at all apt to profess high. I do not believe there is an eminent saint in the world that is a high professor. Such will be much more likely to profess themselves to be least of all saints, and to think that every saint's attainments and experiences are higher than his.[Luther, as his words are cited by Rutherford, in his Display of the Spiritual Antichrist, p. 143, 144, says thus: "So is the life of a Christian, that he that has begun, seems to himself to have nothing; but strives and presses forward, that he may apprehend: whence Paul says, I count not myself to have apprehended. For indeed nothing is more pernicious to a believer, than that presumption, that he has already apprehended, and has no further need of seeking. Hence also many fall back, and pine away in spiritual security and slothfulness. So Bernard says, 'To stand still in God's way, is to go back.' Wherefore this remains to him that has begun to be a Christian, to think that he is not yet a Christian, but to seek that he may be a Christian, that he may glory with Paul, 'I am not, but I desire to be;' a Christian not yet finished, but only in his beginnings. Therefore he is not a Christian, that is a Christian, that is, he that thinks himself a finished Christian, is not sensible how he falls short. We reach after heaven, but we are not in heaven. Woe to him that is wholly renewed, that is, that thinks himself to be so. That man, without doubt, has never so much as begun to be renewed, nor did he ever taste what it is to be a Christian.]

Such is the nature of grace, and of true spiritual light, that they naturally dispose the saints in the present state, to look upon their grace and goodness little, and their deformity great. And they that have the most grace and spiritual light, of any in this world, have most of this disposition. As will appear most clear and evident to anyone that soberly and thoroughly weighs the nature and reason of things, and considers the things following. That grace and holiness is worthy to be called little, that is, little in comparison of what it ought to be. And so it seems to one that is truly gracious: for such a one has his eye upon the rule of his duty; a conformity to that is that he aims at; it is what his soul struggles and reaches after; and it is by that that he estimates and judges of what he does, and what he has. To a gracious soul, and especially to one eminently gracious, that holiness appears little, which is little of what it should be; little of what he sees infinite reason for, and obligation to. If his holiness appears to him to be at a vast distance from this, it naturally appears despicable in his eyes, and not worthy to be mentioned as any beauty or amiableness in him. For the like reason as a hungry man naturally accounts that which is set before him, but a little food, a small matter, not worth mentioning, that is nothing in comparison of his appetite. Or as the child of a great prince, that is jealous for the honor of his father, and beholds He respect which men show him, naturally looks on that honor and respect very little, and not worthy to be regarded, which is nothing in comparison of that which the dignity of his father requires. But that is the nature of true grace and spiritual light, that it opens to a person's view the infinite reason there is that he should be holy in a high degree. And the more grace he has, the more this is opened to view, the greater

sense he has of the infinite excellency and glory of the divine Being, and of the infinite dignity of the person of Christ, and the boundless length and breadth, and depth and height, of the love of Christ to sinners. And as grace increases, the field opens more and more to a distant view, until the soul is swallowed up with the vastness of the object, and the person is astonished to think how much it becomes him to love this God, and this glorious Redeemer, that has so loved man, and how little he does love. And so the more he apprehends, the more the smallness of his grace and love appears strange and wonderful: and therefore is more ready to think that others are beyond him. For wondering at the littleness of his own grace, he can scarcely believe that so strange a thing happens to other saints: it is amazing to him, that one that is really a child of God, and that has actually received the saving benefits of that unspeakable love of Christ, should love no more: and he is apt to look upon it as a thing peculiar to himself, a strange and exempt instance; for he sees only the outside of other Christians, but he sees his own inside.

Here the reader may possibly object, that love to God is really increased in proportion as the knowledge of God is increased; and therefore how should an increase of knowledge in a saint make his love appear less, in comparison of what is known? To which I answer, that although grace and the love of God in the saints, be answerable to the degree of knowledge or sight of God; yet it is not in proportion to the object seen and known. The soul of a saint, by having something of God opened to sight, is convinced of much more than is seen. There is something that is seen, that is wonderful; and that sight brings with it a strong conviction of something vastly beyond, that is not immediately seen. So that the soul, at the same time, is astonished at its ignorance, and that it knows so little, as well as that it loves so little. And as the soul, in a spiritual view, is convinced of infinitely more in the object, yet beyond sight; so it is convinced of the capacity of the soul, of knowing vastly more, if the clouds and darkness were but removed. Which causes the soul, in the enjoyment of a spiritual view, to complain greatly of spiritual ignorance, and want of love, and to long and reach after more knowledge and more love.

Grace and the love of God in the most eminent saints in this world, is truly very little in comparison of what it ought to be. Because the highest love that ever any attain to in this life, is poor, cold, exceedingly low, and not worthy to be named in comparison of what our obligations appear to be, from the joint consideration of these two things, viz.: 1. The reason God has given us to love him, in the manifestations he has made of his infinite glory, in his word, and in his works; and particularly in the gospel of his Son, and what he has done for sinful man by him. And, 2. The capacity there is in the soul of man, by those intellectual faculties which God has given it, of seeing and understanding these reasons, which God has given us to love him. How small indeed is the love of the most eminent saint on earth, in comparison of what these things, jointly considered, do require! And this grace tends to convince men of this, and especially eminent grace; for grace is of the nature of light, and brings truth to view. And therefore he that has much grace, apprehends much more than others that great height to which his love ought to ascend; and he sees better than others, how little a way he has risen towards that height. And therefore estimating his love by the whole height of his duty, hence it appears astonishingly little and low in his eyes. And the eminent saint, having such a conviction of the high degree in which he ought to love God, this shows him, not only the littleness of his grace, but the greatness of his remaining corruption. In order to judge how much corruption or sin we have remaining in us, we must take our measure from that height to which the rule of our duty extends: the whole of the distance we are at from that

height, is sin: for failing of duty is sin; otherwise our duty is not our duty, and by how much the more we fall short of our duty, so much the more sin have we. Sin is no other than disagreeableness, in a moral agent, to the law or rule of his duty. And therefore the degree of sin is to be judged of by the rule: so much disagreeableness to the rule, so much sin, whether it be in defect or excess. Therefore if men, in their love to God, do not come up half way to that height which duty requires, then they have more corruption in their hearts than grace; because there is more goodness wanting, than is there: and all that is wanting is sin: it is an abominable defect; and appears so to the saints; especially those that are eminent; it appears exceeding abominable to them, that Christ should be loved so little, and thanked so little for his dying love: it is in their eyes hateful ingratitude. And then the increase of grace has a tendency another way, to cause the saints to think their deformity vastly more than their goodness: it not only tends to convince them that their corruption is much greater than their goodness, which is indeed the case; but it also tends to cause the deformity that there is in the least sin, or the least degree of corruption, to appear so great as vastly to outweigh all the beauty there is in their greatest holiness; for this also is indeed the case. For the least sin against an infinite God, has an infinite hatefulness or deformity in it, but the highest degree of holiness in a creature, has not an infinite loveliness in it: and therefore the loveliness of it is as nothings, in comparison of the deformity of the least sin. That every sin has infinite deformity and hatefulness in it, is most demonstrably evident; because what the evil, or iniquity, or hatefulness of sin consists in, is the violating of an obligation, or the being or doing contrary to what we should be or do, or are obliged to. And therefore by how much the greater the obligation is that is violated, so much the greater is the iniquity and hatefulness of the violation. But certainly our obligation to love and honor any being is in some proportion to his loveliness and honorableness, or to his worthiness to be loved and honored by us; which is the same thing. We are surely under greater obligation to love a more lovely being, than a less lovely; and if a Being be infinitely lovely or worthy to be loved by us, then our obligations to love him are infinitely great; and therefore, whatever is contrary to this love, has in it infinite iniquity, deformity, and unworthiness. But on the other hand, with respect to our holiness or love to God, there is not an infinite worthiness in that. The sin of the creature against God, is in deserving and hateful in proportion to the distance there is between God and the creature: the greatness of the object, and the meanness and inferiority of the subject, aggravates it. But it is the reverse with regard to the worthiness of the respect of the creature to God; it is worthless, and not worthy, in proportion to the meanness of the subject. So much the greater the distance between God and the creature, so much the less is the creature's respect worthy of God's notice or regard. The great degree of superiority increases the obligation on the inferior to regard the superior; and so makes the want of regard more hateful. But the great degree of inferiority diminishes the worth of the regard of the interior; because the more he is inferior, the less he is worthy of notice; the less he is, the less is what he can offer worth; for he can offer no more than himself, in offering his best respect; and therefore as he is little, and little worth, so is his respect little worth. And the more a person has of true grace and spiritual light, the more will it appear thus to him; the more will he appear to himself infinitely deformed by reason of sin, and the less will the goodness that is in his grace, or good experience, appear in proportion to it. For indeed it is nothing to it; it is less than a drop to the ocean; for finite bears no proportion at all to that which is infinite. But the more a person has of spiritual light, the more do things appear to him, in this respect, as they are indeed.-Hence it most demonstrably appears, that true grace is of that nature, that the more a person has of it, with

remaining corruption, the less does his goodness and holiness appear, in proportion to his deformity; and not only to his past deformity, but to his present deformity, in the sin that now appears in his heart, and the abominable defects of his highest and best affections, and brightest experiences. The nature of many high and religious affections, and great discoveries (as they are called) in many persons that I have been acquainted with, is to hide and cover over the corruption of their hearts, and to make it seem to them as if all their sin was gone, and to leave them without complaints of any hateful evil left in them (though it may be they cry out much of their past unworthiness); a sure and certain evidence that their discoveries (as they call them) are darkness and not light. It is darkness that hides men's pollution and deformity; but light let into the heart discovers it, searches it out in its secret corners, and makes it plainly to appear; especially that penetrating, all searching light of God's holiness and glory. It is true, that saving discoveries may for the present hide corruption in one sense; they restrain the positive exercises of it, such as malice, envy, covetousness, lasciviousness, murmuring, &c., but they bring corruption to light, in that which is privative, viz., that there is no more love, no more humility, no more thankfulness. Which defects appear most hateful in the eyes of those who have the most eminent exercises of grace; and are very burdensome, and cause the saints to cry out of their leanness, and odious pride and ingratitude. And whatever positive exercises of corruption at any time arise, and mingle themselves with eminent actings of grace, grace will exceedingly magnify the view of them, and render their appearance far more heinous and horrible. The more eminent saints are, and the more they have of the light of heaven in their souls, the more do they appear to themselves, as the most eminent saints in this world do to the saints and angels in heaven. How can we rationally suppose the most eminent saints on earth appear to them, if beheld any otherwise than covered over with the righteousness of Christ, and their deformities swallowed up and hid in the coruscation of the beams of his abundant glory and love? How can we suppose our most ardent love and praises appear to them, that do behold the beauty and glory of God without a vail? How does our highest thankfulness for the dying love of Christ appear to them, who see Christ as he is, who know as they are known, and see the glory of the person of him that died, and the wonders of his dying love, without any cloud of darkness? And how do they look on the deepest reverence and humility, with which worms of the dust on earth approach that infinite Majesty which they behold? Do they appear great to them, or so much as worthy of the name of reverence and humility, in those that they see to be at such an infinite distance from that great and holy God, in whose glorious presence they are? The reason why the highest attainments of the saints on earth appear so mean to them, is because they dwell in the light of God's glory, and see God as he is. And it is in this respect with the saints on earth, as it is with the saints in heaven, in proportion as they are more eminent in grace.

I would not be understood, that the saints on earth have in all respects the worst opinion of themselves, when they have most of the exercises of grace. In many respects it is otherwise. With respect to the positive exercises of corruption, they may appear to themselves freest and best when grace is most in exercise, and worst when the actings of grace are lowest. And when they compare themselves with themselves at different times, they may know, when grace is in lively exercise, that it is better with them than it was before (though before, in the time of it, they did not see so much badness as they see now) and when afterwards they sink again in the frame of their minds, they may know that they sink, and have a new argument of their great remaining corruption, and a rational conviction of a greater vileness than they saw before; and many have

more of a sense of guilt, and a kind of legal sense of their sinfulness by far, than when in the lively exercise of grace. But yet it is true, and demonstrable from the forementioned considerations, that the children of God never have so much of a sensible and spiritual conviction of their deformity, and so great, and quick and abasing a sense of their present vileness and odiousness, as when they are highest in the exercise of true and pure grace; and never are they so much disposed to set themselves low among Christians as then. And thus he that is greatest in the kingdom, or most eminent in the church of Christ, is the same that humbles himself, as the least infant among them; agreeable to that great saying of Christ, Matthew 18:4. A true saint may know that he has some true grace: and the more grace there is, the more easily is it known, as was observed and proved before. But yet it does not follow, that an eminent saint is easily sensible that he is an eminent saint, when compared with others. I will not deny that it is possible, that he that has much grace, and is an eminent saint, may know it. But he will not be apt to know it; it will not be a thing obvious to him: that he is better than others, and has higher experiences and attainments, is not a foremost thought; nor is it that which, from time to time readily offers itself; it is a thing that is not in his way, but lies far out of sight; he must take pains to convince himself of it; there will be need of a great command of reason, and a high degree of strictness and care in arguing, to convince himself. And if he be rationally convinced by a very strict consideration of his own experiences compared with the great appearances of low degrees of grace in some other saints, it will hardly seem real to him, that he has more grace than they; and he will be apt to lose the conviction that he has by pains obtained: nor will it seem at all natural to him to act upon that supposition. And this may be laid down as an infallible thing, "that the person who is apt to think that he, as compared with others, is a very eminent saint, much distinguished in Christian experience, in whom this is a first thoughts that rises of itself, and naturally offers itself; he is certainly mistaken; he is no eminent saint, but under the great prevailings of a proud and self-righteous spirit." And if this be habitual with the man, and is steadily the prevailing temper of his mind, he is no saint at all; he has not the least degree of any true Christian experience; so surely as the word of God is true. And that sort of experiences that appears to be of that tendency, and is found from time to time to have that effect, to elevate the subject of them with a great conceit of those experiences, is certainly vain and delusive. Those supposed discoveries that naturally blow up the person with an admiration of the eminency of his discoveries, and fill him with conceit that now he has seen, and knows more than most other Christians, have nothing of the nature of true spiritual light in them. All true spiritual knowledge is of that nature, that the more a person has of it, the more is he sensible of his own ignorance; as is evident by 1 Corinthians 8:2 : "He that thinketh he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." Agur, when he had a great discovery of God, and sense of the wonderful height of his glory, and of his marvellous works, and cries out of his greatness and incomprehensibleness; at the same time, had the deepest sense of his brutish ignorance, and looked upon himself the most ignorant of all the saints. Proverbs 30:2-4 : "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?" For a man to be highly conceited of his spiritual and divine knowledge, is for him to be wise in his own eyes, if anything is. And therefore it comes under those prohibitions: Proverbs 3:7, "Be not wise in thine own eyes." Romans 12:16, "Be not wise in your own conceits;" and brings men under that woe, Isaiah 5:21 :

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight." Those that are thus wise in their own eyes, are some of the least likely to get good of any in the world. Experience shows the truth of that, Proverbs 26:12 : "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him." To this some may object, that the Psalmist, when we must suppose that he was in a holy frame, speaks of his knowledge as eminently great, and far greater than that of other saints: Psalms 119:99-100, "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts." To this I answer two things:

(1.) There is no restraint to be laid upon the Spirit of God, as to what he shall reveal to a prophet, for the benefit of his church, who is speaking or writing under immediate inspiration. The Spirit of God may reveal to such a one, and dictate to him, to declare to others secret things, that otherwise would be hard, yea impossible for him to find out. As he may reveal to him mysteries, that otherwise would be above the reach of his reason; or things in a distant place, that he cannot see; or future events, that it would be impossible for him to know and declare, if they were not extraordinarily revealed to him; so the Spirit of God might reveal to David this distinguishing benefit he had received by conversing much with God’s testimonies; and use him as his instrument to record it for the benefit of others, to excite them to the like duty, and to use the same means to gain knowledge. Nothing can be gathered concerning the natural tendency of the ordinary gracious influences of the Spirit of God, from that that David declares of his distinguishing knowledge under the extraordinary influences of God’s Spirit, immediately dictating to him the divine mind by inspiration, and using David as his instrument to write what he pleased for the benefit of his church; any more than we can reasonably argue, that it is the natural tendency of grace to incline men to curse others, and wish the most dreadful misery to them that can be thought of, because David, under inspiration, often curses others, and prays that such misery may come upon them.

(2.) It is not certain that the knowledge David here speaks of, is spiritual knowledge, wherein holiness does fundamentally consist. But it may be that greater revelation which God made to him of the Messiah, and the things of his future kingdom, and the far more clear and extensive knowledge that he had of the mysteries and doctrines of the gospel, than others; as a reward for his keeping God’s testimonies. In this, it is apparent by the book of Psalms, that David far exceeded all that had gone before him.

Secondly, Another thing that is an infallible sign of spiritual pride, is persons being apt to think highly of their humility. False experiences are commonly attended with a counterfeit humility. And it is the very nature of a counterfeit humility, to be highly conceited of itself. False religious affections have generally that tendency, especially when raised to a great height to make persons think that their humility is great, and accordingly to take much notice of their great attainments in this respect, and admire them. But eminently gracious affections (I scruple not to say it) are evermore of a contrary tendency, and have universally a contrary effect in those that have them. They indeed make them very sensible what reason there is that they should be deeply humbled, and cause them earnestly to thirst and long after it; but they make their present humility, or that which they have already attained to, to appear small; and their remaining pride great, and exceedingly abominable. The reason why a proud person should be apt to think his humility great, and why a very humble person should think his humility small, may be easily seen, if it be

considered, that it is natural for persons, in judging of the degree of their own humiliation, to take their measure from that which they esteem their proper height, or the dignity wherein they properly stand. That may be great humiliation in one, that is no humiliation at all in another; because the degree of honorableness, or considerableness wherein each does properly stand, is very different. For some great man, to stoop to loose the latchet of the shoes of another great man, his equal, or to wash his feet, would be taken notice of as an act of abasement in him; and he, being sensible of his own dignity, would look upon it so himself. But if a poor slave is seen stooping to unloose the shoes of a great prince, nobody will take any notice of this, as any act of humiliation in him, or token of any great degree of humility: nor would the slave himself, unless he be horribly proud and ridiculously conceited of himself: and if after he had done it, he should, in his talk and behavior, show that he thought his abasement great in it, and had his mind much upon it, as an evidence of his being very humble; would not every body cry out upon him, "Whom do you think yourself to be, that you should think this that you have done such a deep humiliation?" This would make it plain to a demonstration, that this slave was swollen with a high degree of pride and vanity of mind, as much as if he declared in plain terms, "I think myself to be some great one." And the matter is no less plain and certain, when worthless, vile, and loathsome worms of the dust, are apt to put such a construction on their acts of abasement before God; and to think it a token of great humility in them that obey, under their affections, can find themselves so willing to acknowledge themselves to be so mean and unworthy, and to behave themselves as those that are so inferior. The very reason why such outward acts, and such inward exercises, look like great abasement in such a one, is because he has a high conceit of himself. Whereas if he thought of himself more justly, these things would appear nothing to him, and his humility in them worthy of no regard; but would rather be astonished at his pride, that one so infinitely despicable and vile is brought no lower before God.-When he says in his heart, "This is a great act of humiliation; it is certainly a sign of great humility in me, that I should feel thus and do so;" his meaning is, "This is great humility for me, for such a one as I, that am so considerable and worthy." He considers how low he is now brought, and compares this with the height of dignity on which he in his heart thinks he properly stands, and the distance appears very great, and he calls it all mere humility, and as such admires it. Whereas, in him that is truly humble, and really sees his own vileness, and loathsomeness before God, the distance appears the other way. When he is brought lowest of all, it does not appear to him, that he is brought below his proper station, but that he is not come to it; he appears to himself yet vastly above it, he longs to get lower, that he may come to it, but appears at a great distance from it. And this distance he calls pride. And therefore his pride appears great to him, and not his humility. For although he is brought much lower than he used to be, yet it does not appear to him worthy of the name of humiliation, for him that is so infinitely mean and detestable, to come down to a place, which, though it be lower than what he used to assume, is yet vastly higher than what is proper for him. As men would hardly count it worthy of the name of humility, in a contemptible slave, that formerly affected to be a prince, to have his spirit so far brought down, as to take the place of a nobleman; when this is still so far above his proper station.

All men in the world, in judging of the degree of their own and others' humility, as appearing in any act of theirs, consider two things, viz., the real degree of dignity they stand in; and the degree of abasement, and the relation it bears to that real dignity. Thus the complying with the same low place, or low act, may be an evidence of great humility in one, that evidences but little or no humility in another. But truly humble Christians have so mean an opinion of their own real dignity,

that all their self-abasement, when considered with relation to that, and compared to that, appears very small to them. It does not seem to them to be any great humility, or any abasement to be made much of, for such poor, vile, abject creatures as they, to lie at the foot of God. The degree of humility is to be judged of by the degree of abasement, and the degree of the cause for abasement: but he that is truly and eminently humble, never thinks his humility great, considering the cause. The cause why he should be abased appears so great, and the abasement of the frame of his heart so greatly short of it, that he takes much more notice of his pride than his humility.

Everyone that has been conversant with souls under convictions of sin, knows that those who are greatly convinced of sin, are not apt to think themselves greatly convinced. And the reason is this: men judge of the degree of their own convictions of sin by two things jointly considered, viz., the degree of sense which they have of guilt and pollution, and the degree of cause they have for such a sense, in the degree of their real sinfulness. It is really no argument of any great conviction of sin, for some men to think themselves to be very sinful, beyond most others in the world; because they are so indeed, very plainly and notoriously. And therefore a far less conviction of sin may incline such a one to think so than another; he must be very blind indeed not to be sensible of it. But he that is truly under great convictions of sin, naturally thinks this to be his case. It appears to him, that the cause he has to be sensible of guilt and pollution, is greater than others have; and therefore he ascribes his sensibleness of this to the greatness of his sin, and not to the greatness of his sensibility. It is natural for one under great convictions, to think himself one of the greatest of sinners in reality, and also that it is so very plainly and evidently; for the greater his convictions are, the more plain and evident it seems to be to him. And therefore it necessarily seems to him so plain and so easy to him to see it, that it may be seen without much conviction. That man is under great convictions, whose conviction is great in proportion to his sin. But no man that is truly under great convictions, thinks his conviction great in proportion to his sin. For if he does, it is a certain sign that he inwardly thinks his sins small. And if that be the case, that is a certain evidence that his conviction is small. And this, by the way, is the main reason that persons, when under a work of humiliation, are not sensible of it in the time of it. And as it is with conviction of sin, just so it is, by parity of reason, with respect to persons' conviction or sensibleness of their own meanness and vileness, their own blindness, their own impotence, and all that low sense that a Christian has of himself, in the exercise of evangelical humiliation. So that in a high degree of this, the saints are never disposed to think their sensibleness of their own meanness, filthiness, impotence, &c., to be great; because it never appears great to them considering the cause. An eminent saint is not apt to think himself eminent in any thing; all his graces and experiences are ready to appear to him to be comparatively small; but especially his humility. There is nothing that appertains to Christian experience, and true piety, that is so much out of his sight as his humility. He is a thousand times more quicksighted to discern his pride than his humility: that he easily discerns, and is apt to take much notice of, but hardly discerns his humility. On the contrary, the deluded hypocrite, that is under the power of spiritual pride, is so blind to nothing as his pride; and so quicksighted to nothing, as the shows of humility that are in him. The humble Christian is more apt to find fault with his own pride than with other men's. He is apt to put the best construction on others' words and behavior, and to think that none are so proud as himself. But the proud hypocrite is quick to discern the mote in his brother's eye, in this respect; while he sees nothing of the beam in his own. He is very often much in crying out of others' pride, finding fault with others' apparel, and way of

living; and is affected ten times as much with his neighbor's ring or ribband, as with all the filthiness of his own heart. From the disposition there is in hypocrites to think highly of their humility, it comes to pass that counterfeit humility is forward to put itself forth to view. Those that have it, are apt to be much in speaking of their humiliations, and to set them forth in high terms, and to make a great outward show of humility, in affected looks, gestures, or manner of speech, or meanness of apparel, or some affected singularity. So it was of old with the false prophets, Zechariah 13:4; so it was with the hypocritical Jews, Isaiah 57:5, and so Christ tells us it was with the Pharisees, Matthew 6:16. But it is contrariwise with true humility; they that have it, are not apt to display their eloquence in setting it forth, or to speak of the degree of their abasement in strong terms.[It is an observation of Mr. Jones, in his excellent treatise of the canon of the New Testament, that the evangelist Mark, who was the companion of St. Peter, and is supposed to have written his gospel under the direction of that apostle, when he mentions Peter's repentance after his denying his Master, does not use such strong terms to set it forth as the other evangelists; he only uses these words, "When he thought thereon, he wept," Mark 14:72; whereas the other evangelists say thus, "he went out and wept bitterly," Matthew 26:75, Luke 22:62.] It does not affect to show itself in any singular outward meanness of apparel, or way of living; agreeable to what is implied in Matthew 6:17, "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face. Colossians 2:23. Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship and humility, and neglecting of the body." Nor is true humility a noisy thing; it is not loud and boisterous. The Scripture represents it as of a contrary nature. Ahab, when he had a visible humility, a resemblance of true humility, went softly, 1 Kings 21:27. A penitent, in the exercise of true humiliation, is represented as still and silent, Lamentations 3:28 : "He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him." And silence is mentioned as what attends humility, Proverbs 30:32 : "If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth."

Thus I have particularly and largely shown the nature of that true humility that attends holy affections, as it appears in its tendency to cause persons to think meanly of their attainments in religion, as compared with the attainments of others, and particularly of their attainments in humility: and have shown the contrary tendency of spiritual pride, to dispose persons to think their attainments in these respects to be great. I have insisted the longer on this, because I look upon it as a matter of great importance, as it affords a certain distinction between true and counterfeit humility; and also as this disposition of hypocrites to look on themselves better than others, is what God has declared to be very hateful to him, "a smoke in his nose, and a fire that burneth all the day," Isaiah 65:5. It is mentioned as an instance of the pride of the inhabitants of that holy city (as it was called) Jerusalem, that they esteemed themselves far better than the people of Sodom, and so looked upon them worthy to be overlooked and disregarded by them: Ezekiel 16:56, "For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride."

Let not the reader lightly pass over these things in application to himself. If you once have taken it in, that it is a bad sign for a person to be apt to think himself a better saint than others, there will arise a blinding prejudice in your own favor; and there will probably be need of a great strictness of self-examination, in order to determine whether it be so with you. If on the proposal of the question, you answer, "No, it seems to me, none are so bad as I," do not let the matter pass off so; but examine again, whether or no you do not think yourself better than others on this very account,

because you imagine you think so meanly of yourself. Have not you a high opinion of this humility? And if you answer again, "No; I have not a high opinion of my humility; it seems to one I am as proud as the devil;" yet examine again, whether self-conceit do not rise up under this cover; whether on this very account, that you think yourself as proud as the devil, you do not think yourself to be very humble. From this opposition that there is between the nature of a true, and of a counterfeit humility, as to the esteem that the subjects of them have of them selves, arises a manifold contrariety of temper and behavior. A truly humble person, having such a mean opinion of his righteousness and holiness, is poor in spirit. For a person to be poor in spirit, is to be in his own sense and apprehension poor, as to what is in him, and to be of an answerable disposition. Therefore a truly humble person, especially one eminently humble, naturally behaves himself in many respects as a poor man. "The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly." A poor man is not disposed to quick and high resentment when he is among the rich: he is apt to yield to others, for he knows others are above him; he is not stiff and self-willed; he is patient with hard fare; he expects no other than to be despised, and takes it patently; he does not take it heinously that he is overlooked and but little regarded; he is prepared to be in a low place; he readily honors his superiors; he takes reproofs quietly; he readily honors others as above him; he easily yields to be taught, and does not claim much to his understanding and judgment; he is not over nice or humorsome, and has his spirit subdued to hard things, he is not assuming, nor apt to take much upon him, but it is natural for him to be subject to others. Thus it is with the humble Christian. Humility is (as the great Mastricht expresses it) a kind of holy pusillanimity. A man that is very poor is a beggar; so is he that is poor in spirit. There is a great difference between those affections that are gracious, and those that are false: under the former, the person continues still a poor beggar at God’s gates, exceeding empty and needy; but the latter make men appear to themselves rich, and increased with goods, and not very necessitous; they have a great stock in their own imagination for their subsistence.["This spirit ever keeps a man poor and vile in his own eyes, and empty.-When the man hath got some knowledge, and can discourse pretty well, and hath some taste of the heavenly gift, some sweet illapses of grace, and so his conscience is pretty well quieted: and if he hath got some answers to his prayers, and hath sweet affections, he grows full: and having ease to his conscience, casts off sense, and daily groaning under sin. And hence the spirit of prayer dies: he loses his esteem of God’s ordinances, feels not such need of them; or gets no good, feels no life or power by them.-This is the woeful condition of some; but yet they know it not. But now he that is filled with the Spirit the Lord empties him; and the more, the longer he lives. So that others think he needs not much grace, yet he accounts himself the poorest." Shepard’s Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part II. p. 132.

"After all fillings, be ever empty, hungry, and feeling need, and praying for more." Ibid., p. 151. "Truly, brethren, when I see the curse of God upon many Christians, who are now grown full of their parts, gifts, peace, comforts, abilities, duties, I stand adoring the riches of the Lord’s mercy, to a little handful of poor believers, not only in making them empty, but in keeping them so all their days." Shepard’s Sound Believer, the late edition in Boston, p. 158, 159.] A poor man is modest in his speech and behavior; so, and much more, and more certainly and universally, is one that is poor in spirit; he is humble and modest in his behavior amongst men. It is in vain for any to pretend that they are humble, and as little children before God, when they are haughty, assuming, and impudent in their behavior amongst men. The apostle informs us, that the design of the gospel is to cut off all glorying, not only before God, but also before men, Romans 4:1-2. Some pretend to

great humiliation, that are very haughty, audacious, and assuming in their external appearance and behavior: but they ought to consider those Scriptures, Psalms 131:1, "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me." Proverbs 6:16-17, "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, &c."- Proverbs 21:4, "A high look, and a proud heart are sin." Psalms 18:27, "Thou wilt bring down high looks." And Psalms 101:5, "Him that hath a high look, and a proud heart, I will not suffer." 1 Corinthians 13:4. "Charity vaunteth not itself, doth not behave itself unseemly." There is a certain amiable modesty and fear that belongs to a Christian behavior among men, arising from humility, that the Scripture often speaks of, 1 Peter 3:15, "Be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you-with meekness and fear." Romans 13:7, "Fear to whom fear." 2 Corinthians 7:15, "Whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him." Ephesians 6:5, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling." 1 Peter 2:18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear." 1 Peter 3:2, "While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear." 1 Timothy 2:9, "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety." In this respect a Christian is like a little child; a little child is modest before men, and his heart is apt to be possessed with fear and awe amongst them. The same spirit will dispose a Christian to honor all men: 1 Peter 2:17, "Honor all men." A humble Christian is not only disposed to honor the saints in his behavior; but others also, in all those ways that do not imply a visible approbation of their sins. Thus Abraham, the great pattern of believers, honored the children of Heth: Genesis 23:7, "Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land." This was a remarkable instance of a humble behavior towards them that were out of Christ, and that Abraham knew to be accursed: and therefore would by no means suffer his servant to take a wife to his son, from among them; and Esau’s wives, being of these children of Heth, were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah. So Paul honored Festus: Acts 26:25, "I am not mad, most noble Festus." Not only will Christian humility dispose persons to honor those wicked men that are out of the visible church, but also false brethren and persecutors. As Jacob, when he was in an excellent frame, having just been wrestling all night with God, and received the blessing, honored Esau, his false and persecuting brother: Genesis 33:3, "Jacob bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother Esau." So he called him lord; and commanded all his family to honor him in like manner.

Thus I have endeavored to describe the heart and behavior of one that is governed by a truly gracious humility, as exactly agreeable to the Scriptures as I am able.

Now, it is out of such a heart as this, that all truly holy affections do flow. Christian affections are like Mary’s precious ointment that she poured on Christ’s head, that filled the whole house with a sweet odor. That was poured out of an alabaster box; so gracious affections flow out to Christ out of a pure heart. That was poured out of a broken box; until the box was broken, the ointment could not flow, nor diffuse its odor; so gracious affections flow out of a broken heart. Gracious affections are also like those of Mary Magdalene (Luke 7:1-50 at the latter end), who also pours precious ointment on Christ, out of an alabaster broken box, anointing therewith the feet of Jesus, when she had washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. All gracious affections that are a sweet odor to Christ, and that fill the soul of a Christian with a heavenly sweetness and fragrancy, are broken hearted affections. A truly Christian love, either to God or men, is a humble

broken hearted love. The desires of the saints, however earnest, are humble desires. Their hope is a humble hope; and their joy, even when it is unspeakable, and full of glory, is a humble broken hearted joy, and leaves the Christian more poor in spirit; and more like a little child, and more disposed to a universal lowliness of behavior.

VII. Another thing, wherein gracious affections are distinguished from others, is, that they are attended with a change of nature.

All Gracious affections do arise from a spiritual understanding, in which the soul has the excellency and glory of divine things discovered to it, as was shown before. But all spiritual discoveries are transforming; and not only make an alteration of the present exercise, sensation, and frame of the soul, but such power and efficacy have they, that they make an alteration in the very nature of the soul: 2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Such power as this is properly divine power, and is peculiar to the Spirit of the Lord: other power may make an alteration in men’s present frames and feelings: but it is the power of a Creator only that can change the nature, or give a new nature. And no discoveries or illuminations but those that are divine and supernatural, will have this supernatural effect. But this effect all those discoveries have, that are truly divine. The soul is deeply affected by these discoveries, and so affected as to be transformed.

Thus it is with those affections that the soul is the subject of in its conversion. The Scripture representations of conversion do strongly imply and signify a change of nature: such as "being born again; becoming new creatures; rising from the dead; being renewed in the spirit of the mind; dying to sin, and living to righteousness; putting off the old man, and putting on the new man; a being ingrafted into a new stock; a having a divine seed implanted in the heart; a being made partakers of the divine nature," &c.

Therefore if there be no great and remarkable abiding change in persons that think they have experienced a work of conversion, vain are all their imaginations and pretenses, however they have been affected.["I would not judge of the whole soul’s coming to Christ, so much by sudden pangs as by inward bent. For the whole soul, in affectionate expressions and actions, may be carried to Christ; but being without this bent, and change of affections, is unsound." Shepard’s Parable, Part I. p. 203.] Conversion is a great and universal change of the man, turning him from sin to God. A man may be restrained from sin before he is converted; but when he is converted, he is not only restrained from sin, his very heart and nature is turned from it unto holiness: so that thenceforward he becomes a holy person, and an enemy to sin. If, therefore, after a person’s high affections at his supposed first conversion, it comes to that in a little time, that there is no very sensible, or remarkable alteration in him, as to those bad qualities, and evil habits, which before were visible in him, and he is ordinarily under the prevalence of the same kind of dispositions that he used to be, and the same thing seems to belong to his character; he appears as selfish, carnal, as stupid, and perverse, as unchristian and unsavory as ever; it is greater evidence against him, than the brightest story of experiences that ever was told, is for him. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision, neither high profession, nor low profession, neither a fair story, nor a broken one, avails any thing; but a new creature.

If there be a very great alteration visible in a person for a while; if it be not abiding, but he afterwards returns, in a stated manner, to be much as he used to be; it appears to be no change of nature; for nature is an abiding thing. A swine that is of a filthy nature may be washed, but the swinish nature remains; and a dove that is of a cleanly nature may be defiled, but its cleanly nature remains.["It is with the soul, as with water; all the cold may be gone, but the native principle of cold remains still. You may remove the burning of lusts, not the blackness of nature. Where the power of sin lies, change of conscience from security to terror, change of life from profaneness to civility, and fashions of the world, to escape the pollutions thereof, change of lusts, may quench them for a time: but the nature is never changed in the best hypocrite that ever was." Shepard’s Parable, Part I. p. 194.]

Indeed allowances must be made for the natural temper; conversion does not entirely root out the natural temper; those sins which a man by his natural constitution was most inclined to before his conversions he may be most apt to fall into still. But yet conversion will make a great alteration even with respect to these sins. Though grace, while imperfect, does not root out an evil natural temper, yet it is of great power and efficacy with respect to it, to correct it. The change that is wrought in conversion, is a universal change; grace changes a man with respect to whatever is sinful in him; the old man is put off, and the new man put on, he is sanctified throughout; and the man becomes a new creature, old things are passed away, and all things are become new; all sin is mortified, constitution sins, as well as others. If a man before his conversion; was by his natural constitution especially inclined to lasciviousness, or drunkenness, or maliciousness; converting grace will make a great alteration in him, with respect to these evil dispositions; so that however he may be still most in danger of these sins, yet they shall no longer have dominion over him; nor will they any more be properly his character. Yea, true repentance does in some respects, especially turn a man against his own iniquity, that wherein he has been most guilty, and has chiefly dishonored God. He that forsakes other sins, but saves his leading sin, the iniquity he is chiefly inclined to, is like Saul, when sent against God’s enemies the Amalekites, with a strict charge to save none of them alive, but utterly to destroy them, small and great; who utterly destroyed inferior people, but saved the king, the chief of them all, alive.

01.11. PART III(f)

Some foolishly make it an argument in favor of their discoveries and affections, that when they are gone, they are left wholly without any life or sense, or anything beyond what they had before. They think it an evidence that what they experienced was wholly of God, and not of themselves, because (say they) when God is departed, all is gone; they can see and feel nothing, and are no better than they used to be.

It is very true, that all grace and goodness in the hearts of the saints is entirely from God; and they are universally and immediately dependent on him for it. But yet these persons are mistaken, as to the manner of God's communicating himself and his Holy Spirit, in imparting saving grace to the soul. He gives his Spirit to be united to the faculties of the soul, and to dwell there after the manner of a principle of nature; so that the soul, in being endued with grace, is endued with a new nature: but nature is an abiding thing. All the exercises of grace are entirely from Christ: but those exercises are not from Christ, as something that is alive, moves and stirs, something that is without life, and remains without life; but as having life communicated to it; so as, through Christ's power, to have inherent in itself a vital nature. In the soul where Christ savingly is, there he lives. He does not only live without it, so as violently to actuate it, but he lives in it, so that that also is alive. Grace in the soul is as much from Christ, as the light in a glass, held out in the sunbeams, is from the sun. But this represents the manner of the communication of grace to the soul, but in part; because the glass remains as it was, the nature of it not being at all changed, it is as much without any lightsomeness in its nature as ever. But the soul of a saint receives light from the Sun of righteousness, in such a manner, that its nature is changed, and it becomes properly a luminous thing; not only does the sun shine in the saints, but they also become little suns, partaking of the nature of the fountain of their light. In this respect, the manner of their derivation of light, is like that of the lamps in the tabernacle, rather than that of a reflecting glass; which, though they were lit up by fire from heaven, yet thereby became themselves burning shining things. The saints do not only drink of the water of life, that flows from the original fountain; out this water becomes a fountain of water in them, springing up there, and flowing out of them, John 4:14, and John 7:38-39. Grace is compared to a seed implanted, that not only is in the ground, but has hold of it, has root there, and grows there, and is an abiding principle of life and nature there. As it is with spiritual discoveries and affections given at first conversion, so it is in all illuminations and affections of that kind, that persons are the subjects of afterwards; they are all transforming. There is a like divine power and energy in them, as in the first discoveries; and they still reach the bottom of the heart, and affect and alter the very nature of the soul, in proportion to the degree in which they are given. And a transformation of nature is continued and carried on by them, to the end of life, until it is brought to perfection in glory. Hence the progress of the work of grace in the hearts of the saints, is represented in Scripture, as a continued conversion and renovation of nature. So the apostle exhorts those that were at Rome, "beloved of God, called to be saints," and that were subjects of God's redeeming mercies, "to be transformed by the renewing of their mind:" Romans 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; and

be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;" compared with Romans 1:7. So the apostle, writing to the "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus," that were at Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1), and those who were once dead in trespasses and sins, but were now quickened and raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that were once far off, but were now made nigh by the blood of Christ, and that were no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and that were built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit; I say, the apostle writing to these, tells them, "that he ceased not to pray for them, that God would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might know, or experience, what was the exceeding greatness of God's power towards them that believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," Ephesians 1:16, to the end. In this the apostle has respect to the glorious power and work of God in converting and renewing the soul; as is most plain by the sequel. So the apostle exhorts the same persons "to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of their minds; and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Ephesians 4:22-24.

There is a sort of high affections that some have from time to time, that leave them without any manner of appearance of an abiding effect. They go off suddenly; so that from the very height of their emotion, and seeming rapture, they pass at once to be quite dead, and void of all sense and activity. It surely is not wont to be thus with high gracious affections;["Do you think the Holy Ghost comes on a man as on Balaam, by immediate acting, and then leaves him, and then he has nothing?" Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 126.] they leave a sweet savor and a relish of divine things on the heart, and a stronger bent of soul towards God and holiness. As Moses' face not only shone while he was in the mount, extraordinarily conversing with God, but it continued to shine after he came down from the mount. When men have been conversing with Christ in an extraordinary manner, there is a sensible effect of it remaining upon them; there is something remarkable in their disposition and frame, which if we take knowledge of, and trace to its cause, we shall find it is because they have been with Jesus, Acts 4:13.

VIII. Truly gracious affections differ from those affections that are false and delusive, in that they tend to, and are attended with the lamblike, dovelike spirit and temper of Jesus Christ; or in other words, they naturally beget and promote such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness and mercy, as appears in Christ. The evidence of this in the Scripture is very abundant. If we judge of the Nature of Christianity, and the proper spirit of the gospel, by the word of God, this spirit is what may, by way of eminency, be called the Christian spirit; and may be looked upon as the true, and distinguishing disposition of the hearts of Christians as Christians. When some of the disciples of Christ said something, through inconsideration and infirmity, that was not agreeable to such a spirit, Christ told them, that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of, Luke 9:55, implying that this spirit that I am speaking of, is the proper spirit of his religion and kingdom. All that are truly godly, and real disciples of Christ, have this spirit in them; and not only so, but they are of this spirit; it is the spirit by which they are so possessed and governed, that it is their true and proper character. This is evident by what the wise man says, Proverbs 17:27 (having respect plainly to such a spirit as this): "A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit." And by the particular

description Christ gives of the qualities and temper of such as are truly blessed, that shall obtain mercy, and are God’s children and heirs: Matthew 5:5, Matthew 5:7, Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." And that this spirit is the special character of the elect of God, is manifested by Colossians 3:12-13 : "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." And the apostle, speaking of that temper and disposition, which he speaks of as the most excellent and essential thing in Christianity, and that without which none are true Christians, and the most glorious profession and gifts are nothing (calling this spirit by the name of charity), he describes it thus, 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 : "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." And the same apostle, Galatians 5:1-26, designedly declaring the distinguishing marks and fruits of true Christian grace, chiefly insists on the things that appertain to such a temper and spirit as I am speaking of, Galatians 5:22-23 : "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." And so does the Apostle James, in describing true grace, or that wisdom that is from above, with that declared design, that others who are of a contrary spirit may not deceive themselves, and lie against the truth, in professing to be Christians, when they are not, James 3:14-17 : "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not; and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

Every thing that appertains to holiness of heart, does indeed belong to the nature of true Christianity; and the character of Christians; but a spirit of holiness as appearing in some particular graces, may more especially be called the Christian spirit or temper. There are some amiable qualities and virtues, that do more especially agree with the nature of the gospel constitution, and Christian profession; because there is a special agreeableness in them, with those divine attributes which God has more remarkably manifested and glorified in the work of redemption by Jesus Christ, that is the grand subject of the Christian revelation; and also a special agreeableness with those virtues that were so wonderfully exercised by Jesus Christ towards us in that affair, and the blessed example he hath therein set us; and likewise because they are peculiarly agreeable to the special drift and design of the work of redemption, and the benefits we thereby receive, and the relation that it brings us into, to God and one another. And these virtues are such as humility, meekness, love, forgiveness, and mercy. These things therefore especially belong to the character of Christians, as such.

These things are spoken of as what are especially the character of Jesus Christ himself, the great head of the Christian church. They are so spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament; as in that cited Matthew 21:5 : "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." So Christ himself speaks of them, Matthew 11:29 : "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." The same appears by the name by which Christ is so often called in Scripture, viz., the Lamb. And as these things are especially the character of Christ, so they are also especially the character of Christians. Christians are

Christlike; none deserve the name of Christians, that are not so in their prevailing character. "The new man is renewed, after the image of him that created him," Colossians 3:10. All true Christians behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, by his Spirit, 2 Corinthians 3:18. The elect are all predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first born among many brethren, Romans 8:29. As we have borne the image of the first man, that is earthly, so we must also bear the image of the heavenly; for as is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, 1 Corinthians 15:47-49.-Christ is full of grace; and Christians all receive of his fullness, and grace for grace; i.e., there is grace in Christians answering to grace in Christ, such an answerableness as there is between the wax and the seal; there is character for character: such kind of graces, such a spirit and temper, the same things that belong to Christ's character, belong to theirs. That disposition, wherein Christ's character does in a special manner consist, therein does his image in a special manner consist. Christians that shine by reflecting the light of the Sun of righteousness, do shine with the same sort of brightness, the same mild, sweet, and pleasant beams. These lamps of the spiritual temple, that are enkindled by fire from heaven, burn with the same sort of flame. The branch is of the same nature with the stock and root, has the same sap, and bears the same sort of fruit. The members have the same kind of life with the head. It would be strange if Christians should not be of the same temper and spirit that Christ is of; when they are his flesh and his bone, yea, are one spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:17; and live so, that it is not they that live, but Christ that lives in them. A Christian spirit is Christ's mark that he sets upon the souls of his people, his seal in their foreheads, bearing his image and superscription.-Christians are the followers of Christ; and they are so, as they are obedient to that call of Christ, Matthew 11:28-29, "Come unto me-and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly of heart." They follow him as the Lamb: Revelation 14:4, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." True Christians are as it were clothed with the meek, quiet, and loving temper of Christ; for as many as are in Christ, have put on Christ. And in this respect the church is clothed with the sun, not only by being clothed with his imputed righteousness, but also by being adorned with his graces, Romans 13:14. Christ, the great Shepherd, is himself a Lamb, and believers are also lambs; all the flock are lambs: John 21:15, "Feed my lambs." Luke 10:3, "I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. "The redemption of the church by Christ from the power of the devil, was typified of old, by David's delivering the lamb out of the mouth of the lion and the bear. That such manner of virtue as has been spoken of, is the very nature of the Christian spirit, or the spirit that worketh in Christ, and in his members, and in the distinguishing nature of it, is evident by this, that the dove is the very symbol or emblem, chosen of God, to represent it. Those things are fittest emblems of other things, which do best represent that which is most distinguishing in their nature. The Spirit that descended on Christ, when he was anointed of the Father, descended on him like a dove. The dove is a noted emblem of meekness, harmlessness, peace and love. But the same Spirit that descended on the head of the church, descends to the members. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts," Galatians 4:6. And "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Romans 8:9. There is but one Spirit to the whole mystical body, head and members, 1 Corinthians 6:17, Ephesians 4:4. Christ breathes his own Spirit on his disciples, John 20:22. As Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost, descending on him like a dove, so Christians also "have an anointing from the Holy One," 1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27. And they are anointed with the same oil; it is the same "precious ointment on the head, that goes down to the skirts of the garments."

And on both, it is a spirit of peace and love. Psalms 133:1-2, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments." The oil on Aaron's garments had the same sweet and inimitable odor with that on his head; the smell of the same sweet spices, Christian affections, and a Christian behavior, is but the flowing out of the savor of Christ's sweet ointments. Because the church has a dovelike temper and disposition, therefore it is said of her that she has doves' eyes, Song of Solomon 1:15 : "Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes." And Song of Solomon 4:1, "Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks." The same that is said of Christ, Song of Solomon 6:12 : "His eyes are as the eyes of doves." And the church is frequently compared to a dove in Scripture: Song of Solomon 2:14, "O, my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock." Song of Solomon 5:2, "Open to me, my love, my dove." And Song of Solomon 6:9, "My dove, my undefiled is but one." Psalms 68:13, "Ye shall be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." And Psalms 74:19, "O deliver not the soul of the turtle dove unto the multitude of the wicked." The dove that Noah sent out of the ark, that could find no rest for the sole of her foot, until she returned, was a type of a true saint.

Meekness is so much the character of the saints, that the meek and the godly, are used as synonymous terms in Scripture: so Psalms 37:10-11, the wicked and the meek are set in opposition one to another, as wicked and godly: "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; but the meek shall inherit the earth." So Psalms 147:6, "The Lord lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground."

It is doubtless very much on this account, that Christ represents all his disciples, all the heirs of heaven, as little children: Matthew 19:14, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 10:42, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Matthew 18:6, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, &c." Matthew 18:10, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Matthew 18:14, "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." John 13:33, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you." Little children are innocent and harmless; they do not do a great deal of mischief in the world; men need not be afraid of them; they are no dangerous sort of persons; their anger does not last long, they do not lay up injuries in high resentment, entertaining deep and rooted malice. So Christians, in malice, are children, 1 Corinthians 14:20. Little children are not guileful and deceitful, but plain and simple; they are not versed in the arts of fiction and deceit; and are strangers to artful disguises. They are yieldable and flexible, and not willful and obstinate; do not trust to their own under standing, but rely on the instructions of parents, and others of superior understanding. Here is therefore a fit and lively emblem of the followers of the Lamb. Persons being thus like little children, is not only a thing highly commendable, and what Christians approve and aim at, and which some extraordinary proficiency do attain to: but it is their universal character, and absolutely necessary in order to entering into the kingdom of heaven: Matthew 18:3, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Mark 10:15, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." But here some may be ready to say, Is there no such thing as Christian fortitude, and boldness for Christ, being good

soldiers in the Christian warfare, and coming out boldly against the enemies of Christ and his people? To which I answer, There doubtless is such a thing. The whole Christian life is compared to a warfare, and fitly so. And the most eminent Christians are the best soldiers, endued with the greatest degrees of Christian fortitude. And it is the duty of God's people to be steadfast and vigorous in their opposition to the designs and ways of such as are endeavoring to overthrow the kingdom of Christ, and the interest of religion. But yet many persons seem to be quite mistaken concerning the nature of Christian fortitude. It is an exceeding diverse thing from a brutal fierceness, or the boldness of the beasts of prey. True Christian fortitude consists in strength of mind, through grace, exerted in two things; in ruling and suppressing the evil and unruly passions and affections of the mind; and in steadfastly and freely exerting, and following good affections and dispositions, without being hindered by sinful fear, or the opposition of enemies. But the passions that are restrained and kept under, in the exercise of this Christian strength and fortitude, are those very passions that are vigorously and violently exerted in a false boldness for Christ. And those affections that are vigorously exerted in true fortitude, are those Christian, holy affections that are directly contrary to them. Though Christian fortitude appears, in withstanding and counteracting the enemies that are without us; yet it much more appears, in resisting and suppressing the enemies that are within us; because they are our worst and strongest enemies, and have greatest advantage against us. The strength of the good soldier of Jesus Christ appears in nothing more, than in steadfastly maintaining the holy calm, meekness, sweetness, and benevolence of his mind, amidst all the storms, injuries, strange behavior, and surprising acts and events of this evil and unreasonable world. The Scripture seems to intimate that true fortitude consists chiefly in this: Proverbs 16:32, "He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." The directest and surest way in the world, to make a right judgment what a holy fortitude is, in fighting with God's enemies, is to look to the Captain of all God's hosts, and our great leader and example, and see wherein his fortitude and valor appeared, in his chief conflict, and in the time of the greatest battle that ever was, or ever will be fought with these enemies, when he fought with them alone, and of the people there was none with him, and exercised his fortitude in the highest degree that ever he did, and got that glorious victory that will be celebrated in the praises and triumphs of all the hosts of heaven, throughout all eternity; even to Jesus Christ in the time of his last sufferings, when his enemies in earth and hell made their most violent attack upon him, compassing him round on every side, like renting and roaring lions. Doubtless here we shall see the fortitude of a holy warrior and champion in the cause of God, in its highest perfection and greatest luster, and an example fit for the soldiers to follow that fight under this Captain. But how did he show his holy boldness and valor at that time? Not in the exercise of any fiery passions; not in fierce and violent speeches, and vehemently declaiming against and crying out of the intolerable wickedness of opposers, giving them their own in plain terms: but in not opening his mouth when afflicted and oppressed, in going as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, not opening his mouth; praying that the Father would forgive his cruel enemies because they knew not what they did; not shedding others' blood, but with all conquering patience and love, shedding his own. Indeed one of his disciples, that made a forward pretense to boldness for Christ, and confidently declared he would sooner die with Christ than deny him, began to lay about him with a sword: but Christ meekly rebukes him, and heals the wound he gives. And never was the patience, meekness, love, and forgiveness of Christ in so glorious a manifestation, as at that time. Never did he appear so much a lamb, and

never did he show so much of the dovelike spirit, as at that time. If therefore we see any of the followers of Christ, in the midst of the most violent, unreasonable, and wicked opposition of God's and his own enemies, maintaining under all this temptation, the humility, quietness, and gentleness of a lamb, and the harmlessness, and love and sweetness of a dove, we may well judge that here is a good soldier of Jesus Christ. When persons are fierce and violent, and exert their sharp and bitter passions, it shows weakness instead of strength and fortitude. 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 at the beginning, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

There is a pretended boldness for Christ that arises from no better principle than pride. A man may be forward to expose himself to the dislike of the world, and even to provoke their displeasure out of pride. For it is the nature of spiritual pride to cause men to seek distinction and singularity; and so oftentimes to set themselves at war with those that they call carnal, that they may be more highly exalted among their party. True boldness for Christ is universal, and overcomes all, and carries men above the displeasure of friends and foes; so that they will forsake all rather than Christ; and will rather offend all parties, and be thought meanly of by all, than offend Christ. And that duty which tries whether a man is willing to be despised by them that are of his own party, and thought the least worthy to be regarded by them, is a much more proper trial of his boldness for Christ, than his being forward to expose himself to the reproach of opposers. The apostle sought not glory, not only of Heathens and Jews, but of Christians; as he declares, 1 Thessalonians 2:6.[Mr. Shepard, speaking of hypocrites affecting applause, says, "Hence men forsake their friends and trample under foot the scorns of the world: they have credit elsewhere. To maintain their interest in the love of godly men, they will suffer much." Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 180.] He is bold for Christ, that has Christian fortitude enough, to confess his fault openly, when he has committed one that requires it, and as it were to come down upon his knees before opposers. Such things as these are of vastly greater evidence of holy boldness, than resolutely and fiercely confronting opposers. As some are much mistaken concerning the nature of true boldness for Christ, so they are concerning Christian zeal. It is indeed a flame, but a sweet one; or rather it is the heat and fervor of a sweet flame. For the flame of which it is the heat, is no other than that of divine love, or Christian charity; which is the sweetest and most benevolent thing that is, or can be, in the heart of man or angel. Zeal is the fervor of this flame, as it ardently and vigorously goes out towards the good that is its object, in desires of it, and pursuit after it and so consequentially, in opposition to the evil that is contrary to it, and impedes it. There is indeed oppositions and vigorous opposition, that is a part of it, or rather is an attendant of it; but it is against things and not persons. Bitterness against the persons of men is no part of it, but is very contrary to it; insomuch that so much the warmer true zeal is, and the higher it is raised, so much the farther are persons from such bitterness, and so much fuller of love, both to the evil and to the good. As appears from what has been just now observed, that it is no other, in its very nature and essence, than the fervor of a spirit of Christian love. And as to what opposition there is in it to things, it is firstly and chiefly against the evil things in the person himself, who has this zeal: against the enemies of God and holiness, that are in his own heart (as these are most in view, and what he has most to do with); and but secondarily against the sins of others And therefore there is nothing in a true Christian zeal, that is contrary to that spirit of meekness, gentleness, and love, that spirit of a little child, a lamb and dove, that has been spoken of; but it is entirely agreeable to it, and tends to promote it.

But to say something particularly concerning this Christian spirit I have been speaking of, as exercised in these three things, forgiveness, love, and mercy; I would observe that the Scripture is very clear and express concerning the absolute necessity of each of these, as belonging to the temper and character of every Christian.

It is so as to a forgiving spirit, or a disposition to overlook and forgive injuries. Christ gives it to us both as a negative and positive evidence; and is express in teaching us, that if we are of such a spirit, it is a sign that we are in a state of forgiveness and favor ourselves: and that if we are not of such a spirit, we are not forgiven of God; and seems to take special care that we should take good notice of it, and always bear it on our minds: Matthew 6:12, Matthew 6:14-15, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. For if ye forgive men their trespassed your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Christ expresses the same again at another time, Mark 11:25-26, and again in Matthew 18:22, to the end, in the parable of the servant that owed his lord ten thousand talents, that would not forgive his fellow servant a hundred pence; and therefore was delivered to the tormentors. In the application of the parable Christ says, Matthew 18:35, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses." And that all true saints are of a loving, benevolent, and beneficent temper, the Scripture is very plain and abundant. Without it the apostle tells us, though we should speak with the tongues of men and angels, we are as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; and that though we have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, yet without this spirit we are nothing. And there is no one virtue or disposition of the mind, that is so often, and so expressly insisted on, in the marks that are laid down in the New Testament, whereby to know true Christians. It is often given as a sign that is peculiarly distinguishing, by which all may know Christ’s disciples, and by which they may know themselves; and is often laid down, both as a negative and positive evidence. Christ calls the law of love, by way of eminency, his commandment: John 13:34, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." And John 15:12, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you." And John 15:17, "These things I command you, that ye love one another." And says, John 13:35, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And John 14:21 (still with a special reference to this which he calls his commandment), "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." The beloved disciple who had so much of this sweet temper himself, abundantly insists on it, in his epistles. There is none of the apostles so much in laying down express signs of grace, for professors to try themselves by, as he; and in his signs, he insists scarcely on anything else, but a spirit of Christian love, and an agreeable practice: 1 John 2:9-10, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." 1 John 3:14, "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." 1 John 2:18-19, "My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." 1 John 2:23-24, "This is his commandment, that we should love one another. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." 1 John 4:7-8, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is

love." 1 John 4:12-13, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, because he hath given us of his Spirit." 1 John 4:16, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:20, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" And the Scripture is as plain as it is possible it should be, that none are true saints, but those whose true character it is, that they are of a disposition to pity and relieve their fellow creatures, that are poor, indigent, and afflicted: Psalms 37:21, "The righteous showeth mercy, and giveth." Psalms 37:26, "He is ever merciful, and lendeth." Psalms 112:5, "A good man showeth favor, and lendeth." Psalms 37:9, "He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor." Proverbs 14:31, "He that honoreth God, hath mercy on the poor." Proverbs 21:26, "The righteous giveth, and spareth not." Jeremiah 22:16, "He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: Was not this to know me? saith the Lord." James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," &c. Hosea 6:6, "For I have desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings." Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. "2 Corinthians 8:8, "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love." James 2:13-16, "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?" 1 John 3:17, "Whoso hath this world’s good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Christ in that description he gives us of the day of judgment, Matthew 25:1-46 (which is the most particular that we have in the Bible), represents that judgment will be passed at that day, according as men have been found to have been of a merciful spirit and practice or otherwise. Christ’s design in giving such a description of the process of that day, is plainly to possess all his followers with that apprehension, that unless this was their spirit and practice, there was no hope of their being accepted and owned by him at that day. Therefore this is an apprehension that we ought to be possessed with. We find in Scripture, that a righteous man, and a merciful man are synonymous expressions, Isaiah 57:1, "The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

Thus we see how full, clear, and abundant, the evidence from Scripture is that those who are truly gracious, are under the government of that lamblike, dovelike Spirit of Jesus Christ, and that this is essentially and eminently the nature of the saving grace of the gospel, and the proper spirit of true Christianity. We may therefore undoubtedly determine, that all truly Christian affections are attended with such a spirit, and that this is the natural tendency of the fear and hope, the sorrow and the joy, the confidence and the zeal of true Christians.

None will understand me, that true Christians have no remains of a contrary Spirit, and can never, in any instances, be guilty of a behavior disagreeable to such a spirit. But this I affirm, and shall affirm, until I deny the Bible to be anything worth, that everything in Christians that belongs to true Christianity, is of this tendency, and works this way; and that there is no true Christian upon earth,

but is so under the prevailing power of such a spirit, that he is properly denominated from it, and it is truly and justly his character, and that therefore ministers, and others, have no warrant from Christ to encourage persons that are of a contrary character and behavior, to think they are converted, because they tell a fair story of illuminations and discoveries. In so doing, they would set up their own wisdom against Christ's, and judge without, and against that rule by which Christ has declared all men should know his disciples. Some persons place religion so much in certain transient illuminations and impressions (especially if they are on such a particular method and order) and so little in the spirit and temper persons are of, that they greatly deform religion, and form notions of Christianity quite different from what it is, as delineated in the Scriptures. The Scripture knows of no such true Christians, as are of a sordid, selfish, cross and contentious spirit. Nothing can be invented that is a greater absurdity, than a morose, hard, close, high-spirited, spiteful, true Christian. We must learn the way of bringing men to rules, and not rules to men, and so strain and stretch the rules of God's word, to take in ourselves, and some of our neighbors, until we make them wholly of none effect.

It is true, that allowances must be made for men's natural temper, with regard to these things, as well as others; but not such allowances, as to allow men, that once were wolves and serpents, to be now converted, without any remarkable change in the spirit of their mind. The change made by true conversion is wont to be most remarkable and sensible, with respect to that which before was the wickedness the person was most notoriously guilty of. Grace has as great a tendency to restrain and mortify such sins, as are contrary to the spirit that has been spoken of, as it is to mortify drunkenness or lasciviousness. Yea, the Scripture represents the change wrought by gospel grace, as especially appearing in an alteration of the former sort: Isaiah 11:6-9, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." And to the same purpose is Isaiah 65:25. Accordingly we find, that in the primitive times of the Christian church, converts were remarkably changed in this respect: Titus 3:3, &c., "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards man appeared-he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And Colossians 3:7-8, "In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth."

IX. Gracious affections soften the heart, and are attended and followed with a Christian tenderness of spirit.

False affections, however persons may seem to be melted by them while they are new, yet have a tendency in the end to harden the heart. A disposition to some kind of passions may be established; such as imply self-seeking, self-exaltation, and opposition to others. But false affections, with the delusion that attends them, finally tend to stupify the mind, and shut it up against those affections wherein tenderness of heart consists: and the effect of them at last is, that persons in the settled frame of their minds, become less affected with their present and past sins,

and less conscientious with respect to future sins, less moved with the warnings and cautions of God's word, or God's chastisements in his providence, more careless of the frame of their hearts, and the manner and tendency of their behavior, less quicksighted to discern what is sinful, less afraid of the appearance of evil, than they were while they were under legal awakenings and fears of hell. Now they have been the subjects of such and such impressions and affections, and have a high opinion of themselves, and look on their state to be safe; they can be much more easy than before, in living in the neglect of duties that are troublesome and inconvenient; and are much more slow and partial in complying with difficult commands; are in no measure so alarmed at the appearance of their own defects and transgressions; are emboldened to favor themselves more, with respect to the labor, and painful care and exactness in their walk, and more easily yield to temptations, and the solicitations of their lusts; and have far less care of their behavior, when they come into the holy presence of God, in the time of public or private worship. Formerly it may be, under legal convictions, they took much pains in religion, and denied themselves in many things: but now they think themselves out of danger of hell, they very much put off the burden of the cross, and save themselves the trouble of difficult duties, and allow themselves more in the enjoyment of their ease and their lusts.

Such persons as these, instead of embracing Christ as their Savior from sin, trust in him as the Savior of their sins; instead of flying to him as their refuge from their spiritual enemies they make use of him as the defense of their spiritual enemies, from God, and to strengthen them against him. They make Christ the minister of sin, and great officer and vicegerent of the devil, to strengthen his interest, and make him above all things in the world strong against Jehovah; so that they may sin against him with good courage, and without any fear, being effectually secured from restraints, by his most solemn warnings and most awful threatenings. They trust in Christ to preserve to them the quiet enjoyment of their sins, and to be their shield to defend them from God's displeasure; while they come close to him, even to his bosom, the place of his children, to fight against him, with their mortal weapons, hid under their skirts.["These are hypocrites that believe, but fail in regard of the use of the gospel and of the Lord Jesus. And these we read of, Jude 1:3, viz., of some men that did turn grace into wantonness. For therein appears the exceeding evil of man's heart, that not only the law, but also the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus, works in him all manner of unrighteousness. And it is too common for men at the first work of conversion, Oh then to cry for grace and Christ, and afterwards grow licentious, live and lie in the breach of the law, and take their warrant for their course from the gospel!" Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 126.] However, some of these, at the same time, make a great profession of love to God, and assurance of his favor, and great joy in tasting the sweetness of his love.

After this manner they trusted in Christ, that the Apostle Jude speaks of, who crept in among the saints unknown; but were really ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, Jude 1:4. These are they that trust in their being righteous; and because God has promised that the righteous shall surely live, or certainly be saved, are therefore emboldened to commit iniquity, whom God threatens in Ezekiel 33:13 : "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity; all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it."

Gracious affections are of a quite contrary tendency; they turn a heart of stone more and more into a heart of flesh. A holy love and hope are principles that are vastly more efficacious upon the

heart, to make it tender, and to fill it with a dread of sin, or whatever might displease and offend God, and to engage it to watchfulness, and care, and strictness, than a slavish fear of hell. Gracious affections, as was observed before, flow out of a contrite heart, or (as the word signifies) a bruised heart, bruised and broken with godly sorrow; which makes the heart tender, as bruised flesh is tender, and easily hurt. Godly sorrow has much greater influence to make the heart tender, than mere legal sorrow from selfish principles. The tenderness of the heart of a true Christian, is elegantly signified by our Savior, in his comparing such a one to a little child. The flesh of a little child is very tender; so is the heart of one that is new born. This is represented in what we are told of Naaman's cure of his leprosy, by his washing in Jordan; which was undoubtedly a type of the renewing of the soul, by washing in the laver of regeneration. We are told, 2 Kings 5:14, "That he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child." Not only is the flesh of a little child tender, but his mind is tender. A little child has his heart easily moved, wrought upon and bowed: so is a Christian in spiritual things. A little child is apt to be affected with sympathy, to weep with them that weep, and cannot well bear to see others in distress: so it is with a Christian, John 11:25, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 12:26. A little child is easily won by kindness: so is a Christian. A little child is easily affected with grief at temporal evils, and has his heart melted, and falls a weeping: thus tender is the heart of a Christian, with regard to the evil of sin. A little child is easily affrighted at the appearance of outward evils, or anything that threatens its hurt: so is a Christian apt to be alarmed at the appearance of moral evil, and anything that threatens the hurt of the soul. A little child, when it meets enemies, or fierce beasts, is not apt to trust its own strength, but flies to its parents for refuge: so a saint is not self-confident in engaging spiritual enemies, but flies to Christ. A little child is apt to be suspicious of evil in places of danger, afraid in the dark, afraid when left alone, or far from home: so is a saint apt to be sensible of his spiritual dangers, jealous of himself, full of fear when he cannot see his way plain before him, afraid to be left alone, and to be at a distance from God: Proverbs 28:14, "Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." A little child is apt to be afraid of superiors, and to dread their anger, and tremble at their frowns and threatenings: so is a true saint with respect to God: Psalms 119:120, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments." Isaiah 66:2, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and trembleth at my word." Isaiah 66:5, "Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word." Ezra 9:4, "Then were assembled unto me everyone that trembled at the words of the God of Israel." Ezra 10:3; "According to the counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God." A little child approaches superiors with awe: so do the saints approach God with holy awe and reverence: Job 13:2, "Shall not his excellency make you afraid? And his dread fall upon you?" Holy fear is so much the nature of true godliness, that it is called in Scripture by no other name more frequently, than the fear of God.

Hence gracious affections do not tend to make men bold, forward, noisy, and boisterous; but rather to speak trembling: Hosea 13:1, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died;" and to clothe with a kind of holy fear in all their behavior towards God and man; agreeably to Psalms 2:11, 1 Peter 3:15, 2 Corinthians 7:15, Ephesians 6:5, 1 Peter 3:2, Romans 11:20. But here some may object and say, is there no such thing as a holy boldness in prayer, and the duties of divine worship? I answer, there is doubtless such a thing; and it is chiefly to be found in eminent saints, persons of great degrees of faith and

love. But this holy boldness is not in the least opposite to reverence; though it be to disunion and servility. It abolishes or lessens that dispositions which arises from moral distance or alienation; and also distance of relation, as that of a slave; but not at all, that which becomes the natural distance, whereby we are infinitely inferior. No boldness in poor sinful worms of the dust, that have a right sight of God and themselves, will prompt them to approach to God with less fear and reverence, than spotless and glorious angels in heaven, who cover their faces before his throne, Isaiah 6:1-13, at the beginning. Rebecca (who in her marriage with Isaac, in almost all its circumstances, was manifestly a great type of the church, the spouse of Christ) when she meets Isaac, lights off from her camel, and takes a vail and covers herself; although she was brought to him as his bride, to be with him in the nearest relation, and most intimate union, that mankind are ever united one to another.[Dr. Ames, in his Cases of Conscience, Book III. chap iv., speaks of a holy modesty in the worship God as one sign of true humility.] Elijah, that great prophet, who had so much holy familiarity with God, at a time of special nearness to God, even when he conversed with him in the mount, wrapped his face in his mantle. Which was not because he was terrified with any servile fear, by the terrible wind, and earthquake, and fire; but after these were all over, and God spake to him as a friend, in a still small voice: 1 Kings 19:12-13, "And after the fire, a still small voice; and it was so, when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle." And Moses, with whom God spake face to face, as a man speaks with his friend, and was distinguished from all the prophets, in the familiarity with God that he was admitted to; at a time when he was brought nearest of all, when God showed him his glory in that same mount where he afterwards spake to Elijah: "He made haste, and bowed his head towards the earth, and worshipped," Exodus 34:8. There is in some persons a most unsuitable and unsufferable boldness, in their addresses to the great Jehovah, in an affectation of a holy boldness, and ostentation of eminent nearness and familiarity; the very thoughts of which would make them shrink into nothing, with horror and confusion, if they saw the distance that is between God and them. They are like the Pharisee, that boldly came up near, in a confidence of his own eminency in holiness. Whereas, if they saw their vileness, they would be more like the publican, that "stood afar off, and durst not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." It becomes such sinful creatures as we, to approach a holy God (although with faith, and without terror, yet) with contrition, and penitent shame and confusion of face. It is foretold that this should be the disposition of the church, in the time of her highest privileges on earth in her latter day of glory, when God should remarkably comfort her, by revealing his covenant mercy to her, Ezekiel 16:60, to the end: "I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed.-And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God." The woman that we read of in Luke 17:1-37, that was an eminent saint, and had much of that true love which casts out fear, by Christ’s own testimony, ver. 47, she approached Christ in an amiable and acceptable manner, when she came with that humble modesty, reverence and shame, when she stood at his feet, weeping behind him, as not being fit to appear before his face, and washed his feet with her tears.

One reason why gracious affections are attended with this tenderness of spirit which has been spoken of, is, that true grace tends to promote convictions of conscience. Persons are wont to have convictions of conscience before they have any grace: and if afterwards they are truly

converted, and have true repentance, and joy, and peace in believing; this has a tendency to put an end to errors, but has no tendency to put an end to convictions of sin, but to increase them. It does not stupify man's conscience; but makes it more sensible, more easily and thoroughly discerning the sinfulness of that which is sinful, and receiving a greater conviction of the heinous and dreadful nature of sin, susceptive of a quicker and deeper sense of it, and more convinced of his own sinfulness and wickedness of his heart; and consequently it has a tendency to make him more jealous of his heart. Grace tends to give the soul a further and better conviction of the same things concerning sin, that it was convinced of, under a legal work of the Spirit of God; viz., its great contrariety to the will, and law, and honor of God, the greatness of God's hatred of it, and displeasure against it, and the dreadful punishment it exposes to and deserves. And not only so, but it convinces the soul of something further concerning sin, that it saw nothing of, while only under legal convictions; and that is the infinitely hateful nature of sin, and its dreadfulness upon that account. And this makes the heart tender with respect to sin; like David's heart, that smote him when he had cut off Saul's skirt. The heart of a true penitent is like a burnt child that dreads the fire. Whereas, on the contrary, he that has had a counterfeit repentance, and false comforts and joys, is like iron that has been suddenly heated and quenched; it becomes much harder than before. A false conversion puts an end to convictions of conscience; and so either takes away, or much diminishes that conscientiousness, which was manifested under a work of the law.

All gracious affections have a tendency to promote this Christian tenderness of heart, that has been spoken of; not only a godly sorrow, but also a gracious joy: Psalms 2:11, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." As also a gracious hope: Psalms 33:18, "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him; upon them that hope in his mercy." And Psalms 147:11, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." Yea, the most confident and assured hope, that is truly gracious, has this tendency. The higher a holy hope is raised, the more there is of this Christian tenderness. The banishing of a servile fear, by a holy assurance, is attended with a proportionable increase of a reverential fear. The diminishing of the fear of the fruits of God's displeasure in future punishment, is attended with a proportionable increase of fear of his displeasure itself; the diminishing of the fear of hell, with an increase of the fear of sin. The vanishing of jealousies of the person's state, is attended with a proportionable increase of jealousies of his heart, in a distrust of its strength, wisdom, stability, faithfulness, &c. The less apt he is to be afraid of natural evil, having his heart fixed, trusting in God, and so not afraid of evil tidings; the more apt he is to be alarmed, with the appearance of moral evil, or the evil of sin. As he has more holy boldness, so he has less of self-confidence, and a forward assuming boldness, and more modesty. As he is more sure than others of deliverance from hell, so he has more of a sense of the desert of it. He is less apt than others to be shaken in faith; but more apt than others to be moved with solemn warnings, and with God's frowns, and with the calamities of others. He has the firmest comfort, but the softest heart: richer than others, but the poorest of all in spirit: the tallest and strongest saint, but the least and tenderest child among them.

X. Another thing wherein those affections that are truly gracious and holy, differ from those that are false, is beautiful symmetry and proportion. Not that the symmetry of the virtues, and gracious affections of the saints, in this life is perfect: it oftentimes is in many things defective, through the imperfection of grace, for want of proper instructions, through errors in judgment, or some particular unhappiness of natural temper, or defects in education, and many other disadvantages

that might be mentioned. But yet there is, in no wise, that monstrous disproportion in gracious affections, and the various parts of true religion in the saints, that is very commonly to be observed, in the false religion, and counterfeit graces, of hypocrites. In the truly holy affections of the saints is found that proportion, which is the natural consequence of the universality of their sanctification. They have the whole image of Christ upon them: they have put off the old man, and have put on the new man entire in all its parts and members. It hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fullness should dwell: there is in him every grace; he is full of grace and truth: and they that are Christ's, do, "of his fullness receive grace for grace" (John 1:14, John 1:16); i.e., there is every grace in them which is in Christ; grace for grace; that is, grace answerable to grace: there is no grace in Christ, but there is its image in believers to answer it: the image is a true image; and there is something of the same beautiful proportion in the image, which is in the original; there is feature for feature, and member for member. There is symmetry and beauty in God's workmanship. The natural body, which God hath made, consists of many members; and all are in a beautiful proportion: so it is in the new man, consisting of various graces and affections. The body of one that was born a perfect child, may fail of exact proportion through distemper, and the weakness and wounds of some of its members; yet the disproportion is in no measure like that of those that are born monsters.

It is with hypocrites, as it was with Ephraim of old, at a time when God greatly complains of their hypocrisy, Hosea 7:8 : "Ephraim is a cake not turned," half roasted and half raw: there is commonly no manner of uniformity in their affections.

There is in many of them great partiality with regard to the several kinds of religious affections; great affections in some things, and no manner of proportion in others. A holy hope and holy fear go together in the saints, as has been observed from Psalms 33:18, and Psalms 147:11. But in some of these is the most confident hope, while they are void of reverence, self-jealousy and caution, to a great degree cast off fear. In the saints, joy and holy fear go together, though the joy be never so great: as it was with the disciples, in that joyful morning of Christ's resurrection, Matthew 28:8 : "And they departed quickly from the sepulcher, with fear and great joy."["Renewed care and diligence follows the sealings of the Spirit. Now is the soul at the foot of Christ, as Mary was at the sepulcher, with fear and great joy. He that travels the road with a rich treasure about him, is afraid of a thief in every bush." Flavel's Sacramental Meditations, Med. 4.] But many of these rejoice without trembling: their joy is of that sort, that it is truly opposite to godly fear. But particularly one great difference between saints and hypocrites is this, that the joy and comfort of the former is attended with godly sorrow and mourning for sin. They have not only sorrow to prepare them for their first comfort, but after they are comforted, and their joy established. As it is foretold of the church of God, that they should mourn and loathe themselves for their sins, after they were returned from the captivity, and were settled in the land of Canaan, the land of rest, and the land that flows with milk and honey, Ezekiel 20:42-43 : "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up mine hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed." As also in Ezekiel 16:61-63. A true saint is like a little child in this respect; he never had any godly sorrow before he was born again; but since has it often in exercise: as a little child, before it is born, and while it remains in darkness, never cries; but as soon as it sees the light, it

begins to cry; and thenceforward is often crying. Although Christ hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, so that we are freed from the sorrow of punishment, and may now sweetly feed upon the comforts Christ hath purchased for us; yet that hinders not but that our feeding on these comforts should be attended with the sorrow of repentance. As of old, the children of Israel were commanded, evermore to feed upon the paschal lamb, with bitter herbs. True saints are spoken of in Scripture, not only as those that have mourned for sin, but as those that do mourn, whose manner it is still to mourn: Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Not only is there often in hypocrites an essential deficiency as to the various kinds of religious affections, but also a strange partiality and disproportion, in the same affections, with regard to different objects.

Thus, as to the affection of love, some make high pretenses, and a great show of love to God and Christ, and it may be, have been greatly affected with what they have heard or thought concerning them: but they have not a spirit of love and benevolence towards men, but are disposed to contention, envy, revenge, and evil speaking; and will, it may be, suffer an old grudge to rest in their bosoms towards a neighbor, for seven years together, if not twice seven years; living in real ill will and bitterness of spirit towards him: and it may be in their dealings with their neighbors, are not very strict and conscientious in observing the rule of "doing to others as they would that they should do to them." And, on the other hand, there are others that appear as if they had a great deal of benevolence to men, are very good natured and generous in their way, but have no love to God. And as to love to men, there are some that have flowing affections to some; but their love is far from being of so extensive and universal a nature, as a truly Christian love is. They are full of dear affections to some, and full of bitterness towards others. They are knit to their own party, them that approve of them, love them and admire them; but are fierce against those that oppose and dislike them. Matthew 5:45-46, "Be like your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise upon the evil, and on the good. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" Some show a great affection to their neighbors, and pretend to be ravished with the company of the children of God abroad; and at the same time are uncomfortable and churlish towards their wives and other near relations at home, and are very negligent of relative duties. And as to the great love to sinners and opposers of religion, and the great concern for their souls, that there is an appearance of in some, even to extreme distress and agony, singling out a particular person, from among a multitude, for its object, there being at the same time no general compassion to sinners, that are in equally miserable circumstances, but what is in a monstrous disproportion; this seems not to be of the nature of gracious affection. Not that I suppose it to be at all strange, that pity to the perishing souls of sinners should be to a degree of agony; if other things are answerable: or that a truly gracious compassion to souls should be exercised much more to some persons than others that are equally miserable, especially on some particular occasions: there may many things happen to fix the mind, and affect the heart, with respect to a particular person, at such a juncture; and without doubt some saints have been in great distress for the souls of particular persons, so as to be as it were in travail for them; but when persons appear, at particular times, in racking agonies for the soul of some single person, far beyond what has been usually heard or read of in eminent saints, but appear to be persons that have a spirit of meek and fervent love, charity, and compassion to mankind in general, in a far less degree than they: I say, such agonies are greatly to be suspected, for reasons already given; viz., that the Spirit of God is wont to give graces and gracious affections in

a beautiful symmetry and proportion. And as there is a monstrous disproportion in the love of some, in its exercises towards different persons, so there is in their seeming exercises of love towards the same persons.-Some men show a love to others as to their outward man, they are liberal of their worldly substance, and often give to the poor; but have no love to, or concern for the souls of men. Others pretend a great love to men's souls, that are not compassionate and charitable towards their bodies. The making a great show of love, pity and distress for souls, costs them nothing; but in order to show mercy to men's bodies, they must part with money out of their pockets. But a true Christian love to our brethren extends both to their souls and bodies; and herein is like the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. He showed mercy to men's souls, by laboring for them, in preaching the gospel to them; and showed mercy to their bodies in going about doing good, healing all manner of sickness and diseases among the people. We have a remarkable instance of Christ's having compassion at once both to men's souls and bodies, and showing compassion by feeding both, in Mark 6:34, &c.: "And Jesus when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." Here was his compassion to their souls. And in the sequel we have an account of his compassion to their bodies, because they had been a long while having nothing to eat; he fed five thousand of them with five loaves and two fishes. And if the compassion of professing Christians towards others does not work in the same ways, it is a sign that it is no true Christian compassion. And furthermore, it is a sign that affections are not of the right sort, if persons seem to be much affected with the bad qualities of their fellow Christians as the coldness and lifelessness of other saints, but are in no proportion affected with their own defects and corruptions. A true Christian may be affected with the coldness and unsavoriness of other saints, and may mourn much over it: but at the same time, he is not so apt to be affected with the badness of anybody's heart, as his own; this is most in his view; this he is most quicksighted to discern; this he sees most of the aggravations of, and is most ready to lament. And a less degree of virtue will bring him to pity himself, and be concerned at his own calamities, than rightly to be affected with others' calamities. And if men have not attained to the less, we may determine they never attained to the greater. And here by the way, I would observe, that it may be laid down as a general rule, that if persons pretend that they come to high attainments in religion, but have never yet arrived to the less attainments, it is a sign of a vain pretense. As if persons pretend, that they have got beyond mere morality, to live a spiritual and divine life; but really have not come to be so much as moral persons: or pretend to be greatly affected with the wickedness of their hearts, and are not affected with the palpable violations of God's commands in their practice, which is a less attainment: or if they pretend to be brought to be even willing to be damned for the glory of God, but have no forwardness to suffer a little in their estates and names, and worldly convenience, for the sake of their duty: or pretend that they are not afraid to venture their souls upon Christ, and commit their all to God, trusting to his bare word, and the faithfulness of his promises, for their eternal welfare; but at the same time, have not confidence enough in God, to dare to trust him with a little of their estates, bestowed to pious and charitable uses; I say, when it is thus with persons, their pretenses are manifestly vain. He that is in a journey, and imagines he has got far beyond such a place in his road, and never yet came to it, must be mistaken; and he is not yet arrived to the top of the hill, that never yet got half way thither. But this by the way. The same that has been observed of the affection of love, is also to be observed of other religious affections. Those that are true, extend in some proportion to the various things that are their due

and proper objects; but when they are false, they are commonly strangely disproportionate. So it is with religious desires and longings: these in the saints, are to those things that are spiritual and excellent in general, and that in some proportion to their excellency, importance or necessity, or their near concern in them; but in false longing it is often far otherwise. They will strangely run, with an impatient vehemence, after something of less importance, when other things of greater importance are neglected.-Thus for instance, some persons, from time to time, are attended with a vehement inclination, and unaccountably violent pressure, to declare to others what they experience, and to exhort others; when there is, at the same time, no inclination, in any measure equal to it, to other things, that true Christianity has as great, yea, a greater tendency to; as the pouring out the soul before God in secret, earnest prayer and praise to him, and more conformity to him, and living more to his glory, &c. We read in Scripture of "groanings that cannot be uttered, and soul breakings for the longing it hath, and longings, thirstings, and pantings," much more frequently to these latter things, than the former. And so as to hatred and zeal; when these are from right principles, they are against sin in general, in some proportion to the degree of sinfulness: Psalms 119:104, "I hate every false way." So Psalms 119:128. But a false hatred and zeal against sin, is against some particular sin only. Thus some seem to be very zealous against profaneness, and pride in apparel, who themselves are notorious for covetousness, closeness, and it may be backbiting, envy towards superiors, turbulency of spirit towards rulers, and rooted ill will to them that have injured them. False zeal is against the sins of others, while men have no zeal against their own sins. But he that has true zeal, exercises it chiefly against his own sins; though he shows also a proper zeal against prevailing and dangerous iniquity in others. And some pretend to have a great abhorrence of their own sins of heart, and cry out much of their inward corruption; and yet make light of sins in practice, and seem to commit them without much restraint or remorse; though these imply sin both in heart and life. As there is a much greater disproportion in the exercises of false affections than of true, as to different objects, so there is also, as to different times. For although true Christians are not always alike; yea, there is very great difference, at different times, and the best have reason to be greatly ashamed of their unsteadiness; yet there is in no wise that instability and inconstancy in the hearts of those who are true virgins, "that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," which is in false-hearted professors. The righteous man is truly said to be one whose heart is fixed, trusting in God, Psalms 112:7, and to have his heart established with grace, Hebrews 13:9, and to hold on his way, Job 17:9 : "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger." It is spoken of as a note of the hypocrisy of the Jewish church, that they were as a swift dromedary, traversing her ways.

If therefore persons are religious only by fits and starts; if they now and then seem to be raised up to the clouds in their affections, and then suddenly fall down again, lose all, and become quite careless and carnal, and this is their manner of carrying on religion; if they appear greatly moved, and mightily engaged in religion, only in extraordinary seasons, in the time of a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit, or other uncommon dispensation of providence, or upon the real or supposed receipt of some great mercy, when they have received some extraordinary temporal mercy, or suppose that they are newly converted, or have lately had what they call a great discovery; but quickly return to such a frame, that their hearts are chiefly upon other things, and the prevailing bent of their hearts and stream of their affections, is ordinarily towards the things of this world; when they are like the children of Israel in the wilderness, who had their affections

highly raised by what God had done for them at the Red Sea, and sang his praise, and soon fell a lusting after the fleshpots of Egypt; but then again, when they came to Mount Sinai, and saw the great manifestations God made of himself there, seemed to be greatly engaged again, and mightily forward to enter into covenant with God, saying, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do, and be obedient," but then quickly made them a golden calf; I say, when it is thus with persons, it is a sign of the unsoundness of their affections.[Dr. Owen (on the Spirit, Book III. Chap. 2 Sect. 18), speaking of a common work of the Spirit, says, "This work operates greatly on the affections: we have given instances, in fear, sorrow, joy, and delight, about spiritual things, that are stirred up and acted thereby: but yet it comes short in two things, of a thorough work upon the affections themselves. For first, it doth not fix them. And secondly, it doth not fill them."

"There is (says Dr. Preston) a certain love, by fits, which God accepts not: when men come and offer to God great promises, like the waves of the sea, as big as mountains: oh, they think they will do much for God! But their minds change; and they become as those high waves, which at last fall level with the other waters." Mr. Flavel, speaking of these changeable professors, says, "These professors have more of the moon than of the sun: little light, less heat, and many changes. They deceive many, yea, they deceive themselves, but cannot deceive God. They want that ballast and establishment in themselves, that would have kept them tight and steady." Touchstone of Sincerity, Chap. 2 Sect. 2] They are like the waters in the time of a shower of rain, which, during the shower, and a little after, run like a brook, and flow abundantly; but are presently quite dry; and when another shower comes, then they will flow again. Whereas a true saint is like a stream from a living spring; which, though it may be greatly increased by a shower of rain, and diminished in time of drought, yet constantly runs: John 4:14, "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up," &c., or like a tree planted by such a stream, that has a constant supply at the root, and is always green, even in time of the greatest drought: Jeremiah 17:7-8, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Many hypocrites are like comets that appear for a while with a mighty blaze; but are very unsteady and irregular in their motion (and are therefore called wandering stars, Jude 1:13), and their blaze soon disappears, and they appear but once in a great while. But the true saints are like the fixed stars, which, though they rise and set, and are often clouded, yet are steadfast in their orb, and may truly be said to shine with a constant light. Hypocritical affections are like a violent motion; like that of the air that is moved with winds (Jude 1:12), but gracious affections are more a natural motion; like the stream of a river, which, though it has many turns hither and thither, and may meet with obstacles, and runs more freely and swiftly in some places than others; yet in the general, with a steady and constant course, tends the same stay, until it gets to the ocean. And as there is a strange unevenness and disproportion in false affections, at different times; so there often is in different places. Some are greatly affected from time to time, when in company; but have nothing that bears any manner of proportion to it in secret, in close meditations secret prayer, and conversing with God, when alone, and separated from all the world.[The Lord is neglected secretly, yet honored openly; because there is no wind in their chambers to blow their sails, and therefore there they stand still. Hence many men keep their profession, when they lose their affection. They have by the one a name to live (and that is enough) though their hearts be dead. And hence so long as you love and commend them, so long they love you; but if not, they will

forsake you. They were warm only by another's fire, and hence, having no principle of life within, soon grow dead. This is the water that turns a Pharisee's mill." Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 180.

"The hypocrite (says Mr. Flavel) is not for the closet, but the synagogue, Matthew 6:5-6. It is not his meat and drink to retire from the clamor of the world, to enjoy God in secret." Touchstone of Sincerity, Chap. 7 Sect. 2.

Dr. Ames, in his Cases of Conscience, Lib. III. Chap. v., speaks of it as a thing by which sincerity may be known, "That persons be obedient in the absence, as well as in the presence of lookers on; in secret, as well, yea more, than in public:" alleging Php 2:12, and Matthew 6:6.] A true Christian doubtless delights in religious fellowship, and Christian conversation, and finds much to affect his heart in it; but he also delights at times to retire from all mankind to converse with God in solitary places. And this also has its peculiar advantages for fixing his heart, and engaging its affections. True religion disposes persons to be much alone in solitary places, for holy meditation and prayer. So it wrought in Isaac, Genesis 24:63. And which is much more, so it wrought in Jesus Christ. How often do we read of his retiring into mountains and solitary places, for holy converse with his Father! It is difficult to conceal great affections, but yet gracious affections are of a much more silent and secret nature, than those that are counterfeit. So it is with the gracious sorrow of the saints. So it is with their sorrow for their own sins. Thus the future gracious mourning of true penitents, at the beginning of the latter day glory, is represented as being so secret, as to be hidden from the companions of their bosom, Zechariah 12:12-14 : "And the land shall mourn, every family apart, the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart: the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart: the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart: all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." So it is with their sorrow for the sins of others. The saints' pains and travailing for the souls of sinners are chiefly in secret places: Jeremiah 13:17, "If ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive." So it is with gracious joys: they are hidden manna, in this respect, as well as others, Revelation 2:17. The Psalmist seems to speak of his sweetest comforts, as those that were to be had in secret: Psalms 63:5-6, "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." Christ calls forth his spouse, away from the world, into retired places, that he may give her his sweetest love: Song of Solomon 7:11-12, "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages: Here I will give thee my loves." The most eminent divine favors that the saints obtained, that we read of in Scripture, were in their retirement. The principal manifestations that God made of himself, and his covenant mercy to Abraham, were when he was alone, apart from his numerous family; as anyone will judge that carefully reads his history. Isaac received that special gift of God to him, Rebekah, who was so great a comfort to him, and by whom he obtained the promised seed, walking alone meditating in the field. Jacob was retired for secret prayer, when Christ came to him, and he wrestled with him, and obtained the blessing. God revealed himself to Moses in the bush, when he was in a solitary place in the desert, in Mount Horeb, Exodus 3:1-22 at the beginning. And afterwards, when God showed him his glory, and he was admitted to the highest degree of communion with God that ever he enjoyed; he was alone, in the same mountain, and continued there forty days and forty nights, and then came down with his face shining. God came

to those great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, and conversed freely with them, chiefly in their retirement. Elijah conversed alone with God at Mount Sinai, as Moses did. And when Jesus Christ had his greatest prelibation of his future glory, when he was transfigured; it was not when he was with the multitude, or with the twelve disciples, but retired into a solitary place in a mountain, with only three select disciples, charging then, that they should tell no man until he was risen from the dead. When the angel Gabriel came to the blessed virgin, and when the Holy Ghost came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, she seems to have been alone, and to be in this matter hid from the world; her nearest and dearest earthly friend Joseph, that had betrothed her (though a just man), knew nothing of the matter. And she that first partook of the joy of Christ's resurrection, was alone with Christ at the sepulcher, John 20:1-31. And when the beloved disciple was favored with those wonderful visions of Christ and his future dispensations towards the church and the world, he was alone in the isle of Patmos. Not but that we have also instances of great privileges that the saints have received when with others; or that there is not much in Christian conversation, and social and public worship, tending greatly to refresh and rejoice the hearts of the saints. But this is all that I aim at by what has been said, to show that it is the nature of true grace, that however it loves Christian society in its place, yet it in a peculiar manner delights in retirement, and secret converse with God. So that if persons appear greatly engaged in social religion, and but little in the religion of the closet, and are often highly affected when with others, and but little moved when they have none but God and Christ to converse with, it looks very darkly upon their religion.

XI. Another great and very distinguishing difference between gracious affections and others is, that gracious affections, the higher they are raised, the more is a spiritual appetite and longing of soul after spiritual attainments increased. On the contrary, false affections rest satisfied in themselves.["Truly there is no work of Christ that is right (says Mr. Shepard) but it carries the soul to long for more of it." Parable of the Ten Virgins, Part I. p. 136.] The more a true saint loves God with a gracious love, the more he desires to love him, and the more uneasy is he at his want of love to him; the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and laments that he has so much remaining love to it; the more he mourns for sin, the more he longs to mourn for sin; the more his heart is broke, the more he desires it should be broke the more he thirsts and longs after God and holiness, the more he longs to long, and breathe out his very soul in longings after God: the kindling and raising of gracious affections is like kindling a flame; the higher it is raised, the more ardent it is; and the more it burns, the more vehemently does it tend and seek to burn. So that the spiritual appetite after holiness, and an increase of holy affections is much more lively and keen in those that are eminent in holiness, than others, and more when grace and holy affections are in their most lively exercise, than at other times. It is as much the nature of one that is spiritually new born, to thirst after growth in holiness, as it is the nature of a new born babe to thirst after the mother's breast; who has the sharpest appetite, when best in health. 1 Peter 2:2-3, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." The most that the saints have in this world, is but a taste, a prelibation of that future glory which is their proper fullness; it is only an earnest of their future inheritance in their hearts, 2 Corinthians 1:22, and 2 Corinthians 5:5, and Ephesians 1:14. The most eminent saints in this state are but children, compared with their future, which is their proper state of maturity and perfection; as the apostle observes, 1 Corinthians 13:10-11. The greatest eminency that the saints arrive to in this world, has no tendency to satiety, or to abate their desires

after more; but, on the contrary, makes them more eager to press forwards; as is evident by the apostle's words, Php 3:13-15 : "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark.-Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." The reasons of it are, that the more persons have of holy affections, the more they have of that spiritual taste which I have spoken of elsewhere; whereby they perceive the excellency, and relish the divine sweetness of holiness. And the more grace they have, while in this state of imperfection, the more they see their imperfection and emptiness, and distance from what ought to be: and so the more do they see their need of grace; as I showed at large before, when speaking of the nature of evangelical humiliation. And besides, grace, as long as it is imperfect, is of a growing nature, and in a growing state. And we see it to be so with all living things, that while they are in a state of imperfection, and in their growing state, their nature seeks after growth; and so much the more, as they are more healthy and prosperous. Therefore the cry of every true grace, is like that cry of true faith, Mark 9:24 : "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." And the greater spiritual discoveries and affections the true Christian has, the more does he become an earnest beggar for grace, and spiritual food, that he may grow; and the more earnestly does he pursue after it, in the use of proper means and endeavors; for true and gracious longings after holiness are no idle ineffectual desires. But here some may object and say, How is this consistent with what all allow, that spiritual enjoyments are of a soul satisfying nature?

I answer, its being so, will appear to be not at all inconsistent with what has been said, if it be considered in what manner spiritual enjoyments are said to be of a soul satisfying nature. Certainly they are not so in that sense, that they are of so cloying a nature, that he who has anything of them, though but in a very imperfect degree, desires no more. But spiritual enjoyments are of a soul satisfying nature in the following respects. 1. They in their kind and nature, are fully adapted to the nature, capacity, and need of the soul of man. So that those who find them, desire no other kind of enjoyments; they sit down fully contented with that kind of happiness which they have, desiring no change, nor inclining to wander about any more, saying, "Who will show us any good?" The soul is never cloyed, never weary; but perpetually giving up itself, with all its powers, to this happiness. But not that those who have something of this happiness, desire no more of the same. 2. They are satisfying also in this respect, that they answer the expectation of the appetite. When the appetite is high to any thing, the expectation is consequently so. Appetite to a particular object, implies expectation in its nature. This expectation is not satisfied by worldly enjoyments; the man expected to have a great accession of happiness, but he is disappointed. But it is not so with spiritual enjoyments; they fully answer and satisfy the expectation. 3. The gratification and pleasure of spiritual enjoyments is permanent. It is not so with worldly enjoyments. They in a sense satisfy particular appetites: but the appetite, in being satisfied, is glutted, and then the pleasure is over: and as soon as that is over, the general appetite of human nature after happiness returns; but is empty, and without anything to satisfy it. So that the glutting of a particular appetite, does but take away from, and leave empty, the general thirst of nature. 4. Spiritual good is satisfying, as there is enough in it to satisfy the soul, as to degree, if obstacles were but removed, and the enjoying faculty duly applied. There is room enough here for the soul to extend itself; here is an infinite ocean of it. If men be not satisfied here, in degree of happiness, the cause is with themselves; it is because they do not open their mouths wide enough. But these things do not argue that a soul has no appetite excited after more of the same, that has tasted a little; or that his appetite will not increase, the more he tastes, until he comes to fullness of enjoyment: as bodies

that are attracted to the globe of the earth, tend to it more strongly, the nearer they come to the attracting body, and are not at rest out of the center. Spiritual good is of a satisfying nature; and for that very reason, the soul that tastes, and knows its nature, will thirst after it, and a fullness of it, that it may be satisfied. And the more he experiences, and the more he knows this excellent, unparalleled, exquisite, and satisfying sweetness, the more earnestly will he hunger and thirst for more, until he comes to perfection. And therefore this is the nature of spiritual affections, that the greater they be, the greater the appetite and longing is, after grace and holiness. But with those joys, and other religious affections, that are false and counterfeit, it is otherwise. If before, there was a great desire, of some sort, after grace; as these affections rise, that desire ceases, or is abated. It may be before, while the man was under legal convictions, and much afraid of hell, he earnestly longed that he might obtain spiritual light in his understanding, and faith in Christ, and love to God: but now, when these false affections are risen, that deceive him, and make him confident that he is converted, and his state good, there are no more earnest longings after light and grace; for his end is answered; he is confident that his sins are forgiven him, and that he shall go to heaven; and so he is satisfied. And especially when false affections are raised very high, they put an end to longings after grace and holiness. The man now is far from appearing to himself a poor empty creature; on the contrary, he is rich, and increased with goods, and hardly conceives of anything more excellent than what he has already attained to.

Hence there is an end to many persons' earnestness in seeking, after they have once obtained that which they call their conversion; or at least, after they have had those high affections, that make them fully confident of it. Before while they looked upon themselves as in a state of nature, they were engaged in seeking after God and Christ, and cried earnestly for grace, and strove in the use of means: but now they act as though they thought their work was done; they live upon their first work, or some high experiences that are past; and there is an end to their crying, and striving after God and grace. Whereas the holy principles that actuate a true saint, have a far more powerful influence to stir him up to earnestness in seeking God and holiness, than servile fear. Hence seeking God is spoken of as one of the distinguishing characters of the saints, and those that seek God is one of the names by which the godly are called in Scripture: Psalms 24:6, "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob!" Psalms 69:6, "Let not those that seek thee, be confounded for my sake." Psalms 69:32, "The humble shall see this and be glad: and your heart shall live that seek God." And Psalms 70:4, "Let all these that seek thee, rejoice, and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation, say continually, The Lord be magnified." And the Scriptures everywhere represent the seeking, striving, and labor of a Christian, as being chiefly after his conversion, and his conversion as being but the beginning of his as work. And almost all that is said in the New Testament, of men's watching, giving earnest heed to themselves, running the race that is set before them, striving, and agonizing, wrestling not with flesh and blood, but principalities and powers, fighting, putting on the whole armor of God, and standing, having done all to stand, pressing forward, reaching forth, continuing instant in prayer, crying to God day and night; I say, almost all that is said in the New Testament of these things, is spoken of, and directed to the saints. Where these things are applied to sinners' seeking conversion once, they are spoken of the saints' prosecution of the great business of their high calling ten times. But many in these days have got into a strange antiscriptural way, of having all their striving and wrestling over before they are converted; and so having an easy time of it afterwards, to sit down and enjoy their sloth and indolence; as those that now have a supply of

their wants, and are become rich and full. But when the Lord "fills the hungry with good things, these rich are like to be sent away empty," Luke 1:53. But doubtless there are some hypocrites, that have only false affections, who will think they are able to stand this trial; and will readily say, that they desire not to rest satisfied with past attainments, but to be pressing forward, they do desire more, they long after God and Christ, and desire more holiness, and do seek it. But the truth is, their desires are not properly the desires of appetite after holiness, for its own sake, or for the moral excellency and holy sweetness that is in it; but only for by-ends. They long after clearer discoveries, that they may be better satisfied about the state of their souls; or because in great discoveries self is gratified, in being made so much of by God, and so exalted above others; they long to taste the love of God (as they call it) more than to have more love to God. Or, it may be, they have a kind of forced, fancied, or made longings; because they think they must long for more grace, otherwise it will be a dark sign upon them. But such things as these are far different from the natural, and as it were necessary appetite and thirsting of the new man, after God and holiness. There is an inward burning desire that a saint has after holiness, as natural to the new creature, as vital heat is to the body. There is a holy breathing and panting after the Spirit of God, to increase holiness, as natural to a holy nature, as breathing is to a living body. And holiness or sanctification is more directly the object of it, than any manifestation of God’s love and favor. This is the meat and drink that is the object of the spiritual appetite: John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Where we read in Scripture of the desires, longings, and thirstings of the saints, righteousness and God’s laws are much more frequently mentioned as the object of them, than anything else. The saints desire the sincere milk of the word, not so much to testify God’s love to them, as that they may grow thereby in holiness. I have shown before, that holiness is that good which is the immediate object of a spiritual taste. But undoubtedly the same sweetness that is the chief object of a spiritual taste, is also the chief object of a spiritual appetite. Grace is the godly man’s treasure: Isaiah 32:6, "The fear of the Lord is his treasure." Godliness is the gain that he is covetous and greedy of. 1 Timothy 6:6. Hypocrites long for discoveries more for the present comfort of the discovery, and the high manifestation of God’s love in it, than for any sanctifying influence of it. But neither a longing after great discoveries, or after great tastes of the love of God, nor longing to be in heaven nor longing to die, are in any measure so distinguishing marks of true saints, as longing after a more holy heart, and living a more holy life.

01.12. PART III(g)

But I am come now to the last distinguishing mark of holy affections that I shall mention.

XII. Gracious and holy affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice.-I mean, they have that influence and power upon him who is the subject of them, that they cause that a practice, which is universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules, should be the practice and business of his life. This implies three things: 1. That his behavior or practice in the world be universally conformed to, and directed by Christian rules. 2. That he makes a business of such a holy practice above all things; that it be a business which he as chiefly engaged in, and devoted to, and pursues with highest earnestness and diligence: so that he may be said to make this practice of religion eminently his work and business. And 3. That he persists in it to the end of life: so that it may be said, not only to be his business at certain seasons, the business of Sabbath days, or certain extraordinary times, or the business of a month, or a year, or of seven years, or his business under certain circumstances; but the business of his life; it being that business which he perseveres in through all changes, and under all trials, as long as he lives. The necessity of each of these, in all true Christians, is most clearly and fully taught in the word of God.

1. It is necessary that men should be universally obedient: 1 John 3:3 &c., "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.-And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. He that doeth righteousness, is righteous even as he is righteous: he that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John 5:18, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

If one member only be corrupt, and we do not cut it off, it will carry the whole body to hell, Matthew 5:29-30. Saul was commanded to slay all God’s enemies, the Amalekites; and he slew all but Agag, and the saving him alive proved his ruin. Caleb and Joshua entered into God’s promised rest, because they wholly followed the Lord, Numbers 14:24, and Numbers 32:11-12, Deuteronomy 1:36. Joshua 14:6, Joshua 14:8-9, Joshua 14:14. Naaman’s hypocrisy appeared in that, however ever he seemed to be greatly affected with gratitude to God for healing his leprosy, and engaged to serve him, yet in one thing he desired to be excused. And Herod, though he feared John, and observed him, and heard him gladly, and did many things; yet was condemned, in that in one thing he would not hearken to him, even in parting with his beloved Herodias. So that it is necessary that men should part with their dearest iniquities, which are as their right hand and right eyes, sins that most easily beset them, and which they are most exposed to by their natural inclinations, evil customs, or particular circumstances, as well as others. As Joseph would not make known himself to his brethren, who had sold him, until Benjamin the beloved child of the family, that was most hardly parted with, was delivered up; no more will Christ reveal his love to us, until we part with our dearest lusts, and until we are brought to comply with the most difficult duties, and those that we have the greatest aversion to. And it is of importance that it should be

observed that in order to man’s being truly said to be universally obedient, his obedience must not only consist in negatives, or in universally avoiding wicked practices, consisting in sins of commission, but he must also be universal in the positives of religion. Sins of omission are as much breaches of God’s commands as sins of commission. Christ, in Matthew 25:1-46 represents those on the left hand as being condemned and cursed to everlasting fire for sins of omission. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat," &c. A man, therefore, cannot be said to be universally obedient, and of a Christian conversation, only because he is no thief, nor oppressor, nor fraudulent person, nor drunkard, nor tavern haunter, nor whoremaster, nor rioter, nor night walker, nor unclean, nor profane in his language, nor slanderer, nor liar, nor furious, nor malicious, nor reviler. He is falsely said to be of a conversation that becomes the gospel, who goes thus far and no farther; but in order to this, it is necessary that he should also be of a serious, religious, devout, humble, meek, forgiving, peaceful, respectful, condescending, benevolent, merciful, charitable and beneficent walk and conversation. Without such things as these, he does not obey the laws of Christ, and laws that he and his apostles did abundantly insist on, as of the greatest importance and necessity.

2. In order to men’s being true Christians, it is necessary that they prosecute the business of religion, and the service of God with great earnestness and diligence, as the work which they devote themselves to, and make the main business of their lives. All Christ’s peculiar people not only do good works, but are zealous of good works, Titus 2:14. No man can do the service of two masters at once. They that are God’s true servants do give up themselves to his service, and make it as it were their whole work, therein employing their whole hearts, and the chief of their strength: Php 3:13, "This one thing I do." Christians in their effectual calling, are not called to idleness, but to labor in God’s vineyard, and spend their day in doing a great and laborious service. All true Christians comply with this call (as is implied in its being an effectual call), and do the work of Christians; which is everywhere in the New Testament compared to those exercises wherein men are wont to exert their strength with the greatest earnestness, as running, wrestling, fighting. All true Christians are good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, and "fight the good fight of faith;" for none but those who do so, do "ever lay hold on eternal life." Those who "fight as those that beat the air," never win the crown of victory. "They that run in a race, run all, but one wins the prize," and they that are slack and negligent in their course, do not "so run as that they may obtain." The kingdom of heaven is not to be taken but by violence. Without earnestness there is no getting along, in that narrow way that leads to life; and so no arriving at that state of glorious life and happiness which it leads to. Without earnest labor there is no ascending the steep and high hill of Zion, and so no arriving at the heavenly city on the top of it. Without a constant laboriousness there is no stemming the swift stream in which we swim, so as ever to come to that fountain of water of life that is at the head of it. There is need that we should "watch and pray always, in order to our escaping those dreadful things that are coming on the ungodly, and our being counted worthy to stand before the Son of man." There is need of our "putting on the whole armor of God, and doing all, to stand," in order to our avoiding a total overthrow, and being utterly destroyed by "the fiery darts of the devil." There is need that we should "forget the things that are behind, and be reaching forth to the things that are before, and pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our Lord," in order to our obtaining that prize. Slothfulness in the service of God in his professed servants, is as damning as open rebellion; for the slothful servant is a wicked servant, and shall be cast into outer darkness, among God’s open

enemies, Matthew 25:26, Matthew 25:30. They that are slothful are not "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Hebrews 6:11-12, "And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." And all they who follow that cloud of witnesses that are gone before to heaven, "do lay aside every weight, and the sin that easily besets them, and do run with patience the race that is set before them," Hebrews 12:1. That true faith, by which persons rely on the righteousness of Christ, and the work that he hath done for them, and do truly feed and live upon him, is evermore accompanied with such a spirit of earnestness in the Christian work and course. Which was typified of old, by the manner of the children of Israel's feeding on the paschal lamb; who were directed to eat it, as those that were in haste, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, Exodus 12:11.

3. Every true Christian perseveres in this way of universal obedience, and diligent and earnest service of God, through all the various kinds of trials that he meets with, to the end of life. That all true saints, all those that do obtain eternal life, do thus persevere in the practice of religion, and the service of God, is a doctrine so abundantly taught in the Scripture, that particularly to rehearse all the texts which imply it would be endless; I shall content myself with referring to some in the margin.[Deuteronomy 5:29; Deuteronomy 32:18-20; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Psalms 78:7-8, Psalms 78:10-11, Psalms 78:35-37, Psalms 78:41, Psalms 78:56, &c.; Psalms 106:3. Psalms 106:12-15; Psalms 125:4-5; Proverbs 26:11, Isaiah 64:5, Jeremiah 17:13, Ezekiel 3:20, and Ezekiel 18:24, and Ezekiel 33:12-13; Matthew 10:22, and Matthew 10:4-8, with Matthew 10:19-23, and Matthew 25:8, and Matthew 24:12-13, Luke 9:62, and Luke 12:35, &c., and Luke 22:28, and Luke 17:32; John 8:30-31, and John 15:6-8, John 15:10, John 15:16; Revelation 2:7, and Revelation 4:22; Colossians 1:22-23, Hebrews 3:6, Hebrews 3:12, Hebrews 3:14, and Hebrews 6:11-12, and Hebrews 10:35, &c.; James 1:25; Revelation 2:13, Revelation 2:26, and Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 4:4-8.] But that perseverance in obedience, which is chiefly insisted on in the Scripture, as a special note of the truth of grace, is the continuance of professors in the practice of their duty, and being steadfast in a holy walk, through the various trials that they meet with. By trials here, I mean those things that occur, and that a professor meets with in his course, that do especially render his continuance in his duty and faithfulness to God, difficult to nature. These things are from time to time called in Scripture by the name of trials, or temptations (which are words of the same signification). These are of various kinds: there are many things that render persons' continuance in the way of their duty difficult, by their tendency to cherish and foment, or to stir up and provoke their lusts and corruptions. Many things make it hard to continue in the way of their duty, by their being of an adhering nature, and having a tendency to entice persons to sin, or by their tendency to take off restraints, and embolden them in iniquity. Other things are trials of the soundness and steadfastness of professors, by their tendency to make their duty appear terrible to them, and so to affright and drive them from it; such as the sufferings which their duty will expose them to; pain, ill will, contempt, and reproach, or loss of outward possessions and comforts. If persons, after they have made a profession of religion, live any considerable time in this world, which is so full of changes, and so full of evil, it cannot be otherwise than that they should meet with many trials of their sincerity and steadfastness. And besides, it is God's manner, in his providence, to bring trials on his professing friends and servants designedly, that he may manifest them, and may exhibit sufficient matter of conviction of the state which they are in, to then

own consciences, and oftentimes to the world; as appears by innumerable Scriptures.

True saints may be guilty of some kinds and degrees of backsliding, and may be foiled by particular temptations, and may fall into sin, yea great sins; but they never can fall away so as to grow weary of religion, and the service of God, and habitually to dislike it and neglect it, either on its own account, or on account of the difficulties that attend it; as is evident by Galatians 6:9, Romans 2:7, Hebrews 10:36, Isaiah 43:22, Malachi 1:13. They can never backslide, so as to continue no longer in a way of universal obedience; or so, that it shall cease to be their manner to observe all the rules of Christianity, and do all duties required, even in the most difficult circumstances. This is abundantly manifest by the things that have been observed already. Nor can they ever fall away so as habitually to be more engaged in other things than in the business of religion; or so that it should become their way and manner to serve something else more than God; or so as statedly to cease to serve God, with such earnestness and diligence, as still to be habitually devoted and given up to the business of religion; unless those words of Christ can fall to the ground, "Ye cannot serve two masters," and those of the apostle, "He that will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God;" and unless a saint can change his God, and yet be a true saint. Nor can a true saint ever fall away so, that it shall come to this, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference in his walk and behavior since his conversion, from what was before. They that are truly converted are new men, new creatures; new not only within, but without; they are sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul and body; old things are passed away, all things are become new; they have new hearts, and new eyes, new ears, new tongues, new hands, new feet; i.e., a new conversation and practice; and they walk in newness of life, and continue to do so to the end of life. And they that fall away, and cease visibly to do so, it is a sign they never were risen with Christ. And especially when men’s opinion of their being converted, and so in a safe estate, is the very cause of their coming to this, it is a most evident sign of their hypocrisy. And that, whether their falling away be into their former sins, or into some new kind of wickedness, having the corruption of nature only turned into a new channel, instead of its being mortified. As when persons that think themselves converted, though they do not return to former profaneness and lewdness; yet from the high opinion they have of their experiences, graces, and privileges, gradually settle more and more in a self-righteous and spiritually proud temper of mind, and in such a manner of behavior as naturally arises therefrom. When it is thus with men, however far they may seem to be from their former evil practices, this alone is enough to condemn them, and may render their last state far worse than the first. For this seems to be the very case of the Jews of that generation that Christ speaks of, Matthew 12:43-45, who being awakened by John the Baptist’s preaching, and brought to a reformation of their former licentious courses, whereby the unclean Spirit was as it were turned out, and the house swept and garnished; yet, being empty of God and of grace, became full of themselves, and were exalted in an exceeding high opinion of their own righteousness and eminent holiness, and became habituated to an answerably self-exalting behavior; so changing the sins of publicans and harlots, for those of the Pharisees; and in issue, had seven devils, worse than the first.

Thus I have explained what exercise and fruit I mean, when I say, that gracious affections have their exercise and fruit in Christian practice. The reason why gracious affections have such a tendency and effect appears from many things that have already been observed, in the preceding parts of this discourse. The reason of it appears from this, that gracious affections do arise from

those operations and influences which are spiritual, and that the inward principle from whence they flow, is something divine, a communication of God, a participation of the divine nature, Christ living in the heart, the Holy Spirit dwelling there, in union with the faculties of the soul, as an internal vital principle, exerting his own proper nature, in the exercise of those faculties. This is sufficient to show us why true grace should have such activity, power, and efficacy. No wonder that which is divine, is powerful and effectual; for it has omnipotence on its side. If God dwells in the heart, and be vitally united to it, he will show that he is a God, by the efficacy of his operation. Christ is not in the heart of a saint, as in a sepulcher, or as a dead savior, that does nothing; but as in his temple, and as one that is alive from the dead. For in the heart where Christ savingly is, there he lives, and exerts himself after the power of that endless life that he received at his resurrection. Thus every saint that is a subject of the benefit of Christ's sufferings, is made to know and experience the power of his resurrection. The Spirit of Christ, which is the immediate spring of grace in the heart, is all life, all power, all act: 1 Corinthians 2:4, "In demonstration of the Spirit, and of power." 1 Thessalonians 1:5, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost." 1 Corinthians 4:20, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Hence saving affections, though oftentimes they do not make so great a noise and show as others, yet have in them a secret solidity, life, and strength, whereby they take hold of, and carry away the heart, leading it into a kind of captivity, 2 Corinthians 10:5, gaining a full and steadfast determination of the will for God and holiness. Psalms 110:3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And thus it is that holy affections have a governing power in the course of a man's life. A statue may look very much like a real man, and a beautiful man; yea, it may have, in its appearance to the eye, the resemblance of a very lively, strong, and active man; but yet an inward principle of life and strength is wanting; and therefore it does nothing, it brings nothing to pass, there is no action or operation to answer the show. False discoveries and affections do not go deep enough to reach and govern the spring of men's actions and practice. The seed in stony ground had not deepness of earth, and the root did not go deep enough to bring forth fruit. But gracious affections go to the very bottom of the heart and take hold of the very inmost springs of life and activity.

Herein chiefly appears the power of true godliness, viz., in its being effectual practice. And the efficacy of godliness in this respect, is what the apostle has respect to, when he speaks of the power of godliness, 2 Timothy 3:5, as is very plain; for he there is particularly declaring, how some professors of religion would notoriously fail in the practice of it, and then in 2 Timothy 3:5 observes, that in being thus of an unholy practice, they deny the power of godliness, though they have the form of it. Indeed the power of godliness is exerted in the first place within the soul, in the sensible, lively exercise of gracious affections there. Yet the principal evidence of this power of godliness, is in those exercises of holy affections that are practical, and in their being practical; in conquering the will, and conquering the lusts and corruptions of men, and carrying men on in the way of holiness, through all temptations, difficulty, and opposition.

Again, the reason why gracious affections have their exercise and effect in Christian practice, appears from this (which has also been before observed), that "the first objective around of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves, and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest." This shows why holy affection will cause men to be holy in their practice universally. What makes men partial in

religion is, that they seek themselves, and not God, in their religion; and close with religion, not for its own excellent nature, but only to serve a turn. He that closes with religion only to serve a turn, will close with no more of it than he imagines serves that turn; but he that closes with religion for its own excellent and lovely nature, closes with all that has that nature: he that embraces religion for its own sake, embraces the whole of religion. This also shows why gracious affections will cause men to practice religion perseveringly, and at all times. Religion may alter greatly in process of time, as to its consistence with men's private interest, in many respects; and therefore he that complies with it only for selfish views, is liable, in chance of times, to forsake it; but the excellent nature of religion, as it is in itself, is invariable; it is always the same, at all times, and through all changes; it never alters in any respect. The reason why gracious affections issue in holy practice, also further appears from the kind of excellency of divine things, that it has been observed is the foundation of all holy affections, viz., "their moral excellency, or the beauty of their holiness." No wonder that a love to holiness, for holiness' sake, inclines persons to practice holiness, and to practice everything that is holy. Seeing holiness is the main thing that excites, draws, and governs all gracious affections, no wonder that all such affections tend to holiness. That which men love, they desire to have and to be united to, and possessed of. That beauty which men delight in, they desire to be adorned with. Those acts which men delight in, they necessarily incline to do. And what has been observed of that divine teaching and leading of the Spirit of God, which there is in gracious affections, shows the reason of this tendency of such affections to a universally holy practice. For, as has been observed, the Spirit of God in this his divine teaching and leading gives the soul a natural relish of the sweetness of that which is holy, and of everything that is holy, so far as it comes in view and excites a disrelish and disgust of everything that is unholy. The same also appears from what has been observed of the nature of that spiritual knowledge, which is the foundation of all holy affection, as consisting in a sense and view of that excellence in divine things, which is supreme and transcendent. For hereby these things appear above all others, worthy to be chosen and adhered to. By the sight of the transcendent glory of Christ, true Christians see him worthy to be followed; and so are powerfully drawn after him; they see him worthy that they should forsake all for him: by the sight of that superlative amiableness, they are thoroughly disposed to be subject to him, and engaged to labor with earnestness and activity in his service, and made willing to no through all difficulties for his sake. And it is the discovery of this divine excellency of Christ, that makes them constant to him: for it makes a deep impression upon their minds, that they cannot forget him; and they will follow him whithersoever he goes, and it is in vain for any to endeavor to draw them away from him. The reason of this practical tendency and issue of gracious affections, further appears from what has been observed of such affections being "attended as with a thorough conviction of the judgment of the reality and certainty of divine things." No wonder that they who were never thoroughly convinced that there is any reality in the things of religion, will never be at the labor and trouble of such an earnest, universal, and persevering practice of religion, through all difficulties, self-denials, and sufferings in a dependence on that, which they are not convinced of. But on the other hand, they who are thoroughly convinced of the certain truth of those things, must needs be governed by them in their practice; for the things revealed in the word of God are so great, and so infinitely more important than all other things, that it is inconsistent with the human nature, that a man should fully believe the truth of them, and not he influenced by them above all things in his practice.

Again, the reason of this expression and effect of holy affections in the practice, appears in what has been observed of "a change of nature, accompanying such affections." Without a change of nature, men's practice will not be thoroughly changed. Until the tree be made good, the fruit will not be good. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The swine may be washed and appear clean for a little while, but yet, without a change of nature, he will still wallow in the mire. Nature is a more powerful principle of action, than anything that opposes it: though it may be violently restrained for a while, it will finally overcome that which restrains it: it is like the stream of a river, it may be stopped a while with a dam, but if nothing be done to dry the fountain, it will not be stopped always; it will have a course, either in its old channel, or a new one. Nature is a thing more constant and permanent, than any of those things that are the foundation of carnal men's reformation and righteousness. When a natural man denies his lust, and lives a strict, religious life, and seems humble, painful, and earnest in religion, it is not natural; it is all a force against nature; as when a stone is violently thrown upwards; but that force will be gradually spent; yet nature will remain in its full strength, and so prevails again, and the stone returns downwards. As long as corrupt nature is not mortified, but the principle left whole in a man, it is a vain thing to expect that it should not govern. But if the old nature be indeed mortified, and a new and heavenly nature infused, then may it well be expected, that men will walk in newness of life, and continue to do so to the end of their days. The reason of this practical exercise and effect of holy affections, may also be partly seen, from what has been said of that spirit of humility which attends them. Humility is that wherein a spirit of obedience does much consist. A proud spirit is a rebellious spirit, but a humble spirit is a yieldable, subject, obediential spirit. We see among men, that the servant who is of a haughty spirit is not apt in everything to be submissive and obedient to the will of his master; but it is otherwise with that servant who is of a lowly spirit. And that lamblike, dovelike spirit, that has been spoken of, which accompanies all gracious affections, fulfills (as the apostle observes, Romans 13:8-10 and Galatians 5:14) all the duties of the second table of the law; wherein Christian practice does very much consist, and wherein the external practice of Christianity chiefly consists. And the reason why gracious affections are attended with that strict, universal and constant obedience which has been spoken of, further appears, from what has been observed of that tenderness of spirit, which accompanies the affections of true saints, causing in them so quick and lively a sense of pain through the presence of moral evil, and such a dread of the appearance of evil. And one great reason why the Christian practice which flows from gracious affections, is universal, and constant, and persevering, appears from That has been observed of those affections themselves, from whence this practice flows, being universal and constant, in all kinds of holy exercises, and towards all objects, and in all circumstances and at all seasons in a beautiful symmetry and proportion. And much of the reason why holy affections are expressed and manifested in such an earnestness, activity, and engagedness and perseverance in holy practice, as has been spoken of, appears from what has been observed, of the spiritual appetite and longing after further attainments in religion, which evermore attends true affection, and does not decay, but increases as those affections increase.

Thus we see how the tendency of holy affections to such a Christian practice as has been explained, appears from each of those characteristics of holy affection that have been before spoken of. And this point may be further illustrated and confirmed, if it be considered, that the holy Scriptures do abundantly place sincerity and soundness in religion, in making a full choice of God as our only Lord and portion, forsaking all for him, and in a full determination of the will for God and

Christ, on counting the cost; in our heart's closing and complying with the religion of Jesus Christ, with all that belongs to it, embracing it with all its difficulties, as it were hating our dearest earthly enjoyments, and even our own lives, for Christ, giving up ourselves, with all that we have, wholly and forever, unto Christ, without keeping back any thing, or making any reserve; or, in one word, in the great duty of self-denial for Christ; or in denying, i.e., as it were, disowning and renouncing ourselves for him, making ourselves nothing that he may be all. See the texts to this purpose referred to in the margin.[Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 6:24; Matthew 8:19-22; Matthew 4:18-22; Matthew 9:37-38; Matthew 13:44-46; Matthew 16:24-26; Matthew 18:8-9; Matthew 19:21, Matthew 19:27-29; Matthew 10:42; Matthew 12:33-34; Matthew 14:16-20, Matthew 14:25-33; Matthew 16:13; Acts 4:34-35, with Acts 5:1-11; Romans 6:3-8; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 6:14; Php 3:7.] Now surely having a heart to forsake all for Christ, tends to actually forsaking all for hire, so far as there is occasion, and we have the trial. A having a heart to deny ourselves for Christ, tends to a denying ourselves indeed, when Christ and self-interest stand in competition. A giving up of ourselves, with all that we have, in our hearts, without making any reserve there, tends to our behaving ourselves universally as his, as subject to his will, and devoted to his ends. Our heart's entirely closing with the religion of Jesus, with all that belongs to it, and as attended with all its difficulties, upon a deliberate counting the cost, tends to a universal closing with the same in act and deed, and actually going through all the difficulties that we meet with in the way of religion, and so holding out with patience and perseverance. The tendency of grace in the heart to holy practice, is very direct, and the connection most natural, close, and necessary. True grace is not an unactive thing; there is nothing in heaven or earth of a more active nature, for it is life itself, and the most active kind of life, even spiritual and divine life. It is no barren thing; there is nothing in the universe that in its nature has a greater tendency to fruit. Godliness in the heart has as direct a relation to practice, as a fountain has to a stream, or as the luminous nature of the sun has to beams sent forth, or as life has to breathing, or the beating of the pulse, or any other vital act; or as a habit or principle of action has to action; for it is the very nature and notion of grace, that it is a principle of holy action or practice. Regeneration which is that work of God in which grace is infused, has a direct relation to practice; for it is the very end of it, with a view to which the whole work is wrought; all is calculated and framed, in this mighty and manifold change wrought in the soul, so as directly to tend to this end. Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Yea, it is the very end of the redemption of Christ: Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and with out blame before him in love." Ephesians 2:10, "Created unto good works, which God hath foreordained that we should walk in them." Holy practice is as much the end of all that God does about his saints, as fruit is the end of all the husbandman does about the growth of his field or vineyard; as the matter is often represented in Scripture, Matthew 3:10, Matthew 13:8, Matthew 13:23, Matthew 13:30, Matthew 13:38, Matthew 21:19, Matthew 21:33-34, Luke 13:6, John 15:1-2, John 15:4-6, John 15:8, 1 Corinthians 3:9, Hebrews 6:7-8, Isaiah 5:1-8, Song of Solomon 8:11-12, Isaiah 27:2-3.["To profess to know much, is easy; but to bring your affections into subjection, to wrestle with lusts, to cross your wills and yourselves, upon every occasion, this is hard. The Lord looketh that in our lives we should be serviceable to him, and useful to men. That which is within, the Lord and our brethren are never the better for it: but the outward obedience, flowing thence, glorifieth God, and does good to men.

The Lord will have this done. What else is the end of our planting and watering, but that the trees may be filled with sap? And what is the end of that sap, but that the trees man bring forth fruit? What careth the husbandman for leaves and barren trees?" Dr. Preston of the Church's Carriage.] And therefore everything in a true Christian is calculated to reach this end. This fruit of holy practice is what every grace, and every discovery, and every individual thing which belongs to Christian experience, has a direct tendency to. The constant and indissoluble connection that there is between a Christian principle and profession in the true saints, and the fruit of holy practice in their lives, was typified of old in the frame of the golden candlestick in the temple. It is beyond doubt that that golden candlestick, with its seven branches and seven lamps, was a type of the church of Christ. The Holy Ghost himself has been pleased to put that matter out of doubt, by representing his church by such a golden candlestick, with seven lamps, in the fourth chapter of Zechariah, and representing the seven churches of Asia by seven golden candlesticks, in the first chapter of the Revelation. That golden candlestick in the temple was everywhere, throughout its whole frame, made with knops and flowers: Exodus 25:31, to the end, and chapter Exodus 37:17-24. The word translated knop, in the original, signifies apple or pomegranate. There was a knop and a flower, a knop and a flower: wherever there was a flower, there was an apple or pomegranate with it: the flower and the fruit were constantly connected, without fail. The flower contained the principle of the fruit, and a beautiful promising appearance of it; and it never was a deceitful appearance; the principle or show of fruit, had evermore real fruit attending it, or succeeding it. So it is in the church of Christ: there is the principle of fruit in grace in the heart; and there is an amiable profession, signified by the open flowers of the candlestick; and there is answerable fruit, in holy practice, constantly attending this principle and profession. Every branch of the golden candlestick, thus composed of golden apples and flowers, was crowned with a burning, shining lamp on the top of it. For it is by this means that the saints shine as lights in the world, by making a fair and good profession of religion, and having their profession evermore joined with answerable fruit in practice: agreeable to that of our Savior, Matthew 5:15-16, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." A fair and beautiful profession, and golden fruits accompanying one another, are the amiable ornaments of the true church of Christ. Therefore we find that apples and flowers were not only the ornaments of the candlesticks in the temple, but of the temple itself, which is a type of the church; which the apostle tells us "is the temple of the living God." See 1 Kings 6:18 : "And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops, and open flowers." The ornaments and crown of the pillars, at the entrance of the temple, were of the same sort: they were lilies and pomegranates, or flowers and fruits mixed together, 1 Kings 7:18-19. So it is with all those that are "as pillars in the temple of God, who shall go no more out," or never be ejected as intruders; as it is with all true saints: Revelation 3:12, "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out."

Much the same thing seems to be signified by the ornaments on the skirt of the ephod, the garment of Aaron, the high priest; which were golden bells and pomegranates.-That these skirts of Aaron's garment represent the church, or the saints (that are as it were the garment of Christ), is manifest; for they are evidently so spoken of, Psalms 133:1-2 : "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments."

That ephod of Aaron signified the same with the seamless coat of Christ our great High Priest. As Christ's coat had no seam, but was woven from the top throughout, so it was with the ephod, Exodus 29:22. As God took care in his providence, that Christ's coat should not be rent; so God took special care that the ephod should not be rent, Exodus 28:32, and Exodus 39:23. The golden bells on this ephod, by their precious matter and pleasant sound, do well represent the good profession that the saints make; and the pomegranates, the fruit they bring forth. And as in the hem of the ephod, bells and pomegranates were constantly connected, as is once and again observed, there was a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, Exodus 28:34, and Exodus 39:26, so it is in the true saints; their good profession and their good fruit, do constantly accompany one another: the fruit they bring forth in life, evermore answers the pleasant sound of their profession.

Again, the very same thing is represented by Christ, in his description of his spouse, Song of Solomon 7:2 : "Thy belly is like a heap of wheat, set about with lilies." Here again are beautiful flowers, and good fruit, accompanying one another. The lilies were fair and beautiful flowers, and the wheat was good fruit. As this fruit of Christian practice is evermore found in true saints, according as they have opportunity and trial, so it is found in them only; none but true Christians do live such an obedient life, so universally devoted to their duty, and given up to the business of a Christian, as has been explained. All unsanctified men are workers of iniquity: they are of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do. There is no hypocrite that will go through with the business of religion, and both begin and finish the tour: they will not endure the trials God is wont to bring on the professors of religion, but will turn aside to their crooked ways: they will not be thoroughly faithful to Christ in their practice, and follow him whithersoever he goes. Whatever lengths they may go in religion in some instances, and though they may appear exceeding strict, and mightily engaged in the service of God for a season; yet they are servants to sin; the chains of their old taskmasters are not broken: their lusts have yet a reigning power in their hearts; and therefore to these masters they will bow down again.[No unregenerate man, though he go never so far, let him do never so much, but he lives in some one sin or other, secret or open, little or great. Judas went far, but he was covetous; Herod went far, but be loved his Herodias. Every dog hath his kennel, every swine hath his swill; and every wicked man his lust." Shepard's Sincere Convert, 1st edition, p. 96.] Daniel 12:10, "Many shall be purified and made white, and tried: but the wicked will do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand." Isaiah 26:10, "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly." Isaiah 35:8, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. Hosea 14:9, "The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." Job 27:8-10, "What is the hope of the hypocrite? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" An unsanctified man may hide his sin, and may in many things, and for a season refrain from sin; but he will not be brought finally to renounce his sin, and give it a bill of divorce; sin is too dear to him, for him to be willing for that: "Wickedness is sweet in his mouth; and therefore he hides it under his tongue he spares it, and forsakes it not; but keeps it still within his mouth," Job 20:12-13. Herein chiefly consists the straitness of the gate, and the narrowness of the way that leads to life; upon the account of which, carnal men will not go in thereat, viz., that it is a way of utterly denying and finally renouncing all ungodliness, and so a way of self-denial or self-renunciation.

Many natural men, under the means that are used with them, and God's strivings with them to bring them to forsake their sins, do by their sins as Pharaoh did by his pride and covetousness, which he gratified by keeping the children of Israel in bondage, when God strove with him, to bring him to let the people go. When God's hand pressed Pharaoh sore, and he was exercised with fears of God's future wrath, he entertains some thoughts of letting the people go, and promised he would do it; but from time to time he broke his promises, when he saw there was respite. When God filled Egypt with thunder and lightning, and the fire ran along the ground, then Pharaoh is brought to confess his sin with seeming humility, and to have a great resolution to let the people go. Exodus 9:27-28, "And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked: entreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." So sinners are sometimes, by thunders and lightnings and great terrors of the law, brought to a seeming work of humiliation, and to appearance to part with their sins; but are no more thoroughly brought to a disposition to dismiss them, than Pharaoh was to let the people go. Pharaoh, in the struggle that was between his conscience and his lusts, was for contriving that God might be served, and he enjoy his lusts that were gratified by the slavery of the people. Moses insisted that Israel's God should be served and sacrificed to: Pharaoh was willing to consent to that; but would have it done without his parting with the people: "Go sacrifice to your God in the land," says he, Exodus 8:25. So, many sinners are for contriving to serve God, and enjoy their lusts too. Moses objected against complying with Pharaoh's proposal, that serving God, and yet continuing in Egypt under their taskmasters, did not agree together, and were inconsistent one with another (there is no serving God, and continuing slaves to such enemies of God at the same time). After this Pharaoh consented to let the people go, provided they would not go far away: he was not willing to part with them finally, and therefore would have them within reach. So do many hypocrites with respect to their sins.-Afterwards Pharaoh consented to let the men go, if they would leave the women and children, Exodus 10:8-10. And then after that, when God's hand was yet harder upon him, he consented that they should go, even women and children, as well as men, provided they would leave their cattle behind! But he was not willing to let them go, and all that they had, Exodus 10:24. So it oftentimes is with sinners; they are willing to part with some of their sins, but not all; they are brought to part with the more gross acts of sin, but not to part with their lusts, in lesser indulgencies of them. Whereas we must part with all our sins, little and great; and all that belongs to them, men, women, children, and cattle; they must be let go, with "their young, and with their old, with their sons, and with their daughters, with their flocks, and with their herds, there must not be a hoof left behind;" as Moses told Pharaoh, with respect to the children of Israel. At last, when it came to extremity, Pharaoh consented to let the people all go, and all that they had; but he was not steadfastly of that mind, he soon repented and pursued after them again, and the reason was, that those lusts of pride and covetousness that were gratified by Pharaoh's dominion over the people, and the gains of their service, were never really mortified in him, but only violently restrained. And thus, being guilty of backsliding, after his seeming compliance with God's commands, he was destroyed without remedy. Thus there may be a forced parting with ways of disobedience to the commands of God, that may seem to be universal, as to what appears for a little season; but because it is a mere force, without the mortification of the inward principle of sin, they will not persevere in it; but will return as the dog to his vomit; and so bring on themselves dreadful and remediless destruction. There were many false disciples in Christ's time,

that followed him for a while; but none of them followed him to the end; but some on one occasion, and some on another, went back and walked no more with him.["The counterfeit and common grace of foolish virgins after some time of glorious profession, will certainly go out and be quite spent. It consumes in the using, and shining, and burning-Men that have been most forward, decay: their gifts decay, life decays. It is so, after some time of profession: for at first, it rather grows than decays and withers, but afterwards they have enough of it, it withers and dies. The spirit of God comes upon many hypocrites, in abundant and plentiful measure of awakening grace: it comes upon them, as it did upon Balaam, and as it is in overflowing waters, which spread far, and grow very deep, and fill many empty places. Though it doth come upon them so, yet it doth never rest within, so as to dwell there, to take up an eternal mansion for himself.-Hence it doth decay by little and little, until at last it is quite gone. As ponds filled with rain water, which comes upon them; not spring water, that riseth up within then; it dries up by little and little until quite dry." Shepard's Parable, Part II. p. 58, 59.] From what has been said, it is manifest, that Christian practice, or a holy life, is a great and distinguishing sign of true and saving grace. But I may go farther, and assert, that it is the chief of all the signs of grace, both as an evidence of the sincerity of professors unto others, and also to their own consciences. But then it is necessary that this be rightly taken, and that it be well understood and observed, in what sense and manner Christian practice is the greatest sign of grace. Therefore to set this matter in a clear light, I will endeavor particularly and distinctly to prove, that Christian practice is the principal sign by which Christians are to judge, both of their own and others' sincerity of godliness; withal observing some things that are needful to be particularly noted, in order to a right understanding of this matter.

1. I shall consider Christian practice and holy life, as a manifestation and sign of the sincerity of a professing Christian, to the eye of his neighbors and brethren. And that this is the chief sign of grace in this respect, is very evident from the word of God. Christ, who knew best how to give us rules to judge of others, has repeated it and inculcated it, that we should know them by their fruits: Matthew 7:16, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And then, after arguing the point, and giving clear reasons why it must needs be, that men's fruits must be the chief evidence of what sort they are, in the following verses, he closes by repeating the assertion, Matthew 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Again, Matthew 12:33, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt." As much as to say, it is a very absurd thing, for any to suppose that the tree is good and yet the fruit bad, that the tree is of one sort, and the fruit of another; for the proper evidence of the nature of the tree is its fruit. Nothing else can be intended by that last clause in the verse, "For the tree is known by its fruit," than that the tree is chiefly known by its fruit, that this is the main and most proper diagnostic by which one tree is distinguished from another. So Luke 6:44, "Every tree is known by his own fruit." Christ nowhere says, Ye shall know the tree by its leaves or flowers, or ye shall know men by their talk, or ye shall know them by the good story they tell of their experiences, or ye shall know them by the manner and air of their speaking, and emphasis and pathos of expression, or by their speaking feelingly, or by making a very great show by abundance of talk, or by many tears and affectionate expressions, or by the affections ye feel in your hearts towards them; but by their fruits shall ye know them; the tree is known by its fruit; every tree is known by its own fruit. And as this is the evidence that Christ has directed us mainly to look at in others, in judging of them, so it is the evidence that Christ has mainly directed us to give to others, whereby they may judge of us: Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in

heaven." Here Christ directs us to manifest our godliness to others. Godliness is as it were a light that shines in the soul. Christ directs that this light not only shine within, but that it should shine out before men, that they may see it. But which way shall this be? It is by our good works. Christ doth not say, that others hearing your good works, your good story, or your pathetical expressions; but "that others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." Doubtless, when Christ gives us a rule how to make our light shine, that others may have evidence of it, his rule is the best that is to be found. And the apostles do mention Christian practice as the principal ground of their esteem of persons as true Christians. As the Apostle Paul, in Hebrews 6:1-20. There the apostle, in the beginning of the chapter, speaks of them that have great common illuminations, that have "been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, that afterwards fall away, and are like barren ground, that is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned;" and then immediately adds in Hebrews 6:9 (expressing his charity for the Christian Hebrews, as having that saving grace, which is better then all these common illuminations), "but beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And then, in the next verse, he tells them what was the reason he had such good thoughts of them: he does not say, that it was because they had given him a good account of a work of God upon their souls, and talked very experimentally; but it was their work and labor of love; "for God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." And the same apostle speaks of a faithful serving of God in practice, as the proper proof to others of men’s loving Christ above all, and preferring his honor to their private interest: Php 2:21-22, "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s; but ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel." So the Apostle John expresses the same, as the ground of his good opinion of Gaius, 3 John 1:3-6, "For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee." But how did the brethren testify of the truth that was in Gaius? And how did the apostle judge of the truth that was in him? It was not because they testified that he had given them a good account of the steps of his experiences, and talked lake one that felt what he said, and had the very language of a Christian, but they testified that he walked in the truth; as it follows, "even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church." Thus the apostle explains what the brethren had borne witness of when they came and testified of his walking in the truth. And the apostle seems in this same place, to give it as a rule to Gaius how he should judge of others; in 3 John 1:10, he mentions one Diotrephes, that did not carry himself well, and led away others after him; and then in 1 John 3:11, he directs Gaius to beware of such, and not to follow them; and gives him a rule whereby he may know them, exactly agreeable to that rule Christ had given before, "by their fruits ye shall know them;" says the apostle, "beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good, is of God; but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." And I would further observe, that the Apostle James, expressly comparing that way of showing others our faith and Christianity by our practice or works, with other ways of showing our faith without works, or not by works, does plainly and abundantly prefer the former: James 2:18, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." A manifestation of our faith without works, or in a way

diverse from works, is a manifestation of it in words, whereby a man professes faith. As the apostle says, James 2:14, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith?" Therefore here are two ways of manifesting to our neighbor what is in our hearts; one by what we say, and the other by what we do. But the apostle abundantly prefers the latter as the best evidence. Now certainly all accounts we give of ourselves in words, our saying that we have faith, and that we are converted, and telling the manner how we came to have faith, and the steps by which it was wrought, and the discoveries and experiences that accompany it, are still but manifesting our faith by what we say; it is but showing our faith by our words; which the apostle speaks of as falling vastly short of manifesting of it by what we do, and showing our faith by our works. And as the Scripture plainly teaches, that practice is the best evidence of the sincerity of professing Christians; so reason teaches the same thing. Reason shows, that men's deeds are better and more faithful interpreters of their minds, than their words. The common sense of all mankind, through all ages and nations, teaches them to judge of men's hearts chiefly by their practice, in other matters; as, whether a man be a loyal subject, a true lover, a dutiful child, or a faithful servant. If a man profess a great deal of love and friendship to another, reason teaches all men, that such a profession is not so great an evidence of his being a real and hearty friend, as his appearing a friend in deeds; being faithful and constant to his friend in prosperity and adversity, ready to lay out himself, and deny himself, and suffer in his personal interest, to do him a kindness. A wise man will trust to such evidences of the sincerity of friendship, further than a thousand earnest professions and solemn declarations, and most affectionate expressions of friendship in words. And there is equal reason why practice should also be looked upon as the best evidence of friendship towards Christ. Reason says the same that Christ said, in John 14:21, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Thus if we see a man, who in the course of his life seems to follow and imitate Christ and greatly to exert and deny himself for the honor of Christ, and to promote his kingdom and interest in the world; reason teaches, that this is an evidence of love to Christ, more to be depended on, than if a man only says he has love to Christ, and tells of the inward experiences he has had of love to him, what strong love he felt, and how his heart was drawn out in love at such and such a time, when it may be there appears but little imitation of Christ in his behavior and he seems backward to do any great matter for him, or to put himself out of his way for the promoting of his kingdom, but seems to be apt to excuse himself whenever he is called to deny himself for Christ. So if a man, in declaring his experiences, tells how he found his heart weaned from the world, and saw the vanity of it, so that all looked as nothing to him, at such and such times, and professes that he gives up all to God, and calls heaven and earth to witness to it; but yet in has practice is violent in pursuing the world, and what he gets he keeps close, is exceeding loth to part with much of it to charitable and pious uses, it comes from him almost like his heart's blood. But there is another professing Christian, that says not a great deal, yet in his behavior appears ready at all times to forsake the world, whenever it stands in the way of his duty, and is free to part with it at any time to promote religion and the good of his fellow creatures. Reason teaches, that the latter gives far the most credible manifestation of a heart weaned from the world. And if a man appears to walk humbly before God and men, and to be of a conversation that savors of a broken heart, appearing patient and resigned to God under affliction, and meek in his behavior amongst men; this is a better evidence of humiliation, than if a person only tells how great a sense he had of his own unworthiness, how he was brought to lie in the dust, and was quite emptied of himself, and saw himself nothing and

all overfilthy and abominable &c. &c., but yet acts as if he looked upon himself one of the first and best of saints, and by just right the head of all the Christians in the town, and is assuming, self-willed, and impatient of the least contradiction or opposition; we may be assured in such a case, that a man's practice comes from a lower place in his heart than his profession. So (to mention no more instances) if a professor of Christianity manifests in his behavior a pitiful tender spirit towards others in calamity, ready to bear their burdens with them, willing to spend his substance for them, and to suffer many inconveniences in his worldly interest to promote the good of others' souls and bodies; is not this a more credible manifestation of a spirit of love to men, than only a man's telling what love he felt to others at certain times, how he pitied their souls, how his soul was in travail for them, and how he felt hearty love and pity to his enemies; when in his behavior he seems to be of a very selfish spirit, close and niggardly, all for himself, and none for his neighbors and perhaps envious and contentious? Persons in a pang of affection may think they have a willingness of heart for great things, to do much and to suffer much, and so may profess it very earnestly and confidently, when really their hearts are far from it. Thus many in their affectionate pangs, have thought themselves willing to be damned eternally for the glory of God. Passing affections easily produce words; and words are cheap; and godliness is more easily feigned in words than in actions. Christian practice is a costly, laborious thing. The self-denial that is required of Christians, and the narrowness of the way that leads to life, does not consist in words, but in practice. Hypocrites may much more easily be brought to talk like saints, than to act like saints.

Thus it is plain, that Christian practice is the best sign or manifestation of the true godliness of a professing Christian, to the eye of his neighbors. But then the following things should be well observed, that this matter may be rightly understood.

First, it must be observed, that when the Scripture speaks of Christian practice, as the best evidence to others, of sincerity and truth of grace, a profession of Christianity is not excluded, but supposed. The rules mentioned, were rules given to the followers of Christ, to guide them in their thoughts of professing Christians, and those that offered themselves as some of their society, whereby they might judge of the truth of their pretenses, and the sincerity of the profession they made; and not for the trial of Heathens, or those that made no pretense to Christianity, and that Christians had nothing to do with. This is as plain as is possible in that great rule which Christ gives in Matthew 7:1-29, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He there gives a rule how to judge of those that professed to be Christians, yea, that made a very high profession, false prophets, "who came in sheep's clothing," as Matthew 7:15. So it is also with that of the Apostle James, James 2:18, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." It is evident, that both these sorts of persons, offering to give these diverse evidences of their faith, are professors of faith: this is implied in their offering each of them to give evidences of the faith they professed. And it is evident by the preceding verses, that the apostle is speaking of professors of faith in Jesus Christ. So it is very plain, that the Apostle John, in those passages that have been observed in his third epistle, is speaking of professing Christians. Though in these rules, the Christian practice of professors be spoken of as the greatest and most distinguishing sign of their sincerity in their profession, much more evidential than their profession itself; yet a profession of Christianity is plainly presupposed: it is not the main thing in the evidence, nor anything distinguishing in it; yet it is a thing requisite and necessary in it. As the having an animal body, is

not anything distinguishing of a man, from other creatures, and is not the main thing in the evidence of human nature, yet it is a thing requisite and necessary in the evidence. So that if any man should say plainly that he was not a Christian, and did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God, or a person sent of God; these rules of Christ and his apostles do not at all oblige us to look upon him as a sincere Christian, let his visible practice and virtues be what they will. And not only do these rules take no place with respect to a man that explicitly denies Christianity, and is a professed Deist, Jew, Heathen, or open Infidel; but also with respect to a man that only forbears to make a profession of Christianity; because these rules were given us to judge of professing Christians only: fruits must be joined with open flowers; bells and pomegranates go together. But here will naturally arise this inquiry, viz., when may a man be said to profess Christianity, or what profession may properly be called a profession of Christianity?

I answer, in two things.

1. In order to a man's being properly said to make a profession of Christianity, there must undoubtedly be a profession of all that is necessary to his being a Christian, or of so much as belongs to the essence of Christianity. Whatsoever is essential in Christianity itself, the profession of that is essential in the profession of Christianity. The profession must be of the thing professed. For a man to profess Christianity, is for him to declare that he has it. And therefore so much as belongs to a thing, so as to be necessary in order to its being truly denominated that thing; so much is essential to the declaration of that thing, in order to its being truly denominated a declaration of that thing if we take only a part of Christianity, and leave out a part that is essential to it, what we take is not Christianity; because something that is of the essence of it is wanting. So if we profess only a part, and leave out a part that is essential, that which we profess is not Christianity. Thus, in order to a profession of Christianity, we must profess that we believe that Jesus is the Messiah for this reason, because such a belief is essential to Christianity. And so we must profess, either expressly or implicitly, that Jesus satisfied for our sins, and other essential doctrines of the gospel, because a belief of these things also is essential to Christianity. But there are other things as essential to religion, as an orthodox belief; which it is therefore as necessary that we should profess, in order to our being truly said to profess Christianity. Thus it is essential to Christianity that we repent of our sins, that we be convinced of our own sinfulness, and that we are sensible we have justly exposed ourselves to God's wrath, and that our hearts do renounce all sin, and that we do with our whole hearts embrace Christ as our only Savior; and that we love him above all, and are willing for his sake to forsake all, and that we do give up ourselves to be entirely and forever his, &c. Such things as these do as much belong to the essence of Christianity, as the belief of any of the doctrines of the gospel: and therefore the profession of them does as much belong to a Christian profession. Not that in order to a being professing Christians, it is necessary that there should be an explicit profession of every individual thing that belongs to Christian grace or virtue: but certainly, there must be a profession, either express or implicit, of what is of the essence of religion. And as to those things that Christians should express in their profession, we ought to be guided by the precepts of God's word or by Scripture examples of public professions of religion, God's people have made from time to time. Thus they ought to profess their repentance of sin: as of old, when persons were initiated as professors, they came confessing their sins, manifesting their humiliation for sin, Matthew 3:6. And the baptism they were baptized with, was called the baptism of repentance, Mark 1:4. And John, when he had baptized them, exhorted them

to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, Matthew 3:8, i.e., agreeable to that repentance which they had professed; encouraging them that if they did so, they should escape the wrath to come, and be gathered as wheat into God's garner, Matthew 3:7-10, Matthew 3:12. So the Apostle Peter says to the Jews, Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized;" which shows, that repentance is a qualification that must be visible in order to baptism; and therefore ought to be publicly professed. So when the Jews that returned from captivity, entered publicly into covenant, it was with confession or public confession of repentance of their sins, Nehemiah 9:2. This profession of repentance should include or imply a profession of conviction, that God would be just in our damnation: see Nehemiah 9:33, together with Nehemiah 9:35, and the beginning of the next chapter. They should profess their faith in Jesus Christ, and that they embrace Christ, and rely upon him as their Savior, with their whole hearts, and that they do joyfully entertain the gospel of Christ. Thus Philip, in order to baptizing the eunuch, required that he should profess that he believed with all his heart: and they that were received as visible Christians, at that great outpouring of the Spirit, which began at the day of Pentecost, appeared gladly to receive the gospel: Acts 2:41, "Then they that gladly received the word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." They should profess that they rely on Christ's righteousness only, and strength; and that they are devoted to him, as their only Lord and Savior, and that they rejoice in him as their only righteousness and portion. It is foretold, that all nations shall be brought publicly to make this profession, Isaiah 45:29, to the end: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." They should profess to give up themselves entirely to Christ, and to God through him; as the children of Israel, when they publicly recognized their covenant with God: Deuteronomy 26:17, "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice." They ought to profess a willingness of heart to embrace religion with all its difficulties, and to walk in a way of obedience to God universally and perseveringly, Exodus 19:8, and Exodus 24:3, Exodus 24:7, Deuteronomy 26:16-18, 2 Kings 23:3, Nehemiah 10:28-29, Psalms 119:57, Psalms 119:106. They ought to profess, that all their hearts and souls are in these engagements to be the Lord's and forever to serve him, 2 Chronicles 15:12-14. God's people swearing to God, and swearing by his name, or to his name, as it might be rendered (by which seems to be signified their solemnly giving up themselves to him in covenant, and vowing to receive him as their God, and to be entirely his, to obey and serve him), is spoken of as a duty to be performed by all God's visible Israel, Deuteronomy 6:13, and Deuteronomy 10:20, Psalms 63:11, Isaiah 19:18, Isaiah 14:23-24, compared with Romans 14:11, and Php 2:10-11, Isaiah 48:1-2, and Isaiah 65:15-16, Jeremiah 4:2, and Jeremiah 5:7, and Jeremiah 12:16, Hosea 4:16, and Hosea 10:4. Therefore, in order to persons being entitled to full esteem and charity, with their neighbors, as being sincere professors of Christianity; by those forementioned rules of Christ and his apostles, there must be a visibly holy life, with a profession, either expressing, or plainly implying such things as those which have been now mentioned. We are to know them by their fruits, that is, we are by their fruits to know whether they be what they profess to be; not that we are to know by their fruits, that they have something in them, they do not so much as pretend to.

01.13. PART III(h)

And moreover,

2. That profession of these things, which is properly called a Christian profession, and which must be joined with Christian practice, in order to persons being entitled to the benefit of those rules, must be made (as to what appears) understandingly: that is, they must be persons that appear to have been so far instructed in the principles of religion, as to be in an ordinary capacity to understand the proper import of what is expressed in their profession. For sounds are no significations or declarations of any thing, any further than men understand the meaning of their own sounds. But in order to persons making a proper profession of Christianity, such as the Scripture directs to and such as the followers of Christ should require, in order to the acceptance of the professors with full charity, as of their society; it is not necessary they should give an account of the particular steps and method by which the Holy Spirit, sensibly to them, wrought and brought about those great essential things of Christianity in their hearts. There is no footstep in the Scripture of any such way of the apostles, or primitive ministers and Christians requiring any such relation, in order to their receiving and treating others as their Christian brethren, to all intents and purposes, or of their first examining them, concerning the particular method and order of their experiences. They required of them a profession of the things wrought; but no account of the manner of working was required of them. Nor is there the least shadow in the Scripture of any such custom in the church of God from Adam to the death of the Apostle John.

I am far from saying, that it is not requisite that persons should give any sort of account of their experiences to their brethren. For persons to profess those things wherein the essence of Christianity lies, is the same thing as to profess that they experience those things. Thus for persons solemnly to profess, that, in a full conviction of their own utter sinfulness, misery, and impotence, and totally undone state as in themselves, and their just desert of God’s utter rejection and eternal wrath, and the utter insufficiency of their own righteousness, or anything in them, to satisfy divine justice, or recommend them to God’s favor; they do entirely depend on the Lord Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction and righteousness; that they do with all their hearts believe the truth of the gospel of Christ: and that in a full conviction of his sufficiency and perfect excellency as a Savior, as exhibited in the gospel, they do with their whole souls cleave to him, and acquiesce in him, as the refuge and rest of their souls, and fountain of their comfort; that they repent of their sins, and utterly renounce all sin, and give up themselves wholly to Christ, willingly subjecting themselves to him as their King; that they give him their hearts and their whole man; and are willing and resolved to have God for their whole and everlasting portion; and in a dependence on his promises of a future eternal enjoyment of him in heaven, to renounce all the enjoyments of this vain world, selling all for this great treasure and future inheritance, and to comply with every command of God, even the most difficult and self-denying, and devote their whole lives to God’s service; and that in forgiveness of those that have injured them, and a general benevolence to mankind, their hearts are united to the people of Jesus Christ as their people, to cleave to them and love them as their brethren, and worship and serve God, and follow Christ in union and

fellowship with them, being willing and resolved to perform all those duties that belong to them, as members of the same family of God and mystical body of Christ: I say, for persons solemnly to profess such things as these, as in the presence of God, is the same thing as to profess that they are conscious to, or do experience such things in their hearts. Nor is it what I suppose, that persons giving an account of their experience of particular exercises of grace, with the times and circumstances, gives no advantage to others in forming a judgment of their state; or that persons may not fitly be inquired of concerning these in some cases, especially cases of great importance, where all possible satisfaction concerning persons' piety is especially to be desired and sought after, as in the case of ordination or approbation of a minister. It may give advantage in forming a judgment, in several respects; and among others, in this, that hereby we may be better satisfied, that the professor speaks honestly and understandingly, in what he professes; and that he does not make the profession in mere formality. In order to a profession of Christianity being accepted to any purpose, there ought to be good reason, from the circumstances of the profession, to think, that the professor does not make such a profession out of a mere customary compliance with a prescribed form, using words without any distinct meaning, or in a very lax and ambiguous manner, as confessions of faith are often subscribed; but that the professor understandingly and honestly signifies what he is conscious of in his own heart; otherwise his profession can be of no significance, and no more to be regarded than the sound of things without life. But indeed (whatever advantage an account of particular exercises may give in judging of this) it must be owned, that the professor having been previously thoroughly instructed by his teachers, and given good proof of his sufficient knowledge, together with a practice agreeable to his profession, is the best evidence of this. Nor do I suppose, but that, if a person that is inquired of about particular passages, times, and circumstances of his Christian experiences among other things, seems to be able to give a distinct account of the manner of his first conversion, in such a method as has been frequently observable in true conversion, so that things seem sensibly and distinctly to follow one another, in the order of time, according to the order of nature; it is an illustrating circumstance, that among other things adds luster to the evidence he gives his brethren of the truth of his experiences. But the thing that I speak of as unscriptural, is the insisting on a particular account of the distinct method and steps, wherein the Spirit of God did sensibly proceed, in first bringing the soul into a state of salvation, as a thing requisite in order to receiving a professor into full charity as a real Christian; or so, as for the want of such relation, to disregard other things in the evidence persons give to their neighbors of their Christianity, that are vastly more important and essential.

Secondly, That we may rightly understand how Christian practice is the greatest evidence that others can have of the sincerity of a professing Christian, it is needful that what was said before, showing what Christian practice is, should be borne in mind; and that it should be considered how far this may be visible to others. Merely that a professor of Christianity is what is commonly called an honest man, and a moral man (i.e., we have no special transgression or iniquity to charge him with, that might bring a blot on his character), is no great evidence of the sincerity of his profession. This is not making his light shine before men. This is not that work and labor of love showed towards Christ's name, which gave the apostle such persuasion of the sincerity of the professing Hebrews, Hebrews 6:9-10. It may be so, that we may see nothing in a man, but that he may be a good man; there may appear nothing in his life and conversation inconsistent with his being godly, and yet neither may there be any great positive evidence that he is so. But there may be great positive appearance of holiness in men's visible behavior. Their life may appear to be a

life of the service of God: they may appear to follow the example of Jesus Christ, and come up in a great measure to those excellent rules in Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, and Matthew 7:1-29, and Romans 12:1-21, and many other parts of the New Testament: there may be a great appearance of their being universal in their obedience to Christ's commands and the rules of the gospel. They may appear to be universal in the performance of the duties of the first table, manifesting the fear and love of God; and also universal in fulfilling rules of love to men, love to saints, and love to enemies: rules of meekness and forgiveness rules of mercy and charity, and looking not only at our own things but also at the things of others; rules of doing good to men's souls and bodies, to particular persons and to the public; rules of temperance and mortification, and of a humble conversation; rules of bridling the tongue, and improving it to glorify God and bless men, showing that in their tongues is the law of kindness. They may appear to walk as Christians, in all places, and at all seasons, in the house of God, and in their families, and among their neighbors, on Sabbath days and every day, in business and in conversation, towards friends and enemies, towards superiors, inferiors, and equals. Persons in their visible walk may appear to be very earnestly engaged in the service of God and mankind, much to labor and lay out themselves in this work of a Christian, and to be very constant and steadfast in it, under all circumstances and temptations. There may be great manifestations of a spirit to deny themselves, and suffer for God and Christ, and the interest of religion, and the benefit of their brethren. There may be great appearances in a man's walk, of a disposition to forsake any thing, rather than to forsake Christ, and to make everything give place to his honor. There may be great manifestations in a man's behavior of such religion as this, being his element, and of his placing the delight and happiness of his life in it; and his conversation may be such, that he may carry with him a sweet odor of Christian graces and heavenly dispositions, wherever he goes. And when it is thus in the professors of Christianity, here is an evidence to others of their sincerity in their profession, to which all other manifestations are not worthy to be compared.

There is doubtless a great variety in the degrees of evidence that professors do exhibit of their sincerity, in their life and practice; as there is a variety in the fairness and clearness of accounts persons give of the manner and method of their experiences: but undoubtedly such a manifestation as has been described of a Christian spirit in practice, is vastly beyond the fairest and brightest story of particular steps and passages of experience that ever was told. And in general, a manifestation of the sincerity of a Christian profession in practice, is far better than a relation of experiences. But yet,

Thirdly, It must be noted, agreeable to what was formerly observed, that no external manifestations and outward appearances whatsoever, that are visible to the world, are infallible evidences of grace. These manifestations that have been mentioned, are the best that mankind can have; and they are such as do oblige Christians entirely to embrace professors as saints, and love them and rejoice in them as the children of God, and are sufficient to give them as great satisfaction concerning them, as ever is needful to guide them in their conduct, or for any purpose that needs to be answered in this world. But nothing that appears to them in their neighbor, can be sufficient to beget an absolute certainty concerning the state of his soul: for they see not his heart, nor can they see all his external behavior; for much of it is in secret, and hid from the eye of the world; and it is impossible certainly to determine how far a man maw go in many external appearances and imitations of grace, from other principles. Though undoubtedly, if others could

see so much of what belongs to men's practice, as their own consciences may see of it, it might be an infallible evidence of their state, as will appear from what follows.

Having thus considered Christian practice as the best evidence of the sincerity of professors to others, I now proceed,

2. To observe, that the Scripture also speaks of Christian practice as a distinguishing and sure evidence of grace to persons' own consciences. This is very plain in 1 John 2:3 : "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And the testimony of our consciences, with respect to our good deeds, is spoken of as that which may give us assurance of our own godliness, 1 John 3:18-19 : "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." And the Apostle Paul, in Hebrews 6:1-20, speaks of the work and labor of love, of the Christian Hebrews, as that which both gave him a persuasion that they had something above the highest common illuminations, and also as that evidence which tended to give them the highest assurance of hope concerning themselves, Hebrews 6:9, &c.: "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to his saints, and do minister. And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end." So the apostle directs the Galatians to examine their behavior or practice, that they might have rejoicing in themselves in their own happy state, Galatians 6:4 : "Let every man prove his own work, so shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another." And the psalmist says, Psalms 119:6, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments;" i.e., then I shall be bold, and assured, and steadfast in my hope. And in that of our Savior, Matthew 7:19-20 : "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Though Christ gives this, firstly, as a rule by which we should judge of others, yet in the words that next follow he plainly shows, that he intends it also as a rule by which we would judge ourselves: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall Enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, &c.-And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.-And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." I shall have occasion to mention other texts to show the same thing, hereafter. But for the greater clearness in this matter, I would, first, show how Christian practice, doing good works, or keeping Christ's commandments, is to be taken, when the Scripture represents it as a sure sign to our own consciences, that we are real Christians. And secondly, will prove, that this is the chief of all evidences that men can have of their own sincere godliness.

First, I would show how Christian practice, or keeping Christ's commandments, is to be taken, when the Scripture represents it as a sure evidence to our own consciences, that we are sincere Christians. And here I would observe, that we cannot reasonably suppose, that when the Scripture in this case speaks of good works, good fruit, and keeping Christ's commandments, it has respect merely to what is external, or the motion and action of the body without including anything else, having no respect to any aim or intention of the agent, or any act of his understanding or will. For

consider men's actions so, and they are no more good works or acts of obedience, than the regular motions of a clock; nor are they considered as the actions of the man, nor any human actions at all. The actions of the body, taken thus, are neither acts of obedience nor disobedience, any more than the motions of the body in a convulsion. But the obedience and fruit that is spoken of, is the obedience and fruit of the man; and therefore not only the acts of the body, but the obedience of the soul, consisting in the acts and practice of the soul. Not that I suppose, that when the Scripture speaks, in this case, of gracious works, and fruit and practice, that in these expressions are included all inward piety and holiness of heart, both principle and exercise, both spirit and practice: because then, in these things being given as signs of a gracious principle in the heart, the same thing would be given as a sign of itself, and there would be no distinction between root and fruit. But only the gracious exercise, and holy act of the soul is meant, and given as the sign of the holy principle and good estate. Neither is every kind of inward exercise of grace meant; but the practical exercise, that exercise of the soul, and exertion of inward holiness, which there is in an obediential act; or that exertion of the mind, and act of grace which issues and terminates in what they call the imperate acts of the will; in which something is directed and commanded by the soul to be done, and brought to pass in practice.

Here, for a clearer understanding, I would observe, that there are two kinds of exercises of grace. 1. There are those that some call immanent acts, that is, those exercises of grace that remain within the soul, that begin and are terminated there, without any immediate relation to anything to be done outwardly, or to be brought to pass in practice. Such are the exercises of grace, which the saints often have in contemplation; when the exercise that is in the heart does not directly proceed to, or terminate in anything beyond the thoughts of the mind; however they may tend to practice (as all exercises of grace do) more remotely. 2. There is another kind of acts of grace, that are more strictly called practical, or effective exercises, because they immediately respect something to be done. They are the exertions of grace in the commanding acts of the will, directing the outward actions. As when a saint gives a cup of cold water to a disciple, in and from the exercise of the grace of charity; or voluntarily endures persecution in the way of his duty; immediately from the exercise of a supreme love to Christ. Here is the exertion of grace producing its effect in outward actions. These exercises of grace are practical and productive of good works, not only in this sense, that they are of a productive nature (for so are all exercises of true grace), but they are the producing acts. This is properly the exercise of grace in the act of the will; and this is properly the practice of the soul. And the soul is the immediate actor of no other practice but this; the motions of the body follow from the laws of union between the soul and body, which God, and not the soul, has fixed and does maintain. The act of the soul and the exercise of grace, that is exerted in the performance of a good work, is the good work itself, so far as the soul is concerned in it, or so far as it is the soul's good work. The determinations of the will are indeed our very actions, so far as they are properly ours, as Dr. Doddridge observes.[Scripture Doctrine of Salvation, Sermon I. p. 11] In this practice of the soul is included the aim and intention of the soul, which is the agent. For not only should we not look on the motions of a statue, doing justice or distributing alms by clockwork, as any acts of obedience to Christ in that statue; but neither would anybody call the voluntary actions of a man, externally and materially agreeable to a command of Christ, by the name of obedience to Christ, if he had never heard of Christ, or any of his commands, or had no thought of his commands in what he did. If the acts of obedience and good fruit spoken of, be looked upon, not as mere motions of the body, but as acts of the soul; the whole exercise of the

spirit of the mind in the action must be taken in, with the end acted for, and the respect the soul then has to God, &c., otherwise they are no acts of denial of ourselves, or obedience to God, or service done to him, but something else. Such effective exercises of grace as these that I have now described, many of the Martyrs have experienced in a high degree. And all true saints live a life of such acts of grace as these; as they all live a life of gracious works, of which these operative exertions of grace are the life and soul. And this is the obedience and fruit that God mainly looks at, as he looks at the soul more than the body; as much as the soul, in the constitution of the human nature, is the superior part. As God looks at the obedience and practice of the man, he looks at the practice of the soul; for the soul is the man in God's sight, "for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for he looketh on the heart." And thus it is that obedience, good works, good fruits, are to be taken, when given in Scripture as a sure evidence to our own consciences of a true principle of grace: even as including the obedience and practice of the soul, as preceding and governing the actions of the body. When practice is given in Scripture as the main evidence to others of our true Christianity, then is meant that in our practice which is visible to them, even our outward actions: but when practice is given as a sure evidence of our real Christianity to our own consciences, then is meant that in our practice which is visible to our own consciences; which is not only the motion of our bodies, but the exertion of the soul, which directs and commands that motion; which is more directly and immediately under the view of our own consciences, than the act of the body. And that this is the intent of the Scripture, not only does the nature and reason of the thing show, but it is plain by the Scripture itself. Thus it is evident that when Christ, at the conclusion of his sermon on the mount, speaks of doing or practicing those sayings of his, as the grand sign of professors being true disciples, without which he likens them to a man that built his house upon the sand, and with which, to a man that built his house upon a rock; he has a respect, not only to the outward behavior, but to the inward exercise of the mind in that behavior: as is evident by observing what those preceding sayings of his are that he refers to, when he speaks of our doing or practicing them; and we shall find they are such as these: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are the meek; blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; blessed are the merciful; blessed are the pure in heart; whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, &c.; whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, &c.; love your enemies; take no thought for your life," and others of the like nature, which imply inward exercises: and when Christ says, John 14:2, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" he has evidently a special respect to that command several times repeated in the same discourse (which he calls, by way of eminence, his commandment), that they should love one another as he had loved them (see John 13:34, and John 15:10, John 15:12-14). But this command respects chiefly an exercise of the mind or heart, though exerted in practice. So when the Apostle John says, 1 John 2:3, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments;" he has plainly a principal respect to the same command, as appears by what follows, 1 John 2:7-11, and 2 John 1:5-6; and when we are told in Scripture that men shall at the last day be judged according to their works, and all shall receive according to the things done in the body, it is not to be understood only of outward acts; for if so, why is God so often spoken of as searching the hearts and trying the reins, "that he may render to everyone according to his works?" As Revelation 2:23, "And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto everyone according to his works." Jeremiah 17:9-10, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." But if

by his ways, and the fruit of his doings, is meant only the actions of his body, what need of searching the heart and reins in order to know them? Hezekiah in his sickness pleads his practice as an evidence of his title to God's favor, as including not only his outward actions, but what was in his heart: Isaiah 38:3, "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart."

Though in this great evidence of sincerity that the Scripture gives us, what is inward is of greatest importance; yet what is outward is included and intended, as connected with the practical exertion of grace in the will, directing and commanding the actions of the body. And hereby are effectually cut off all pretensions that any man can have to evidences of godliness, who externally lives wickedly; because the great evidence lies in that inward exercise and practice of the soul, which consists in the acts of the will, commanding outward acts. But it is known, that these commanding acts of the will are not one way and the actions of the bodily organs another: for the unalterable law of nature is, that they should be united as long as soul and body are united, and the organs are not so destroyed as to be incapable of those motions that the soul commands. Thus it would be ridiculous for a man to plead, that the commanding act of his will was to go to the public worship, while his feet carry him to a tavern or brothel-house; or that the commanding act of his will was to give such a piece of money he had in his hand to a poor beggar, while his hand at the same instant kept it back, and held it fast.

Secondly, I proceed to show, that Christian practice, taken in the sense that has been explained, is the chief of all the evidences of a saving sincerity in religion, to the consciences of the professors of it; much to be preferred to the method of the first convictions, enlightenings, and comforts in conversion, or any immanent discoveries or exercises of grace whatsoever, that begin and end in contemplation.["Look upon John, Christ's beloved disciple and bosom companion! He had received the anointing to know him that is true, and he knew that he knew him, 1 John 2:3. But how did he know that? He might be deceived; (as it is strange to see what a melancholy fancy will do, and the effects of it; as honest men are reputed to have weak brains, and never saw the depths of the secrets of God;) what is his last proof? 'Because we keep his commandments.'" Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 131.] The evidence of this appears by the following arguments.

ARGUMENT I.-Reason plainly shows, that those things which put it to the proof what men will actually cleave to and prefer in their practice, when left to follow their own choice and inclinations, are the proper trial what they do really prefer in their hearts. Sincerity in religion, as has been observed already, consists in setting God highest in the heart, in choosing him before other things, in having a heart to sell all for Christ, &c. But a man's actions are the proper trial what a man's heart prefers. As for instance, when it is so that God and other things come to stand in competition, God is as it were set before a man on one hand, and his worldly interest or pleasure on the other (as it often is so in the course of a man's life); his behavior in such case, in actually cleaving to the one and forsaking the other, is the proper trial which he prefers. Sincerity consists in forsaking all for Christ in heart; but to forsake all for Christ in heart, is the very same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ; but certainly the proper trial whether a man has a heart to forsake all for Christ is his being actually put to it, the having Christ and other things coming in competition, that he must actually or practically cleave to one and forsake the other. To forsake all for Christ in heart, is the same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ when called to it: but the highest proof to ourselves and others, that we have a heart to forsake all for Christ when

called to it, is actually doing it when called to it, or so far as called to it. To follow Christ in heart is to have a heart to follow him. To deny ourselves in heart for Christ, is the same thing as to have a heart to deny ourselves for him in fact. The main and most proper proof of a man's having a heart to any thing, concerning which he is at liberty to follow his own inclinations, and either to do or not to do as he pleases, is his doing of it. When a man is at liberty whether to speak or keep silence, the most proper evidence of his having a heart to speak, is his speaking. When a man is at liberty whether to walk or sit still, the proper proof of his having a heart to walk, is his walking. Godliness consists not in a heart to intend to do the will of God, but in a heart to do it. The children of Israel in the wilderness had the former, of whom we read, Deuteronomy 5:27-29, "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" The people manifested that they had a heart to intend to keep God's commandments, and to be very forward in those intentions; but God manifests, that this was far from being the thing that he desired, wherein true godliness consists, even a heart actually to keep them.

It is therefore exceedingly absurd, and even ridiculous, for any to pretend that they have a good heart, while they live a wicked life, or do not bring forth the fruit of universal holiness in their practice. For it is proved in fact, that such men do not love God above all. It is foolish to dispute against plain fact and experience. Men that live in ways of sin, and yet flatter themselves that they shall go to heaven, or expect to be received hereafter as holy persons, without a holy practice, act as though they expected to make a fool of their Judge. Which is implied in what the apostle says (speaking of men's doing good works and living a holy life, thereby exhibiting evidence of their title to everlasting life), Galatians 6:7 : "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As much as to say, "Do not deceive yourselves with an expectation of reaping life everlasting hereafter, if you do not sow to the Spirit here; it is in vain to think that God will be made a fool of by you, that he will be shammed and baffled with shadows instead of substances, and with vain pretense, instead of that good fruit which he expects, when the contrary to what you pretend appears plainly in your life, before his face." In this manner the word mock is sometimes used in Scripture. Thus Delilah says to Sampson, "behold thou hast mocked me, and told me lies." Judges 16:10, Judges 16:13; i.e., "Thou hast baffled me, as though you would have made a fool of me, as if I might be easily turned off with any vain pretense, instead of the truth." So it is said that Lot, when he told his sons in law that God would destroy that place, "he seemed as one that mocked, to his sons in law," Genesis 19:14; i.e., he seemed as one that would make a game of them, as though they were such credulous fools as to regard such bugbears. But the great Judge, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, will not be mocked or baffled with any pretenses, without a holy life. If in his name men have prophesied and wrought miracles, and have had faith, so that they could remove mountains, and cast out devils, and however high their religious affections have been, however great resemblances they have had of grace, and though their hiding-place has been so dark and deep, that no human skill nor search could find them out, yet if they are workers or practicers of iniquity, they cannot hide their hypocrisy from their Judge: Job 34:22, there is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may

hide themselves." Would a wise prince suffer himself to be fooled and baffled by a subject, who should pretend that he was a loyal subject, and should tell his prince that he had an entire affection to him, and that at such and such a time he had experience of it, and felt his affections strongly working towards him, and should come expecting to be accepted and rewarded by his prince, as one of his best friends on that account, though he lived in rebellion against him, following some pretender to his crown, and from time to time stirring up sedition against him? Or would a master suffer himself to be shammed and gulled by a servant, that should pretend to great experiences of love and honor towards him in his heart, and a great sense of his worthiness and kindness to him, when at the same time he refused to obey him, and he could get no service done by him?

ARGUMENT II.-As reason shows, that those things which occur in the course of life, that put it to the proof whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the proper trial of the uprightness and sincerity of their hearts; so the same are represented as the proper trial of the sincerity of professors in the Scripture. There we find that such things are called by that very name, trials or temptations (which I before observed are both words of the same signification). The things that put it to the proof, whether men will prefer God to other things in practice, are the difficulties of religion, or those things which occur, that make the practice of duty difficult and cross to other principles beside the love of God; because in them, God and other things are both set before men together, for their actual and practical choice; and it comes to this, that we cannot hold to both, but one or the other must be forsaken. And these things are all over the Scripture called by the name of trials or proofs.[2 Corinthians 8:2; Hebrews 11:36; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 4:12; Genesis 22:1; Deuteronomy 8:2, Deuteronomy 8:16; Deuteronomy 13:3; Exodus 15:25; Exodus 16:4; Judges 2:22; Judges 3:1, Judges 3:4; Psalms 66:10-11, Daniel 12:10, Revelation 3:10; Job 23:10; Zechariah 13:9; James 1:12, Revelation 2:10; Luke 8:13; Acts 20:19; James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6.] And they are called by this name, because hereby professors are tried and proved of what sort they be, whether they be really what they profess and appear to be; and because in them, the reality of a supreme love to God is brought to the test of experiment and fact; they are the proper proofs in which it is truly determined by experience, whether men have a thorough disposition of heart to cleave to God or no: Deuteronomy 8:2, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no:" Judges 2:21-22, "I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the nations which Joshua left when he died; that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord." So Judges 3:1, Judges 3:4, and Exodus 16:4. The Scripture, when it calls these difficulties of religion by the name of temptations or trials, explains itself to mean thereby the trial or experiment of their faith: James 1:2-3, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience:" 1 Peter 1:6-7, "Now, for a season ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold," &c. So the Apostle Paul speaks of that expensive duty of parting with our substance to the poor, as the proof of the sincerity of the love of Christians: 2 Corinthians 8:8. And the difficulties of religion are often represented in Scripture, as being the trial of professors, in the same manner that the furnace is the proper trial of gold and silver: Psalms 66:10-11, "Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou has tried us as silver is tried: thou broughtest us into the net, thou laidest affliction upon our loins." Zechariah 13:9, "And I will bring the third part of them through the fire; and I will refine them as

silver is refined; and I will try them as gold is tried." That which has the color and appearance of gold, is put into the furnace to try whether it be what it seems to be, real gold or no. So the difficulties of religion are called trials, because they try those that have the profession and appearance of saints, whether they are what they appear to be, real saints.

If we put true gold into the furnace, we shall find its great value and preciousness: so the truth and inestimable value of the virtues of a true Christian appear when under these trials: 1 Peter 1:7, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory." True and pure gold will come out of the furnace in full weight, so true saints, when tried, come forth as gold, Job 23:10. Christ distinguishes true grace from counterfeit by this, that it is gold tried in the fire, Revelation 3:17-18. So that it is evident, that these things are called trials in Scripture, principally as they try or prove the sincerity of professors. And, from what has now been observed, it is evident that they are the most proper trial or proof of their sincerity; inasmuch as the very meaning of the word trial, as it is ordinarily used in Scripture, is the difficulty occurring in the way of a professor's duty, as the trial or experiment of his sincerity. If trial of sincerity be the proper name of these difficulties of religion, then, doubtless, these difficulties of religion are properly and eminently the trial of sincerity; for they are doubtless eminently what they are called by the Holy Ghost: God gives things their name from that which is eminently their nature. And, if it be so, that these things are the proper and eminent trial, proof, or experiment of the sincerity of professors, then certainly the result of the trial or experiment (that is, persons' behavior or practice under such trials) is the proper and eminent evidence of their sincerity; for they are called trials or proofs, only with regard to the result, and because the effect is eminently the proof or evidence. And this is the most proper proof and evidence to the conscience of those that are the subjects of these trials. For when God is said by these things to try men, and prove them, to see what is in their hearts, and whether they will keep his commandments or no; we are not to understand, that it is for his own information, or that he may obtain evidence himself of their sincerity (for he needs no trials for his information); but chiefly for their conviction, and to exhibit evidence to their consciences.["I am persuaded, as Calvin is, that all the several trials of men are to show them to themselves, and to the world, that they be but counterfeits; and to make saints known to themselves the better, Romans 5:5. Tribulation works trial, and hope, Proverbs 17:3. If you will know whether it will hold weight, the trial will tell you. Shepard's Parable, Part I. p. 191.]

Thus, when God is said to prove Israel by the difficulties they met with in the wilderness, and by the difficulties they met with from their enemies in Canaan, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or no; it must be understood, that it was to discover them to themselves, that they might know what was in their own hearts. So when God tempted or tried Abraham with that difficult command of offering up his son, it was not for his satisfaction, whether he feared God or no, but for Abraham's own greater satisfaction and comfort, and the more clear manifestation of the favor of God to him. When Abraham had proved faithful under this trial, God says to him, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." Which plainly implies, that in this practical exercise of Abraham's grace under this trial, was a clearer evidence of the truth of his grace, than ever was before; and the greatest evidence to Abraham's conscience; because God himself gives it to Abraham as such, for his comfort and rejoicing; and speaks of it to him as what might be the greatest evidence to his conscience of his being upright in the sight of his Judge. Which proves what I say, that holy

practice, under trials, is the highest evidence of the sincerity of professors to their own consciences. And we find that Christ, from time to time, took the same method to convince the consciences of those that pretended friendship to him, and to show them what they were. This was the method he took with the rich young man, Matthew 19:16, &c. He seemed to show a great respect to Christ; he came kneeling to high and called him good Master, and made a great profession of obedience to the commandments; but Christ tried him, by bidding him go and sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and come and take up his cross and follow him, telling him that then he should have treasure in heaven. So he tried another that we read of, Matthew 8:20. He made a great profession of respect to Christ: says he, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. Christ immediately puts his friendship to the proof, by telling him, that the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but that the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. And thus Christ is wont still to try professed disciples in general, in his providence. So the seed sown, in every kind of ground, stony ground, thorny ground, and good ground, which, in all appears alike, when it first springs up; yet is tried, and the difference made to appear, by the burning heat of the sun.

Seeing therefore, that these are the things that God makes use of to try us, it is undoubtedly the surest way for us to pass a right judgment on ourselves, to try ourselves by the same things. These trials of his are not for his information but for ours; therefore we ought to receive our information from thence. The surest way to know our gold, is to look upon it and examine it in God’s furnace, where he tries it for that end, that we may see what it is. If we have a mind to know whether a building stands strong or no, we must look upon it when the wind blows. If we would know whether that which appears in the form of wheat, has the real substance of wheat, or be only chaff, we must observe it when it is winnowed. If we would know whether a staff be strong, or a rotten broken reed, we must observe it when it is leaned on, and weight is borne upon it. If we would weigh ourselves justly, we must weigh ourselves in God’s scales that he makes use of to weigh us.[Dr. Sibbs, in his Bruised Reed, says, "When Christ’s will cometh in competition with any worldly loss or gain, yet, if then, in that particular case, the heart will stoop to Christ, it is a true sign. For the truest trial of the power of grace, is in such particular cases as touch us the nearest for there our corruption maketh the greatest head. When Christ came home to the young man in the gospel, he lost a disciple of him."] These trials, in the course of our practice, are as it were the balances in which our hearts are weighed, or in which Christ and the world, or Christ and his competitors, as to the esteem and regard they have in our hearts are weighed, or are put into opposite scales, by which there is opportunity to see which preponderates. When a man is brought to the dividing of paths, the one of which leads to Christ, and the other to the object of his lusts, to see which way he will go, or is brought, and as it were set between Christ and the world, Christ on the right hand, and the world on the left, so that, if he goes to one, he must leave the other, to see which his heart inclines most to, or which preponderates in his heart; this is just the same thing as laying Christ and the world in two opposite scales; and his going to the one, and leaving the other, is just the same thing as the sinking of one scale, and rising of the other. A man’s practice, therefore, under the trials of God’s providence, is as much the proper evidence of the superior inclination of his heart as the motion of the balance, with different weights, in opposite scales, is the proper experiment of the superior weight.

01.14. PART III(i)

ARGUMENT III.-Another argument, that holy practice, in the sense which has been explained, is the highest kind of evidence of the truth of grace to the consciences of Christians, is, that in practice, grace, in Scripture style, is said to be made perfect, or to be finished. So the Apostle James says, James 2:22, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect" (or finished, as the word in the original properly signifies)?" So the love of God is said to be made perfect, or finished, in keeping his commandments. 1 John 2:4-5, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him: but, whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." The commandment of Christ, which the apostle has especially respect to, when he here speaks of our keeping his commandments, is (as I observed before) that great commandment of his, which respects deeds of love to our brethren, as appears by the following verses. Again, the love of God is said to be perfected in the same sense, chapter 1 John 4:12 : "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." Here, doubtless, the apostle has still respect to loving one another, in the same manner that he had explained in the preceding chapter, speaking of loving one another, as a sign of the love of God, 1 John 4:17-18 : "Whoso hath this world’s goods, and shutteth up his bowels, &c., how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed (or in work) and in truth." By thus loving in work, the apostle says, "The love of God is perfected in us." Grace is said to be perfected or finished in holy practice, as therein it is brought to its proper effect, and to that exercise which is the end of the principle; the tendency and design of grace herein is reached, and its operation completed and crowned. As the tree is made perfect in the fruit; it is not perfected in the seed’s being planted in the ground; it is not perfected in the first quickening of the seed, and in its putting forth root and sprout; nor is it perfected when it comes up out of the ground; nor is it perfected in bringing forth leaves; nor yet in putting forth blossoms: but, when it has brought forth good ripe fruit, when it is perfected, therein it reaches its end, the design of the tree is finished: all that belongs to the tree is completed and brought to its proper effect in the fruit. So is grace in its practical exercises. Grace is said to be made perfect or finished in its work or fruit, in the same manner as it is said of sin, James 1:15, "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Here are three steps; first, sin in its principle or habit, in the being of lust in the heart; and nextly, here is its conceiving, consisting in the immanent exercises of it in the mind; and lastly, here is the fruit that was conceived, actually brought forth in the wicked work and practice. And this the apostle calls the finishing or perfecting of sin: for the word, in the original, is the same that is translated perfected in those forementioned places.

Now certainly, if it be so, if grace be in this manner made perfect in its fruit, if these practical exercises of grace are those exercises wherein grace is brought to its proper effect and end, and the exercises wherein whatsoever belongs to its design, tendency and operation, is completed and crowned; then these exercises must be the highest evidences of grace, above all other exercises. Certainly the proper nature and tendency of every principle must appear best and most fully in its

most perfect exercises, or in those exercises wherein its nature is most completely exerted, and in its tendency most fully answered and crowned in its proper effect and end. If we would see the proper nature of anything whatsoever, and see it in its full distinction from other things; let us look upon it in the finishing of it. The Apostle James says, by works is faith made perfect; and introduces this as an argument to prove, that works are the chief evidence of faith, whereby the sincerity of the professors of faith is justified, James 2:1-26. And the Apostle John, after he had once and again told us that love was made perfect in keeping Christ's commandments, observes, 1 John 4:18. That perfect love casteth out fear; meaning (at least in part) love made perfect in this sense; agreeable to what he had said in the foregoing chapter that, by loving in deed, or work, we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts, 1 John 4:18-19.

ARGUMENT IV.-Another thing which makes it evident, that holy practice is the principal evidence that we ought to make use of in judging both of our own and others' sincerity, is, that this evidence is above all others insisted on in Scripture. A common acquaintance with the Scripture, together with a little attention and observation, will be sufficient to show to anyone that this is ten times more insisted on as a note of true piety, throughout the Scripture, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelations, than anything else. And, in the New Testament, where Christ and his apostles do expressly, and of declared purpose, lay down signs of true godliness, this is almost wholly insisted on. It may be observed, that Christ, and his apostles, do not only often say those things, in their discoursing on the great doctrines of religion, which do show what the nature of true godliness must be, or from whence the nature and signs of it may be inferred by just consequence, and often occasionally mention many things which do appertain to godliness; but they do also often, of set purpose, give signs and marks for the trial of professors, putting them upon trying themselves by the signs they give, introducing what they say, with such like expressions as these: "By this you shall know, that you know God: by this are manifest the children of God, and the children of the devil: he that hath this, builds on a good foundation; he that hath it not, builds on the sand: hereby we shall assure our hearts: he is the man that loveth Christ," &c. But I can find no place, where either Christ or his apostles do, in this manner, give signs of godliness (though the places are many), but where Christian practice is almost the only thing insisted on. Indeed in many of these places, love to the brethren is spoken of as a sign of godliness; and, as I have observed before, there is no one virtuous affection, or disposition, so often expressly spoken of as a sign of true grace, as our having love one to another: but then the Scriptures explain themselves to intend chiefly this love as exercised and expressed in practice, or in deeds of love. So does the Apostle John, who, above all others, insists on love to the brethren as a sign of godliness, most expressly explain himself, in that 1 John 3:14, &c, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us love, not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed (i.e., in deeds of love) and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." So that when the Scripture so much insists on our loving one another, as a great sign of godliness, we are not thereby to understand the immanent workings of affection which men feel one to another, so much as the soul's practicing all the duties of the second table of the law; all which the New Testament tells us again and again, a true love one to another comprehends, Romans 13:8 and Romans 13:10, Galatians 5:14, Matthew 22:39-40 So that, really, there is no place in the New Testament where the declared design is to give signs

of godliness, but that holy practice, and keeping Christ's commandments, is the mark chosen out from all others to be insisted on. Which is an invincible argument, that it is the chief of all the evidences of godliness: unless we suppose that when Christ and his apostles, on design, set themselves about this business of giving signs, by which professing Christians, in all ages, might determine their state; they did not know how to choose signs so well as we could have chosen for them. But, if we make the word of Christ our rule, then undoubtedly those marks which Christ and his apostles did chiefly lay down, and give to us, that we might try ourselves by them, those same marks we ought especially to receive, and chiefly to make use of, in the trial of ourselves.["It is a sure rule," says, Dr. Preston, "that, what the Scriptures bestow much words on, we should have much thoughts on: and what the Holy Ghost urgeth most, we should prize most." Church's Carriage.] And surely those things, which Christ and his apostles chiefly insisted on, in the rules they gave, ministers ought chiefly to insist on in the rules they give. To insist much on those things that the Scripture insists little on, and to insist very little on those things on which the Scripture insists much, is a dangerous thing; because it is going out of God's way, and is to judge ourselves, and guide others, in an unscriptural manner. God knew which way of leading and guiding souls was safest and best for them: he insisted so much on some things, because he knew it to be needful that they should be insisted on; and let other things more alone as a wise God, because he knew it was not best for us, so much to lay the weight of the trial there. As the Sabbath was made for man, so the Scriptures were made for man; and they are, by infinite wisdom, fitted for our use and benefit. We should, therefore, make them our guide in all things, in our thoughts of religion, and of ourselves. And for us to make that great which the Scripture makes little, and that little which the Scripture makes great, tends to give us a monstrous idea of religion; and (at least indirectly and gradually) to lead us wholly away from the right rule, and from a right opinion of ourselves, and to establish delusion and hypocrisy.

ARGUMENT V.-Christian practice is plainly spoken of in the word of God, as the main evidence of the truth of grace, not only to others, but to men's own consciences. It is not only more spoken of and insisted on than other signs, but in many places where it is spoken of, it is represented as the chief of all evidences. This is plain in the manner of expression from time to time. If God were now to speak from heaven to resolve our doubts concerning signs of godliness, and should give some particular sign, that by it all might know whether they were sincerely godly or not, with such emphatical expressions as these, the man that has such a qualification or mark, "that is the man that is a true saint, that is the very man, by this you may know, this is the thing by which it is manifest who are saints and who are sinners, such men as these are saints indeed;" should not we look upon it as a thing beyond doubt, that this was given, as a special, and eminently distinguishing note of true godliness? But this is the very case with respect to the sign of grace I am speaking of; God has again and again uttered himself in his word in this very manner, concerning Christian practice, as John 14:1-31, "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." Thus Christ in this place gives to the disciples, not so much to guide them in judging of others, as to apply to themselves for their own comfort after his departure, as appears by every word of the context. And by the way I would observe, that not only the emphasis with which Christ utters himself is remarkable, but also his so much insisting on, and repeating the matter, as he does in the context: John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words." And John 14:24, "He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." And in the next chapter over and over: John 15:2, "Every branch in me that

beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit; he purgeth it." John 15:8. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." We have this mark laid down with the same emphasis again, John 8:31 "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." And again 1 John 2:3, "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And 1 John 2:5, "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we, that we are in him" And 1 John 3:18-19, "Let us love in deed, and in truth; hereby we know that we are of the truth." What is translated hereby would have been a little more emphatical if it had been rendered more literally from the original, by this we do know.-And how evidently is holy practice spoken of as the grand note of distinction between the children of God and the children of the devil, in 1 John 3:10, of the same chapter? "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Speaking of a holy, and a wicked practice, as may be seen in all the context; as 1 John 3:3, "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." 1 John 3:6-10, "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous: he that committeth sin is of the devil.-Whosoever is born of God sinneth not.-Whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God." So we have the like emphasis, 2 John 1:6 : "This is love, that we walk after his commandments;" that is (as we must understand it), this is the proper evidence of love. Song of Solomon 1:1-17 John 5:3, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." So the Apostle James, speaking of the proper evidences of true and pure religion, says, James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." We have the like emphatical expressions used about the same thing in the Old Testament, Job 28:28 : "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." Jeremiah 22:15-16, "Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? He judged the cause of the poor and needy: was not this to know me? saith the Lord." Psalms 34:11, &c. "Come, ye children, unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.-Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Psal. 15, at the beginning, "Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly," &c. Psalms 24:3-4, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," &c. Psalms 119:1, "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." Psalms 119:6, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.' Proverbs 8:13, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." So the Scripture never uses such emphatical expressions concerning any other signs of hypocrisy, and unsoundness of heart, as concerning an unholy practice. So Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, &c., shall inherit the kingdom of God." Ephesians 5:5-6, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger nor unclean person, &c, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words." 1 John 3:7-8, "Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; he that committeth sin is of the devil." 1 John 2:4, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." And 1 John 1:6. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." James 1:26, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not

his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." James 3:14-15, "If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." Psalms 125:5, "As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity." Isaiah 35:8, "A high way shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it." Revelation 21:27, "And there shall in no noise enter into it, whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." And in many places, "Depart from me, I know you not, ye that work iniquity."

ARGUMENT VI.-Another thing which makes it evident, that holy practice is the chief of all the signs of the sincerity of professors, not only to the world, but to their own consciences, is, that this is the grand evidence which will hereafter be made use of, before the judgment seat of God; according to which his judgment will be regulated, and the state of every professor of religion unalterably determined. In the future judgment, there will be an open trial of professors, and evidences will be made use of in the judgment. For God's future judging of men, in order to their eternal retribution, will not be his trying, and finding out, and passing a judgment upon the state of men's hearts, in his own mind; but it will be, a declarative judgment; and the end of it will be, not God's forming a judgment within himself, but the manifestation of his judgment, and the righteousness of it, to men's own consciences, and to the world. And therefore the day of judgment is called the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Romans 2:6. And the end of God's future trial and judgment of men, as to the part that each one in particular is to have in the judgment, will be especially the clear manifestation of God's righteous judgment, with respect to him, to his conscience; as is manifest by Matthew 18:31, to the end; Matthew 20:8-15, Matthew 22:11-13, Matthew 25:19-30, and Matthew 25:35, to the end, Luke 19:16-23. And therefore, though God needs no medium whereby to make the truth evident to himself, yet evidences will be made use of in his future judging of men. And doubtless the evidences that will be made use of in their trial, will be such as will be best fitted to serve the ends of the judgment; viz., the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God, not only to the world, but to men's own consciences. But the Scriptures do abundantly teach us, that the grand evidences which the Judge will make use of in the trial, for these ends, according to which the judgment of everyone shall be regulated, and the irreversible sentence passed, will be men's works, or practice, here in this world: Revelation 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened;-and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." So Revelation 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad." So men's practice is the only evidence that Christ represents the future judgment as regulated by, in that most particular description of the day of judgment, which we have in the Holy Bible, Matthew 25:1-46 at the latter end. See also Romans 2:6, Romans 2:13, Jeremiah 17:10, Job 34:11, Proverbs 24:12, Jeremiah 32:19, Revelation 22:12, Matthew 16:27, Revelation 2:23, Ezekiel 33:20, 1 Peter 1:17. The Judge, at the day of judgment, will not (for the conviction of men's own consciences, and to manifest them to the world) go about to examine men, as to the method of their experiences, or set every man to tell his story of the manner of his conversion; but his works will be brought forth, as evidences of what he is; what he has done in darkness and in light:

Ecclesiastes 12:14, "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." In the trial that professors shall be the subjects of, in the future judgment, God will make use of the same evidences, to manifest them to themselves and to the world, which he makes use of to manifest them, in the temptations or trials of his providence here, viz., their practice, in cases wherein Christ and other things come into actual and immediate competition. At the day of judgment, God, for the manifestation of his righteous judgment, will weigh professors in a balance that is visible. And the balance will be the same that he weighs men in now, which has been already described.

Hence we may undoubtedly infer, that men's works (taken in the sense that has been explained) are the highest evidences by which they ought to try themselves. Certainly that which our supreme Judge will chiefly make use of to judge us by, when we come to stand before him, we should chiefly make use of, to judge ourselves by.["That which God maketh a rule of his own judgment, as that by which he judgeth of every man, that is a sure rule for every man to judge himself by. That which we shall be judged by at the last day, is a sure rule to apply to ourselves for the present. Now by our obedience and works he judgeth us. 'He will give to every man according to his works.'" Dr. Preston's Church's Carriage.] If it had not been revealed in what manner, and by what evidence the Judge would proceed with us hereafter, how natural would it be for one to say, "O that I knew what token God will chiefly look for and insist upon in the last and decisive judgment, and which he expects that all should be able to produce, who would then be accepted of him, and according to which sentence shall be passed; that I might know what token or evidence especially to look at and seek after now, as I would be sure not to fail then." And seeing God has so plainly and abundantly revealed what this token or evidence is, surely, if we act wisely, we shall regard it as of the greatest importance.

Now from all that has been said, I think it to be abundantly manifest, that Christian practice is the most proper evidence of the gracious sincerity of professors, to themselves and others; and the chief of all the marks of grace, the sign of signs, and evidence of evidences, that which seals and crowns all other signs.-I had rather have the testimony of my conscience, that I have such a saying of my Supreme Judge on my side, as that, John 14:21, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" than the judgment and fullest approbation of all the wise, sound, and experienced divines, that have lived this thousand years, on the most exact and critical examination of my experiences, as to the manner of my conversion. Not that there are no other good evidences of a state of grace but this. There may be other exercises of grace besides these efficient exercises, which the saints may have in contemplation, that may be very satisfying to them, but yet this is the chief and most proper evidence. There may be several good evidences that a tree is a fig tree; but the highest and most proper evidence of it is, that it actually bears figs. It is possible, that a man may have a good assurance of a state of grace, at his first conversion, before he has had opportunity to gain assurance, by this great evidence I am speaking of.-If a man hears that a great treasure is offered him, in a distant place, on condition that he will prize it so much, as to be willing to leave what he possesses at home, and go a journey for it, over the rocks and mountains that are in the way, to the place where it is; it is possible the man may be well assured, that he values the treasure to the degree spoken of, as soon as the offer is made him: he may feel within him, a willingness to go for the treasure, beyond all doubt; but yet, this does not hinder but that his actual doing for it, is the highest and most proper evidence of his being willing,

not only to others, but to himself. But then as an evidence to himself, his outward actions, and the motions of his body in his journey, are not considered alone, exclusive of the action of his mind, and a consciousness within himself, of the thing that moves him, and the end he goes for; otherwise his bodily motion is no evidence to him of his prizing the treasure. In such a manner is Christian practice the most proper evidence of a saving value of the pearl of great price, and treasure hid in the field.

Christian practice is the sign of signs, in this sense, that it is the great evidence, which confirms and crowns all other signs of godliness. There is no one grace of the Spirit of God, but that Christian practice is the most proper evidence of the truth of it. As it is with the members of our bodies, and all our utensils, the proper proof of the soundness and goodness of them, is in the use of them: so it is with our graces (which are given to be used in practice, as much as our hands and feet, or the tools with which we work, or the arms with which we fight), the proper trial and proof of them is in their exercise in practice. Most of the things we use are serviceable to us, and so have their serviceableness proved, in some pressure, straining, agitation, or collision. So it is with a bow, a sword, an axe, a saw, a cord, a chain, a staff, a foot, a tooth, &c. And they that are so weak, as not to bear the strain or pressure we need to put them to, are good for nothing. So it is with all the virtues of the mind. The proper trial and proof of them, is in being exercised under those temptations and trials that God brings us under, in the course of his providence, and in being put to such service as strains hard upon the principles of nature.

Practice is the proper proof of the true and saving knowledge of God; as appears by that of the apostle already mentioned, "hereby do we know that we know him, that we keep his commandments." It is in vain for us to profess that we know God, if in works we deny him, Titus 1:16. And if we know God, but glorify him not as God; our knowledge will only condemn us, and not save us, Romans 1:21. The great note of that knowledge which saves and makes happy, is, that it is practical: John 13:17, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Job 28:28, "To depart from evil is understanding."

Holy practice is the proper evidence of repentance. When the Jews professed repentance, when they came confessing their sins, to John, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; he directed them to the right way of getting and exhibiting proper evidences of the truth of their repentance, when he said to them, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance," Matthew 3:8. Which was agreeable to the practice of the Apostle Paul; see Acts 26:20. Pardon and mercy are from time to time promised to him who has this evidence of true repentance, that he forsakes his sin, Proverbs 28:13, and Isaiah 55:7, and many other places.

Holy practice is the proper evidence of a saving faith. It is evident that the Apostle James speaks of works, as what do eminently justify faith, or (which is the same thing) justify the professors of faith, and vindicate and manifest the sincerity of their profession, not only to the world, but to their own consciences; as is evident by the instance he gives of Abraham, James 2:21-24. And in James 2:20 and James 2:26, he speaks of the practical and working nature of faith, as the very life and soul of it; in the same manner that the active nature and substance, which is in the body of a man, is the life and soul of that. And if so, doubtless practice is the proper evidence of the life and soul of true faith by which it is distinguished from a dead faith. For doubtless, practice is the most proper evidence of a practical nature, and operation the most proper evidence of an operative

nature.

Practice is the best evidence of a saving belief of the truth. That is spoken of as the proper evidence of the truth's being in a professing Christian, that he walks in the truth, 3 John 1:3 : "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth."

Practice is the most proper evidence of a true coming to Christ, and accepting of, and closing with him. A true and saving coming to Christ, is (as Christ often teaches) a coming so as to forsake all for him. And, as was observed before, to forsake all for Christ in heart, is the same thing as to have a heart actually to forsake all; but the proper evidence of having a heart actually to forsake all, is, indeed, actually to forsake all so far as called to it. If a prince make suit to a woman in a far country, that she would forsake her own people, and father's house, and come to him to be his bride; the proper evidence of the compliance of her heart with the king's suit, is her actually forsaking her own people and father's house, and coming to him.-By this her compliance with the king's suit is made perfect, in the same sense that the Apostle James says, By works is faith made perfect.["Our real taking Christ appears in our actions and works: Isaiah 1:19. 'If ye consent and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land.' That is, if ye will consent to take JEHOVAH for your Lord and King: if ye give consent, there is the first thing; but that is not enough, but if ye also obey. The consent that standeth in the inward act of the mind, the truth of it will be seen in your obedience, in the acts of your lives. 'If ye consent and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land;' that is, you shall take of all that he hath that is convenient for you; for then you are married to him in truth, and have an interest in all his good." Dr. Preston's Church's Carriage.] Christ promises us eternal life, on condition of our coming to him: but it is such a coming as he directed the young man to, who came to inquire what he should do that he might have eternal life; Christ bade him go and sell all that he had, and come to him, and follow him. If he had consented in his heart to the proposal, and had therein come to Christ in his heart, the proper evidence of it would have been his doing of it; and therein his coming to Christ would have been made perfect. When Christ called Levi the publican, when sitting at the receipt of custom, and in the midst of his worldly gains; the closing of Levi's heart with this invitation of his Savior to come to him, was manifested, and made perfect by his actually rising up, leaving all, and following him, Luke 5:27-28. Christ, and other things, are set before us together, for us particularly to cleave to one, and forsake the other; in such a case, a practical cleaving to Christ is a practical acceptance of Christ; as much as a beggar's reaching out his hand and taking a gift that is offered, is his practical acceptance of the gift. Yea, that act of the soul that is in cleaving to Christ in practice is itself the most perfect coming of the soul to Christ.

Practice is the most proper evidence of trusting in Christ for salvation. The proper signification of the word trust, according to the more ordinary use of it, both in common speech and in the Holy Scriptures, is the emboldening and encouragement of a person's mind, to run some venture in practice, or in something that he does on the credit of another's sufficiency and faithfulness. And, therefore, the proper evidence of his trusting, is the venture he runs in what he does. He is not properly said to run any venture, in a dependence on any thing, that does nothing on that dependence, or whose practice is no otherwise than if he had no dependence. For a man to run a venture on a dependence on another, is for him to do something from that dependence by which he seems to expose himself, and which he would not do, were it not for that dependence. And,

therefore, it is in complying with the difficulties, and seeming dangers of Christian practice, in a dependence on Christ's sufficiency and faithfulness to bestow eternal life, that persons are said to venture themselves upon Christ, and trust in him for happiness and life. They depend on such promises as that, Matthew 10:39, "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall, find it." And so they part with all, and venture their all, in a dependence on Christ's sufficiency and truth. And this is the Scripture notion of trusting in Christ, in the exercise of a saving faith in him. Thus Abraham, the father of believers, trusted in Christ, and by faith forsook his own country, in a reliance on the covenant of grace God established with him, Hebrews 11:8-9. Thus also, "Moses, by faith refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Hebrews 11:23, &c. So by faith, others exposed themselves to be stoned and sawn asunder, or slain with the sword; "endured the trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonments, and wandered about in sheep skins, and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented." And in this sense the Apostle Paul, by faith trusted in Christ, and committed himself to him, venturing himself, and his whole interest, in a dependence on the ability and faithfulness of his Redeemer, under great persecutions, and in suffering the loss of all things: 2 Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

If a man should have word brought him from the king of a distant island, that he intended to make him his heir, if, upon receiving the tidings, he immediately leaves his native land and friends, and all that he has in the world, to go to that country, in a dependence on what he hears, then he may be said to venture himself, and all that he has in the world upon it. But, if he only sits still, and hopes for the promised benefit, inwardly pleasing himself with the thoughts of it; he cannot properly be said to venture himself upon it; he runs no venture in the case; he does nothing, otherwise than he would do, if he had received no such tidings, by which he would be exposed to any suffering in case all should fail. So he that, on the credit of what he hears of a future world, and, in a dependence on the report of the gospel, concerning life and immortality, forsakes all, or does so at least, so far as there is occasion, making everything entirely give place to his eternal interest; he, and he only, may properly be said to venture himself on the report of the gospel. And this is the proper evidence of a true trust in Christ for salvation.

Practice is the proper evidence of a gracious love, both to God and men. The texts that plainly teach this, have been so often mentioned already, that it is needless to repeat them.

Practice is the proper evidence of humility. That expression, and manifestation of humility of heart, which God speaks of, as the great expression of it, that he insists on; that we should look upon as the proper expression and manifestation of it: but this is walking humbly. Micah 6:8, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" This is also the proper evidence of the true fear of God: Proverbs 8:13, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." Psalms 34:11, &c., "Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile: depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Proverbs 3:7, "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil." Proverbs 16:6, "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil." Job 1:8, "Hast thou considered my servant Job-a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?" Job 2:3, "Hast thou considered my servant Job-a perfect and an upright

man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him." Psalms 36:1, "The transgression of the wicked saith within thy heart, There is no fear of God before his eyes." So practice, in rendering again according to benefits received, is the proper evidence of true thankfulness. Psalms 116:12, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" 2 Chronicles 32:25, "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him." Paying our vows unto God, and ordering our conversation aright, seem to be spoken of as the proper expression and evidence of true thankfulness, in the 50th Psalm, Psalms 50:14 : "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Psalms 50:23, &c; Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God." So the proper evidence of gracious desires and longings, and that which distinguishes them from those that are false and vain, is, that they are not idle wishes and wouldings like Balaam's; but effectual in practice, to stir up persons earnestly and thoroughly to seek the things they long for. Psalms 27:4 "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after." Psalms 63:1-2, "O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory." Psalms 63:8, "My soul followeth hard after thee." Song of Solomon 1:4, "Draw me, we will run after thee."

Practice is the proper evidence of a gracious hope: 1 John 3:3, "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure." Patient continuance in well-doing, through the difficulties and trials of the Christian course, is often mentioned as the proper expression and fruit of a Christian hope. 1 Thessalonians 1:3, "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope." 1 Peter 1:13-14, "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient children," &c. Psalms 119:166, "Lord, I have hoped in thy salvation, and done thy commandments." Psalms 78:7, "That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of the Lord, but keep his commandments." A cheerful practice of our duty, and doing the will of God, is the proper evidence of a truly holy joy. Isaiah 64:5, "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness." Psalms 119:111-112, "Thy testimonies have I taken for my heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even to the end." Psalms 119:14, "I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches." 1 Corinthians 13:6, "Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." 2 Corinthians 8:2, "The abundance of their joy abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

Practice also is the proper evidence of Christian fortitude. The trial of a good soldier is not in his chimney corner, but in the field of battle, 1 Corinthians 9:25-26, 2 Timothy 2:3-4, 2 Timothy 6.

And, as the fruit of holy practice is the chief evidence of the truth of grace, so the degree in which experiences have influence on a person's practice, is the surest evidence of the degree of that which is spiritual and divine in his experiences. Whatever pretenses persons may make to great discoveries, great love and joys, they are no further to be regarded than they have influence on their practice. Not but that allowances must be made for the natural temper. But that does not hinder, but that the degree of grace is justly measured, by the degree of the effect in practice. For the effect of grace is as great, and the alteration as remarkable, in a very ill natural temper, as another. Although a person of such a temper will not behave himself so well, with the same degree of grace as another, the diversity from what was before conversion, may be as great; because a

person of a good natural temper did not behave himself so in before conversion.

Thus I have endeavored to represent the evidence there is, that Christian practice is the chief of all the signs of saving grace. And, before I conclude this discourse, I would say something briefly in answer to two objections that may possibly be made by some against what has been said upon this head.

Objection I.-Some may be ready to says this seems to be contrary to that opinion, so much received among good people; that professors should judge of their state, chiefly by their inward experience, and that spiritual experiences are the main evidences of true grace.

I answer, it is doubtless a true opinion, and justly much received among good people, that professors should chiefly judge of their state by their experience. But it is a great mistake, that what has been said is at all contrary to that opinion. The chief sign of grace to the consciences of Christians being Christian practice, in the sense that has been explained, and according to what has been shown to be the true notion of Christian practice, is not at all inconsistent with Christian experience, being the chief evidence of grace. Christian or holy practice is spiritual practice; and that is not the motion of a body that knows not how, nor when, nor wherefore it moves: but spiritual practice in man is the practice of a spirit and body jointly, or the practice of a spirit animating, commanding, and actuating a body to which it is united, and over which it has power given it by the Creator. And, therefore, the main thing, in this holy practice, is the holy action of the mind, directing and governing the motions of the body. And the motions of the body are to be looked upon as belonging to Christian practices only secondarily, and as they are dependent and consequent on the acts of the soul. The exercises of grace that Christians find, or are conscious to within themselves, are what they experience within themselves; and herein therefore lies Christian experience: and this Christian experience consists as much in those operative exercises of grace in the will, that are immediately concerned in the management of the behavior of the body, as in other exercises. These inward exercises are not the less a part of Christian experience, because they have outward behavior immediately connected with them. A strong act of love to God, is not the less a part of spiritual experience, because it is the act that immediately produces and effects some self-denying and expensive outward action, which is much to the honor and glory of God. To speak of Christian experience and practice, as if they were two things, properly and entirely distinct, is to make a distinction without consideration or reason. Indeed, all Christian experience is not properly called practice, but all Christian practice is properly experience. And the distinction that is made between them, is not only an unreasonable, but an unscriptural distinction. Holy practice is one kind or part of Christian experience; and both reason and Scripture represent it as the chief, and most important and most distinguishing part of it. So it is represented in Jeremiah 22:15-16 : "Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and judgment? He judged the cause of the poor and needy-Was not this to know me, saith the Lord?" Our inward acquaintance with God surely belongs to the head of experimental religion: but this, God represents as consisting chiefly in that experience which there is in holy practice. So the exercises of those graces of the love of God, and the fear of God are a part of experimental religion: but these the Scripture represents as consisting chiefly in practice, in those forementioned texts: 1 John 5:3, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." 2 John 1:6, "This is love, that we walk after his commandments." Psalms 34:11, &c., "Come, ye children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord: depart from evil, and do good." Such experiences as these Hezekiah took comfort in, chiefly on his

sick bed, when he said, "Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart." And such experiences as these, the Psalmist chiefly insists upon, in the 119th Psalm, and elsewhere.

Such experiences as these the Apostle Paul mainly insists upon, when he speaks of his experiences in his epistles; as, Romans 1:9, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son." 2 Corinthians 1:12, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that-by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." 2 Corinthians 4:13, "We, having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I have believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." 2 Corinthians 5:7, "We walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:14, "The love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Corinthians 6:4-7, "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in labors, in watchings, in fastings. By pureness, by knowledge, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned; by the power of God." Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Php 3:7-8, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ." Colossians 1:29, "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." 1 Thessalonians 2:2, "We were bold in our God, to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention." 1 Thessalonians 2:8-10, "Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travel, laboring night and day. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably, we behaved ourselves among you." And such experiences as these they were, that this blessed apostle chiefly comforted himself in the consideration of, when he was going to martyrdom: 2 Timothy 4:6-7, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." And not only does the most important and distinguishing part of Christian experience lie in spiritual practice; but such is the nature of that sort of exercises of grace, wherein spiritual practice consists, that nothing is so properly called by the name of experimental religion. For, that experience, which is in these exercises of grace, that are found and prove effectual at the very point of trial, wherein God proves, which we will actually cleave to, whether Christ or our lusts, is, as has been shown already, the proper experiment of the truth and power of our godliness; wherein its victorious power and efficacy, in producing its proper effect, and reaching its end, is found by experience. This is properly Christian experience, wherein the saints have opportunity to see, by actual experience and trial, whether they have a heart to do the will of God, and to forsake other things for Christ, or no. As that is called experimental philosophy which brings opinions and notions to the test of fact, so is that properly called experimental religion, which brings religious affections and intentions to the like test.

There is a sort of external religious practice, wherein is no inward experience, which no account is made of in the sight of God, but it is esteemed good for nothing. And there is what is called experience, that is without practice, being neither accompanied nor followed with a Christian behavior; and this is worse than nothing. Many persons seem to have very wrong notions of Christian experience and spiritual light and discoveries. Whenever a person finds within him a

heart to treat God as God, at the time that he has the trial, and finds his disposition effectual in the experiment, that is the most proper, and most distinguishing experience. And to have, at such a time, that sense of divine things, that apprehension of the truth, importance and excellency of the things of religion, which then sways and prevails, and governs his heart and hands; this is the most excellent spiritual light, and these are the most distinguishing discoveries. Religion consists much in holy affection; but those exercises of affection which are most distinguishing of true religion, are these practical exercises. Friendship between earthly friends consists much in affection; but yet, those strong exercises of affection, that actually carry them through fire and water for each other, are the highest evidences of true friendship.

There is nothing in what has been said, contrary to what is asserted by some sound divines; when they say, that there are no sure evidences of grace, but the acts of grace. For that doth not hinder, but that these operative, productive acts, those exercises of grace that are effectual in practice, may be the highest evidences above all other kinds of acts of grace. Nor does it hinder, but that, when there are many of these acts and exercises, following one another in a course, under various trials of every kind, the evidence is still heightened; as one act confirms another. A man, once by seeing his neighbor, may have good evidence of his presence; but by seeing him from day to day, and conversing with him in a course, in various circumstances, the evidence is established. The disciples when they first saw Christ, after his resurrection, had good evidence that he was alive; but, by conversing with him for forty days, and his showing himself to them alive by many infallible proofs, they had yet higher evidence.["The more these visible exercises of grace are renewed, the more certain you will be. The more frequently these actings are renewed, the more abiding and confirmed your assurance win be. A man that has been assured of such visible exercises of grace, may quickly after be in doubt whether he was not mistaken. But when such actings are renewed again and again, he grows more settled and established about has good estate. If a man see a thing once, that makes him sure; but, if afterwards, he fear he was deceived, when he comes to see it again, he is more sure he was not mistaken. If a man read such passages in a book, he is sure it is so. Some months after, some may bear him down, that he was mistaken, so as to make him question it himself; but, when he looks, and reads it again, he is abundantly confirmed. The more men’s grace is multiplied, the more their peace is multiplied:" 2 Peter 1:2, "Grace and peace he multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord." Stoddard’s Way to know Sincerity and Hypocrisy.] The witness or seal of the Spirit that we read of, doubtless consists in the effect of the Spirit of God on the heart, in the implantation and exercises of grace there, and so consists in experience. And it is also beyond doubt, that this seal of the Spirit, is the highest kind of evidence of the saints’ adoption, that ever they obtain. But in these exercises of grace in practice, that have been spoken of, God gives witness, and sets to his seal, in the most conspicuous, eminent, and evident manner. It has been abundantly found to be true in fact, by the experience of the Christian church, that Christ commonly gives, by his Spirit, the greatest and most joyful evidences to his saints of their sonship, in those effectual exercises of grace under trials, which have been spoken of; as is manifest in the full assurance, and unspeakable joys of many of the martyrs. Agreeable to that, 1 Peter 4:14, "If ye are reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you." And that in Romans 5:2-3, "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and glory in tribulations." And agreeable to what the Apostle Paul often declares of what he experienced in his trials. And when the Apostle Peter, in my text, speaks of the joy unspeakable, and full of glory, which the Christians to whom he wrote,

experienced; he has respect to what they found under persecution, as appears by the context. Christ's thus manifesting himself, as the friend and savior of his saints, cleaving to him under trials seems to have been represented of old, by his coming and manifesting himself, to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the furnace. And when the apostle speaks of the witness of the Spirit, in Romans 8:15-17, he has a more immediate respect to what the Christians experienced, in their exercises of love to God, in suffering persecution; as is plain by the context. He is, in the foregoing verses, encouraging the Christian Romans under their sufferings, that though their bodies be dead because of sin, yet they should be raised to life again. But it is more especially plain by the verse immediately following, Romans 8:18, "For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." So the apostle has evidently respect to their persecutions, in all that he says to the end of the chapter. So when the apostle speaks of the earnest of the Spirit, which God had given to him, in 2 Corinthians 5:5, the context shows plainly that he has respect to what was given him in his great trials and sufferings. And in that promise of the white stone and new name, to him that overcomes, Revelation 2:17, it is evident Christ has a special respect to a benefit that Christians should obtain, by overcoming, in the trial they had, in that day of persecution. This appears by verse 13, and many other passages in this epistle, to the seven churches of Asia.

Objection II.-Some also may be ready to object against what has been said of Christian practice being the chief evidence of the truth of grace, that this is a legal doctrine; and that this making practice a thing of such great importance in religion, magnifies works, and tends to lead men to make too much of their own doings, to the diminution of the glory of free grace, and does not seem well to consist with the great gospel doctrine of justification by faith alone. But this objection is altogether without reason. Which way is it inconsistent with the freeness of God's grace, that holy practice should be a sign of God's grace? It is our works being the price of God's favor, and not their being the sign of it, that is the thing which is inconsistent with the freeness of that favor. Surely the beggar's looking on the money he has in his hands, as a sign of the kindness of him who gave it to him, is in no respect inconsistent with the freeness of that kindness. It is his having money in his hands as the price of a benefit, that is the thing which is inconsistent with the free kindness of the giver. The notion of the freeness of the grace of God to sinners, as that is revealed and taught in the gospel, is not that no holy and amiable qualifications or actions in us shall be a fruit, and so a sign of that grace; but that it is not the worthiness or loveliness of any qualification or action of ours which recommends us to that grace; that kindness is shown to the unworthy and unlovely; that there is great excellency in the benefit bestowed and no excellency in the subject as the price of it; that goodness goes forth and flows out, from the fullness of God's nature, the fullness of the fountain of good, without any amiableness in the object to draw it. And this is the notion of justification without works (as this doctrine is taught in the Scripture), that it is not the worthiness or loveliness of our works, or anything in us, which is in any wise accepted with God, as a balance for the guilt of sin, or a recommendation of sinners to his acceptance as heirs of life. Thus we are justified only by the righteousness of Christ, and not by our righteousness. And when works are opposed to faith in this affair, and it is said that we are justified by faith and not by works; thereby is meant, that it is not the worthiness or amiableness of our works, or anything in us, which recommends us to an interest in Christ and his benefits; but that we have this interest only by faith, or by our souls receiving Christ, or adhering to and closing with him. But that the worthiness or amiableness of nothing in us recommends and brings us to an interest in Christ, is

no argument that nothing in us is a sign of an interest in Christ.

If the doctrines of free grace, and justification by faith alone, be inconsistent with the importance of holy practice as a sign of grace; then they are equally inconsistent with the importance of anything whatsoever in us as a sign of grace, any holiness, or any grace that is in us, or any of our experiences of religion; for it is as contrary to the doctrines of free grace and justification by faith alone, that any of these should be the righteousness which we are justified by, as that holy practice should be so. It is with holy works, as it is with holy qualifications; it is inconsistent with the freeness of gospel grace, that a title to salvation should be given to men for the loveliness of any of their holy qualifications, as much as that it should be given for the holiness of their works. It is inconsistent with the gospel doctrine of free grace, that an interest in Christ and his benefits should be given for the loveliness of a man's true holiness, for the amiableness of his renewed, sanctified, heavenly heart, his love to God, and being like God, or his experience of joy in the Holy Ghost, self-emptiness, a spirit to exalt Christ above all, and to give all glory to him, and a heart devoted unto him; I say it is inconsistent with the gospel doctrine of free grace, that a title to Christ's benefits should be given out of regard to the loveliness of any of these, or that any of these should be our righteousness in the affair of justification. And yet this does not hinder the importance of these things as evidences of an interest in Christ. Just so it is with respect to holy actions and works. To make light of works, because we be not justified by works, is the same thing in effect, as to make light of all religion, all grace and holiness, yea, true evangelical holiness, and all gracious experience; for all is included, when the Scripture says, we are not justified by works; for by works in this case, is meant all our own righteousness, religion, or holiness, and everything that is in us, all the good we do, and all the good which we are conscious of all external acts, and all internal acts and exercises of grace, and all experiences, and all those holy and heavenly things wherein the life and power, and the very essence of religion do consist, all those great things which Christ and his apostles mainly insisted on in their preaching, and endeavored to promote, as of the greatest consequence in the hearts and lives of men, and all good dispositions, exercises and qualifications of every kind whatsoever; and even faith itself, considered as a part of our holiness. For we are justified by none of these things; and if we were, we should, in a Scripture sense, be justified by works. And therefore if it be not legal, and contrary to the evangelical doctrine of justification without works, to insist on any of these, as of great importance, as evidences of an interest in Christ; then no more is it, thus to insist on the importance of holy practice. It would be legal to suppose, that holy practice justifies by bringing us to a title to Christ's benefits, as the price of it, or as recommending to it by its preciousness or excellence; but it is not legal to suppose, that holy practice justifies the sincerity of a believer, as the proper evidence of it. The Apostle James did not think it legal to say, that Abraham our father was justified by works in this sense. The Spirit that indited the Scripture, did not think the great importance and absolute necessity of holy practice, in this respect, to be inconsistent with the freeness of grace; for it commonly teaches them both together; as in Revelation 21:6-7, God says, "I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely;" and then adds, in the very next words, "he that overcometh shall inherit all things." As though behaving well in the Christian race and warfare, were the condition of the promise. So in Revelation 22:14-15, Christ says, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city;" and then declares in Revelation 22:15, "how they that are of a wicked practice" shall be excluded; and yet in the two verses next following, does with very great solemnity give forth an

invitation to all to come and take of the water of life freely: "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth, say, come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." So Revelation 3:20-21, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." But then it is added in the next words, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." And in that great invitation of Christ, Matthew 11:1-30 latter end, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" Christ adds in the next words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light:" as though taking the burden of Christ's service, and imitating his example, were necessary in order to the promised rest. So in that great invitation to sinners to accept of free grace, Isaiah 55:1-13, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price;" even there, in the continuation of the same invitation, the sinner's forsaking his wicked practice is spoken of as necessary to the obtaining mercy: Isaiah 55:7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." So the riches of divine grace, in the justification of sinners, is set forth with the necessity of holy practice, Isaiah 1:16, &c.: "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn too do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." And in that most solemn invitation of wisdom, Proverbs 9:1-18, after it is represented what great provision is made, and how that all things were ready, the house built, the beasts killed, the wine mingled, and the table furnished, and the messengers sent forth to invite the guests; then we have the free invitation, Proverbs 9:4-6 : "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding (i.e. has no righteousness) she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." But then in the next breath it follows, "Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding;" as though forsaking sin, and going in the way of holiness, were necessary in order to life. So that the freeness of grace, and the necessity of holy practice, which are thus from time to time joined together in Scripture, are not inconsistent one with another. Nor does it at all diminish the honor and importance of faith, that the exercises and effects of faith in practice, should be esteemed the chief signs of it; any more than it lessens the importance of life, that action and motion are esteemed the chief signs of that. So that in what has been said of the importance of holy practice as the main sign of sincerity; there is nothing legal, nothing derogatory to the freedom and sovereignty of gospel grace, nothing in the least clashing with the gospel doctrine of justification by faith alone, without the works of the law, nothing in the least tending to lessen the glory of the Mediator, and our dependence on his righteousness, nothing infringing on the special prerogatives of faith in the affair of our salvation, nothing in any wise detracting from the glory of God and his mercy, or exalting man, or diminishing his dependence and obligation. So that if any are against such an importance of holy practice as has been spoken of, it must be only from a senseless aversion to the letters and sound of the word works, when there is no reason in the world to be given for it, but what may be given with equal force, why they should have an aversion to the words holiness, godliness, grace, religion,

experience, and even faith itself; for to make a righteousness of any of these, is as legal, and as inconsistent with the way of the new covenant, as to make a righteousness of holy practice.

It is greatly to the hurt of religion, for persons to make light of, and insist little on, those things which the Scripture insists most upon, as of most importance in the evidence of our interest in Christ, under a notion that to lay weight on these things is legal, and an old covenant way; and so, to neglect the exercises, and effectual operations of grace in practice, and insist almost wholly on discoveries, and the method and manner of the immanent exercises of conscience and grace in contemplation; depending on an ability to make nice distinctions in these matters, and a faculty of accurate discerning in them, from philosophy or experience. It is in vain to seek for any better, or any further signs than those that the Scriptures have most expressly mentioned, and most frequently insisted on, as signs of godliness. They who pretend to a greater accuracy in giving signs, or by their extraordinary experience or insight into the nature of things, to give more distinguishing marks, which shall more thoroughly search out and detect the hypocrite, are but subtle to darken their own minds, and the minds of others; their refinings and nice discerning, are in God’s sight, but refined foolishness and a sagacious delusion. Here are applicable those words of Agur, Proverbs 30:5-6, "Every word of God is pure; he is a shield to them that put their trust in him: add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Our discerning, with regard to the hearts of men, is not much to be trusted. We can see but a little way into the nature of the soul, and the depths of;man’s heart. The ways are so many whereby persons’ affections may be moved without any supernatural influence, the natural springs of the affections are so various and so secret, so many things have oftentimes a joint influence on the affections, the imagination, and that in ways innumerable and unsearchable, natural temper, education, the common influences of the Spirit of God, a surprising concourse of affecting circumstances, an extraordinary coincidence of things in the course of men’s thoughts, together with the subtle management of invisible malicious spirits, that no philosophy or experience will ever be sufficient to guide us safely through this labyrinth and maze, without our closely following the clew which God has given us in his word. God knows his own reasons why he insists on some things, and plainly sets them forth as the things that we should try ourselves by rather than others. It may be it is because he knows that these things are attended with less perplexity, and that we are less liable to be deceived by them than others. He best knows our nature; and he knows the nature and manner of his own operations; and he best knows the way of our safety; he knows what allowances to make for different states of his church, and different tempers of particular persons, and varieties in the manner of his own operations, how far nature may resemble grace, and how far nature may be mixed with grace, what affections may rise from imagination, and how far imagination may be mixed with spiritual illumination. And therefore it is our wisdom, not to take his work out of his hands, but to follow him, and lay the stress of the judgment of ourselves there, where he has directed us. If we do otherwise, no wonder if we are bewildered, confounded, and fatally deluded. But if we had got into the way of looking chiefly at those things, which Christ and his apostles and prophets chiefly insisted on, and so in judging of ourselves and others, chiefly regarding practical exercises and effects of grace, not neglecting other things; it would be of manifold happy consequence; it would above all things tend to the conviction of deluded hypocrites, and to prevent the delusion of those whose hearts were never brought to a thorough compliance with the straight and narrow way which leads to life; it would tend to deliver us from innumerable perplexities, arising from the various inconsistent schemes there are about methods

and steps of experience; it would greatly tend to prevent professors neglecting strictness of life, and tend to promote their engagedness and earnestness in their Christian walk; and it would become fashionable for men to show their Christianity, more by an amiable distinguished behavior, than by an abundant and excessive declaring their experiences; and we should get into the way of appearing lively in religion, more by being lively in the service of God and our generation, than by the liveliness and forwardness of our tongues, and making a business of proclaiming on the house tops, with our mouths, the holy and eminent acts and exercises of our own hearts; and Christians that are intimate friends, would talk together of their experiences and comforts, in a manner better becoming Christian humility and modesty, and more to each other's profit: their tongues not running before, but rather going behind their hands and feet, after the prudent example of the blessed apostle, 2 Corinthians 12:6, and many occasions of spiritual pride would be cut off; and so a great door shut against the devil; and a great many of the main stumbling-blocks against experimental and powerful religion would be removed; and religion would be declared and manifested in such a way that, instead of hardening spectators, and exceedingly promoting infidelity and atheism, would, above all things, tend to convince men that there is a reality in religion, and greatly awaken them, and win them, by convincing their consciences of the importance and excellency of religion. Thus the light of professors would so shine before men, that others, seeing their good works, would glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Chapter 17

02.00. Absent From The Body

Absent From The Body A Sermon By Jonathan Edwards

Preached on the day of the funeral of the Rev. Mr. David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians, from the Honorable Society in Scotland for the propagation of Christian Knowledge, and Pastor of a Church of Christian Indians in New Jersey; who died at Northampton, in New England, October 9, 1747, in the 30th year of his age, and was interred on the l2th following.

Jonathan Edwards (October 5, 1703- March 22, 1758) was a colonial American Congregational preacher and theologian. He is known as one of the greatest and most profound American evangelical theologians. His work is very broad in scope, but he is often associated with his defense of Calvinist theology and the Puritan heritage, while missing the Puritan Era by almost 150 years.

Note: The text has been divided for easier reading in the top format and the Scripture references have been modified into tool tips.

02.01. Part I

TRUE SAINTS, WHEN ABSENT FROM THE BODY, ARE PRESENT WITH THE LORD.

2 Corinthians 5:8 --We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. THE apostle in this place is giving a reason why he went on with so much boldness and immovable steadfastness, through such labors, sufferings, and dangers of his life, in the service of his Lord; for which his enemies, the false teachers among the Corinthians, sometimes reproached him as being beside himself, and driven on by a kind of madness. In the latter part of the preceding chapter, the apostle informs the Christian Corinthians, that the reason why he did thus, was, that he firmly believed the promises that Christ had made to his faithful servants of a glorious future eternal reward, and knew that these present afflictions were light, and but for a moment, in comparison of that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The same discourse is continued in this chapter; wherein the apostle further insists on the reason he had given of his constancy in suffering, and exposing himself to death in the work of the ministry, even the more happy state he expected after death. And this is the subject of the text; wherein may be observed,

1. The great future privilege, which the apostle hoped for; that of being present with Christ. The words, in the original, properly signify dwelling with Christ, as in the same country or city, or making a home with Christ.

2. When the apostle looked for this privilege, viz., when he should be absent from the body. Not to wait for it till the resurrection, when soul and body should be united again. He signifies the same thing in his epistle to the Php 1:22-23 : "But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor. Yet what I shall choose, I wot not. For I am in a strait between two; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ."

3. The value the apostle set on this privilege. It was such, that for the sake of it, he chose to be absent from the body. He was willing rather, or (as the word properly signifies) it were more pleasing to him, to part with the present life, and all its enjoyments, and be possessed of this great benefit, than to continue here.

4. The present benefit, which the apostle had by his faith and hope of this future privilege, and of his great value for it, viz., that hence he received courage, assurance, and constancy of mind, agreeable to the proper import of the word that is rendered, we are confident. The apostle is now giving a reason of that fortitude and immovable stability of mind, with which he went through those extreme labors, hardships and dangers, which he mentions in this discourse; so that, in the midst of all, he did not faint, was not discouraged, but had constant light, and inward support, strength, and comfort in the midst of all: agreeable to the 10th verse of the foregoing chapter, "For which cause, we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Corinthians 4:16) And the same is expressed more particularly in 2 Corinthians 4:8-10, of that chapter: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in

despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." (2 Corinthians 4:8-10) And in 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 5:4-10 : "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Corinthians 6:4-10)

Among the many useful observations there might be raised from the text, I shall at this time only insist on that which lies most plainly before us in the words, viz., this: The souls of true saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ.

02.02. Part II

Departed souls of saints go to be with Christ, in the following respects:

I. They go to dwell in the same blessed abode with the glorified human nature of Christ. The human nature of Christ is yet in being. He still continues, and will continue to all eternity, to be both God and man. His whole human nature remains: not only his human soul, but also his human body. His dead body rose from the dead; and the same that was raised from the dead, is exalted and glorified at God's right hand; that which was dead is now alive, and lives for evermore. And therefore there is a certain place, a particular part of the external creation, to which Christ is gone, and where he remains. And this place is that which we call the highest heaven, or the heaven of heavens; a place beyond all the visible heavens. Ephesians 4:9-10 , "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens." This is the same which the apostle calls the third heaven, 2 Corinthians 12:2 , reckoning the aerial heaven as the first, the starry heaven as the second, and the highest heaven as the third. This is the abode of the holy angels; they are called "the angels of heaven," Matthew 24:36; "The angels which are in heaven," Mark 13:32; "The angels of God in heaven," Matthew 22:30 , and Mark 12:25 . They are said "always to behold the face of the Father which is in heaven," Matthew 18:10 . And they are elsewhere often represented as before the throne of God, or surrounding his throne in heaven, and sent from thence, and descending from thence on messages to this world. And thither it is that the souls of departed saints are conducted, when they die. They are not reserved in some abode distinct from the highest heaven; a place of rest, which they are kept in, till the day of judgment; such as some imagine, which they call the hades of the happy: but they go directly to heaven itself. This is the saints' home, being their Father's house: they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and this is the other and better country that they are traveling to, Hebrews 11:13–26 . This is the city they belong to: Php 3:20 , "Our conversation or (as the word properly signifies) citizenship, is in heaven." Therefore this undoubtedly is the place the apostle has respect to in my text, when he says, "We are willing to forsake our former house, the body, and to dwell in the same house, city or country, wherein Christ dwells;" which is the proper import of the words of the original. What can this house, or city, or country be, but that house, which is elsewhere spoken of, as their proper home, and their Father's house, and the city and country to which they properly belong, and whither they are traveling all the while they continue in this world, and the house, city, and country where we know the human nature of Christ is? This is the saints' rest; here their hearts are while they live; and here their treasure is. "The inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, that is designed for them, is reserved in heaven," 1 Peter 1:4; and therefore they never can have their proper and full rest till they come here. So that undoubtedly their souls, when absent from their bodies (when the Scriptures represent them as in a state of perfect rest), arrive hither. Those two saints, that left this world, to go to their rest in another world, without dying, viz., Enoch and Elijah, went to heaven. Elijah was seen ascending up to heaven, as Christ was. And to the same resting place, is there all reason to think, that those saints go, that leave the world, to go

to their rest, by death. Moses, when he died in the top of the mount, ascended to the same glorious abode with Elias, who ascended without dying. They are companions in another world; as they appeared together at Christ's transfiguration. They were together at that time with Christ in the mount, when there was a specimen or sample of his glorification in heaven. And doubtless they were also together afterwards, with him, when he was, actually, fully glorified in heaven. And thither undoubtedly it was, that the soul of Stephen ascended, when he expired. The circumstances of his death demonstrate it, as we have an account of it, Acts 7:55 , &c.: "He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man (i.e. Jesus, in his human nature) standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Before his death he had an extraordinary view of the glory that his Saviour had received in heaven, not only for himself, but for him, and all his faithful followers; that he might be encouraged, by the hopes of this glory, cheerfully to lay down his life for his sake. Accordingly he dies in the hope of this, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." By which doubtless he meant, "receive my spirit to be with thee, in that glory, wherein I have now seen thee, in heaven, at the right hand of God." And thither it was that the soul of the penitent thief on the cross ascended. Christ said to him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Paradise is the same with the third heaven; as appears by 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 . There that which is called the third heaven in 2 Corinthians 12:2, in 2 Corinthians 12:4 is called paradise. The departed souls of the apostles and prophets are in heaven; as is manifest from Revelation 18:20 : "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets." The church of God is distinguished in Scripture, from time to time, into these two parts; that part of it that is in heaven, and that which is in earth; Ephesians 3:14-15 , "Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Colossians 1:20 , "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." Now what things in heaven are they for whom peace has been made by the blood of Christ's cross, and who have by him been reconciled to God, but the saints in heaven? In like manner we read, Ephesians 1:10 , of God's gathering together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." The spirits of just men made perfect are in the same city of the living God, and heavenly Jerusalem, with the innumerable company of angels, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant; as is manifest by Hebrews 12:22-24 . The church of God is often in Scripture called by the name Jerusalem; and the apostle speaks of the Jerusalem which is above, or which is in heaven, as the mother of us all; but if no part of the church be in heaven, or none but Enoch and Elias, it is not likely that the church would be called the Jerusalem which is in heaven.

II. The souls of true saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ, as they go to dwell in the immediate, full and constant sight or view of him. When we are absent from our dear friends, they are out of sight; but when we are with them, we have the opportunity and satisfaction of seeing them. So while the saints are in the body, and are absent from the Lord, HE is in several respects out of sight: 1 Peter 1:8 , "Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing," &c. They have indeed, in this world, a spiritual sight of Christ; but they see through a glass darkly, and with great interruption; but in heaven they see him face to face, 1 Corinthians 13:12; "The pure in heart are blessed; for they shall see God," Matthew 5:8 . Their

beatifical vision of God is in Christ, who is that brightness or effulgence of God's glory, by which his glory shines forth in heaven, to the view of saints and angels there, as well as here on earth. This is the Sun of righteousness, that is not only the light of this world, but is also the sun that enlightens the heavenly Jerusalem; by whose bright beams it is that the glory of God shines forth there, to the enlightening and making happy all the glorious inhabitants. "The Lamb is the light thereof; and so the glory of God doth lighten it," Revelation 21:23 . None sees God the Father immediately, who is the King eternal, immortal, invisible; Christ is the image of that invisible God, by which he is seen by all elect creatures. The only begotten Son that is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, and manifested him. None has ever immediately seen the Father, but the Son; and none else sees the Father any other way, than by the Son's revealing him. And in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect do see him as he is. They behold his glory. They see the glory of his divine nature, consisting in all the glory of the Godhead, the beauty of all his perfections; his great majesty, almighty power, his infinite wisdom, holiness, and grace, and they see the beauty of his glorified human nature, and the glory which the Father hath given him, as God-man and Mediator. For this end, Christ desired that his saints might "be with him, that they might behold his glory," John 17:24 . And when the souls of the saints leave their bodies, to go to be with Christ, they behold the marvelous glory of that great work of his, the work of redemption, and of the glorious way of salvation by him; desire to look into. They have a most clear view of the unfathomable depths of the manifold wisdom and knowledge of God; and the most bright displays of the infinite purity and holiness of God, that do appear in that way and work; and see in a much clearer manner than the saints do here, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height of the grace and love of Christ, appearing in his redemption. And as they see the unspeakable riches and glory of the attribute of God's grace, so they most clearly behold and understand Christ's eternal and unmeasurable dying love to them in particular. And in short, they see every thing in Christ that tends to kindle and inflame love, and every thing that tends to gratify love, and every thing that tends to satisfy them: and that in the most clear and glorious manner, without any darkness or delusion, without any impediment or interruption. Now the saints, while in the body, see something of Christ's glory and love; as we, in the dawning of the morning, see something of the reflected light of the sun mingled with darkness; but when separated from the body, they see their glorious and loving Redeemer, as we see the sun when risen, and showing his whole disk above the horizon, by his direct beams, in a clear hemisphere, and with perfect day.

III. The souls of true saints, when absent from the body go to be with Jesus Christ, as they are brought into a most perfect conformity to and union with him. Their spiritual conformity is begun while they are in the hotly; here beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image; but when they come to see him as he is, in heaven, then they become like him in another manner. That perfect sight will abolish all remains of deformity, disagreement, and sinful unlikeness; as all darkness is abolished before the full blaze of the sun's meridian light: it is impossible that the least degree of obscurity should remain before such light; so it is impossible the least degree of sin and spiritual deformity should remain, in such a view of the spiritual beauty and glory of Christ, as the saints enjoy in heaven; when they see that Sun of righteousness without a cloud, they themselves shine forth as the sun, and shall be as little suns, without a spot. For then is come the time when Christ presents his saints to himself, in glorious beauty; "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;" and having holiness without a blemish. And then the saints' union with Christ is perfected. This also is begun in this world. The relative union is both begun and perfected

at once, when the soul first closes with Christ by faith: the real union, consisting in the union of hearts and affections, and in the vital union, is begun in this world and perfected in the next. The union of the heart of a believer to Christ, is begun when his heart is drawn to Christ, by the first discovery of divine excellency, at conversion; and consequent on this drawing and closing of his heart with Christ, is established a vital union with Christ; whereby the believer becomes a living branch of the true vine, living by a communication of the sap and vital juice of the stock and root; and a member of Christ's mystical body, living by a communication of spiritual and vital influences from the head, and by a kind of participation of Christ's own life. But while the saints are in the body, there is much remaining distance between Christ and them: there are remainders of alienation, and the vital union is very imperfect; and so consequently is the communication of spiritual life and vital influences: there is much between Christ and believers to keep them asunder, much indwelling sin, much temptation, a world of carnal objects, to keep off the soul from Christ, and hinder a perfect coalescence. But when the soul leaves the body, all these clogs and hindrances shall be removed, every separating wall shall be broken down, and every impediment taken out of the way, and all distance shall cease; the heart shall be wholly and forever attached and bound to him, by a perfect view of his glory. And the vital union shall then be brought to perfection; the soul shall live perfectly in and upon Christ, being perfectly filled with his spirit, and animated by his vital influences; living, as it were, only by Christ's life, without any remainder of spiritual death, or carnal life.

IV. Departed souls of saints are with Christ, as they enjoy a glorious and immediate intercourse and converse with him.

While we are present with our friends, we have opportunity for that free and immediate conversation with them, which we cannot have in absence from them. And therefore, by reason of the vastly more free, perfect, and immediate intercourse with Christ, which the saints enjoy when absent from the body, they are fitly represented as present with him. The most intimate intercourse becomes that relation that the saints stand in to Jesus Christ; and especially becomes that most perfect and glorious union they shall be brought into with him in heaven. They are not merely Christ's servants, but his friends, John 15:15 . His brethren and companions, Psalms 122:8; "yea, they are the spouse of Christ." They are espoused or betrothed to Christ while in the body; but when they go to heaven, they enter into the king's palace, their marriage with him is come, and the king brings them into his chambers indeed. They then go to dwell with Christ constantly, to enjoy the most perfect converse with him. Christ conversed in the most friendly manner with his disciples on earth; he admitted one of them to lean on his bosom: but they are admitted much more fully and freely to converse with him in heaven. Though Christ be there in a state of glorious exaltation, reigning in the majesty and glory of the sovereign Lord and God of heaven and earth, angels and men; yet this will not hinder intimacy and freedom of intercourse, but rather promote it. For he is thus exalted, not only for himself, but for them; he is instated in this glory of head over all things for their sakes, that they might be exalted and glorified; and when they go to heaven where he is, they are exalted and glorified with him; and shall not be kept at a more awful distance from Christ, but shall be admitted nearer, and to a greater intimacy. For they shall be unspeakably more fit for it, and Christ in more fit circumstances to bestow on them this blessedness. Their seeing the great glory of their friend and Redeemer, will not awe them to a distance, and make them afraid of a near approach; but on the contrary, will most powerfully draw them near, and encourage and

engage them to holy freedom. For they will know that it is he that is their own Redeemer, and beloved friend and bridegroom; the very same that loved them with a dying love, and redeemed them to God by his blood; Matthew 14:27 , "It is I; be not afraid." Revelation 1:17-18 , "Fear not:--I am he that liveth, and was dead." And the nature of this glory of Christ that they shall see, will be such as will draw and encourage them; for they will not only see infinite majesty and greatness, but infinite grace, condescension, and mildness, and gentleness and sweetness, equal to his majesty. For he appears in heaven, not only as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but as the Lamb, and the Lamb in the midst of the throne, " Revelation 5:5-6; and this Lamb in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, to" feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water," Revelation 7:17; so that the sight of Christ's great kingly majesty will be no terror to them; but will only serve the more to heighten their pleasure and surprise. When Mary was about to embrace Christ, being full of joy at the sight of him again alive after his crucifixion, Christ forbids her to do it for the ended: John 20:16-17 , "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God." As if he had said, "This is not the time and place for that freedom your love to me desires: this is appointed in heaven after my ascension. I am going thither; and you that are my true disciples, shall, as my brethren and companions, soon be there with me in my glory. And then there shall be no restraint. That is the place appointed for the most perfect expressions of complacence and endearment, and full enjoyment of mutual love." And accordingly the souls of departed saints with Christ in heaven, shall have Christ as it were unbosomed unto them, manifesting those infinite riches of love towards them, that have been there from eternity; and they shall be enabled to express their love to him, in an infinitely better manner than ever they could while in the body. Thus they shall eat and drink abundantly, and swim in the ocean of love, and be eternally swallowed up in the infinitely bright, and infinitely mild and sweet beams of divine love; eternally receiving that light, eternally full of it, and eternally compassed round with it, and everlastingly reflecting it back again to the fountain of it.

V. The souls of the saints, when they leave their bodies at death, go to be with Christ, as they are received to a glorious fellowship with Christ in his blessedness. As the wife is received to a joint possession of her husband's estate, and as the wife of a prince partakes with him in his princely possessions and honors; so the church, the spouse of Christ, when the marriage comes, and she is received to dwell with him in heaven, shall partake with him in his glory. When Christ rose from the dead, and took possession of eternal life; this was not as a private person, but as the public head of all his redeemed people. He took possession of it for them, as well as for himself; and "they are quickened together with him, and raised up together." And so when he ascended into heaven, and was exalted to great glory there, this also was as a public person. He took possession of heaven, not only for himself, but his people, as their forerunner and head, that they might ascend also, "and sit together in heavenly places with him," Ephesians 2:5-6 . "Christ writes upon them his new name," Revelation 3:12; i.e., he makes them partakers of his own glory and exaltation in heaven. His new name is that new honor and glory that the Father invested him with, when he set him on his own right hand. As a prince, when he advances any one to new dignity in his kingdom, gives him a new title. Christ and his saints shall be glorified together, Romans 8:17 .

02.03. Part III

The saints in heaven have communion, or a joint participation with Christ in his glory and blessedness in heaven, in the following respects more especially.

1. They partake with him in the ineffable delights he has in heaven, in the enjoyment of his Father. When Christ ascended into heaven, he was received to a glorious and peculiar joy and blessedness in the enjoyment of his Father, who, in his passion, hid his face from him; such an enjoyment as became the relation he stood in to the Father, and such as was a meet reward for the great and hard service he had performed on earth. Then "God showed him the path of life, and brought him into his presence, where is fulness of joy, and to sit on his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore," as is said of Christ, Psalms 16:11 . Then the Father "made him most blessed forever. He made him exceeding glad with his countenance;" as in Psalms 21:6 . The saints, by virtue of their union with Christ, and being his members, do, in some sort partake of his childlike relation to the Father; and so are heirs with him of his happiness in the enjoyment of his Father; as seems to be intimated by the apostle, in Galatians 4:4-7 . The spouse of Christ, by virtue of her espousals to that only begotten Son of God, is, as it were, a partaker of his filial relation to God, and becomes the king’s daughter, Psalms 14:13 (?), and so partakes with her divine husband in his enjoyment of his Father and her Father, his God and her God." A promise of this seems to be implied in those words of Christ to Mary, John 20:17 . Thus Christ’s faithful servants "enter into the joy of their Lord," Matthew 25:21 , Matthew 25:23 , and "Christ’s joy remains in them;" agreeably to those words of Christ, John 15:11 . Christ from eternity is, as it were, in the bosom of the Father, as the object of his infinite complacence. In him is the Father’s eternal happiness. Before the world was, he was with the Father, in the enjoyment of his infinite love; and had infinite delight and blessedness in that enjoyment; as he declares of himself 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." And when Christ ascended to the Father after his passion, he went to him, to the enjoyment of the same glory and blessedness in the enjoyment of his love; agreeably to his prayer the evening before his crucifixion, John 17:5 : "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory I had with thee before the world was." And in the same prayer, he manifests it to be his will, that his true disciples should be with him in the enjoyment of that joy and glory, which he then asked for himself, John 17:13 : "That my joy might be fulfilled in themselves:" John 17:22, "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." This glory of Christ, which the saints are to enjoy with him, is that which he has in the enjoyment of the Father’s infinite love to him; as appears by the last words of that prayer of our Lord, John 17:26 : "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." The love which the Father has to his Son is great indeed: the Deity does, as it were, wholly and entirely flow out in a stream of love to Christ; and the joy and pleasure of Christ is proportionably great. This is the stream of Christ’s delights, the river of his infinite pleasure; which he will make his saints to drink of with him, agreeably to Psalms 36:8-9 : "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house. Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life. In thy

light shall we see light." The saints shall have pleasure in partaking with Christ in his pleasure, and shall see light in his light. They shall partake with Christ of the same river of pleasure, shall drink of the same water of life, and of the same new wine in Christ's Father's kingdom, Matthew 26:29 . That new wine is especially that joy and happiness that Christ and his true disciples shall partake of together in glory, which is the purchase of Christ's blood, or the reward of his obedience unto death. Christ, at his ascension into heaven, received everlasting pleasures at his Father's right hand, and in the enjoyment of his Father's love, as the reward of his own death, or obedience unto death. But the same righteousness is reckoned to both head and members; and both shall have fellowship in the same reward, each according to their distinct capacity. That the saints in heaven have such a communion with Christ in his joy, and do so partake with him in his own enjoyment of the Father, does greatly manifest the transcendent excellency of their happiness, and their being admitted to a vastly higher privilege in glory than the angels.

2. The saints in heaven are received to a fellowship or participation with Christ in the glory of that dominion to which the Father hath exalted him. The saints, when they ascend to heaven as Christ ascended, and are made to sit together with him in heavenly places, and are partakers of the glory of his exaltation, are exalted to reign with him. They are through him made kings and priests, and reign with him, and in him, over the same kingdom. As the Father hath appointed unto him a kingdom, so he has appointed to them. The Father has appointed the Son to reign over his own kingdom, and the Son appoints his saints to reign in his. The Father has given to Christ to sit with him on his throne, and Christ gives to the saints to sit with him on his throne, agreeably to Christ's promise, Revelation 3:21 . Christ, as God's Son, is the heir of his kingdom, and the saints are joint heirs with Christ: which implies, that they are heirs of the same inheritance, to possess the same kingdom, in and with him, according to their capacity. Christ, in his kingdom, reigns over heaven and earth; he is appointed the heir of all things; and so all things are the saints'; "whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come," all are theirs; because they are Christ's, and united to him, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23 . The angels are given to Christ as a part of his dominion: they are all given to wait upon him as ministering spirits to him. So also they are all, even the highest and most dignified of them, ministering spirits, to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation. They are Christ's angels, and they are also their angels. Such is the saints' union with Christ, and their interest in him, that what he possesses, they possess, in a much more perfect and blessed manner than if all things were given to them separately, and by themselves, to be disposed of according to their discretion. They are now disposed of so as, in every respect, to be most for their blessedness, by an infinitely better discretion than their own; and in being disposed of by their head and husband, between whom and them there is the most perfect union of hearts, and so the most perfect union of wills, and who are most perfectly each other's. As the glorified spouse of this great King reigns with and in him, in his dominion over the universe, so more especially does she partake with him in the joy and glory of his reign in his kingdom of grace; which is more peculiarly the kingdom that he possesses as Head of the church, and is that kingdom wherein she is more especially interested. It was especially to reign in this kingdom, that God the Father exalted him to his throne in heaven: he set his King on his holy hill of Zion, especially that he might reign over Zion, or over his church, in his kingdom of grace; and that he might be under the best advantages to carry on the designs of his love in this lower world. And therefore undoubtedly the saints in heaven are partakers with Christ in the joy and glory of the advancement and prosperity of his kingdom of grace on earth, and success of his gospel here,

which he looks on as the peculiar glory of his reign. The good shepherd rejoices when he finds but one sheep that was lost; and his friends and neighbors in heaven rejoice with him on that occasion. That part of the family that is in heaven is surely not unacquainted with the affairs of that part of the same family that is on earth. They that are with the King and are next to him, the royal family, that dwell in his palace, are not kept in ignorance of the affairs of his kingdom. The saints in heaven are with the angels, the King's ministers, by which he manages the affairs of his kingdom, and who are continually ascending and descending from heaven to the earth, and one or other of them daily employed as ministering spirits to each individual member of the church below: besides the continual ascending of the souls of departed saints from all parts of the militant church. On these accounts the saints in heaven must needs be under a thousand times greater advantage than we here for a full view of the state of the church on earth, and a speedy, direct, and certain acquaintance with all its affairs in every part. And that which gives them much greater advantage for such an acquaintance than the things already mentioned, is their being constantly in the immediate presence of Christ, and in the enjoyment of the most perfect intercourse with him, who is the King who manages all these affairs, and has an absolutely perfect knowledge of them. Christ is the head of the whole glorified assembly; they are mystically his glorified body: and what the head sees, it sees for the information of the whole body, according to its capacity: and what the head enjoys, is for the joy of the whole body. The saints, in leaving this world, and ascending to heaven, do not go out of sight of things appertaining to Christ's kingdom on earth; but, on the contrary, they go out of a state of obscurity, and ascend above the mists and clouds into the clearest light: to a pinnacle in the very centre of light, where every thing appears in clear view. They have as much greater advantage to view the state of Christ's kingdom, and the works of the new creation here, than while they were in this world, as a man that ascends to the top of a high mountain has a greater advantage to view the face of the earth, than he had while he was in a deep valley, or thick forest below, surrounded on every side with those things that impeded and limited his sight. Nor do they view as indifferent or unconcerned spectators, any more than Christ himself is an unconcerned spectator. The happiness of the saints in heaven consists very much in beholding the glory of God appearing in the work of redemption: for it is by this chiefly that God manifests his glory, the glory of his wisdom, holiness, grace, and other perfections, to both saints and angels; as is apparent by many Scriptures. And therefore undoubtedly their happiness consists very much in beholding the progress of this work in its application and success, and the steps by which infinite power and wisdom bring it to its consummation. And the saints in heaven are under unspeakably greater advantage to take the pleasure of beholding the progress of this work on earth than we are that are here; as they are under greater advantages to see and understand the marvellous steps that Divine Wisdom takes in all that is done, and the glorious ends he obtains, the opposition Satan makes, and how he is baffled and overthrown. They can better see the connection of one event with another, and the beautiful order of all things that come to pass in the church in different ages that to us appear like confusion. Nor do they only view these things, and rejoice in them, as a glorious and beautiful sight, but as persons interested, as Christ is interested; as possessing these things in Christ, and reigning with him, in this kingdom. Christ's success in his work of redemption, in bringing home souls to himself, applying his saving benefits by his Spirit, and the advancement of the kingdom of grace in the world, is the reward especially promised to him by his Father in the covenant of redemption, for the hard and difficult service he performed while in the form of a servant; as is manifest by Isaiah 53:10-12 . But the saints shall be

rewarded with him: they shall partake with him in the joy of this reward; for this obedience that is thus rewarded is reckoned to them as they are his members, as was before observed. This was especially the joy that was set before Christ, for the sake of which he endured the cross and despised the shame. And his joy is the joy of all heaven. They that are with him in heaven are under much the greatest advantages to partake with him in this joy; for they have a perfect communion with him through whom, and in fellowship with whom, they enjoy and possess their whole inheritance, all their heavenly happiness; as much as the whole body has all its pleasure of music by the ear, and all the pleasure of its food by the mouth and stomach; and all the benefit and refreshment of the air by the lungs. The saints while on earth pray and labor for the same thing that Christ labored for, viz., the advancement of the kingdom of God among men, the promoting of the prosperity of Zion, and flourishing of religion in this world; and most of them have suffered for that end as Christ did, have been made partakers with their head in his sufferings, and "filled up (as the apostle expresses it) that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ:" and therefore they shall partake with him of the glory and joy of the end obtained. Romans 8:17 , "We are joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." 2 Timothy 2:12 , "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Christ, when his sufferings were past, and he left the earth and ascended into heaven, was so far from having done with kingdom in this world, that it was as it were but then begun: and he ascended for that very end, that he might more fully possess and enjoy this kingdom, that he might reign in it, and be under the best advantages for it; as much as a king ascends a throne in order to reign over his people, and receive the honor and glory of his dominion. No more have the saints done with Christ’s kingdom on earth, when they leave the earth and ascend into heaven. "Christ came (i.e., ascended) with clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before him, to the very end, that he might receive dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him," Daniel 7:13-14 . Which shall be eminently fulfilled after the ruin of Antichrist, which is especially the time of Christ’s kingdom. And the same is the time when "the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God;" as Daniel 7:27, in the same chapter. It is because they shall reign in and with Christ, the Most High, as seems intimated in the words that follow; "whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." This verse is true, not only of the saints on earth, but also the saints in heaven. Hence the saints in heaven, having respect to this time, do sing, in Revelation 5:10 , "We shall reign on the earth." And agreeably hereto, it is afterwards represented, that when the forementioned time comes, the souls of them that in former ages had suffered with Christ do reign with Christ; having as it were given to them new life and joy, in that spiritual blessed resurrection, which shall then be of the church of God on earth; and thus it is that it is said, Matthew 5:5 , "The meek (those that meekly and patiently suffer with Christ, and for his sake) shall inherit the earth:" they shall inherit it, and reign on earth with Christ. Christ is the heir of the world; and when the appointed time of his kingdom comes, his inheritance shall be given him, and then the meek, who are joint heirs, shall inherit the earth. The place in the Old Testament whence the words are taken, leads to a true interpretation of them. Psalms 37:11 , "The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." That there is reference in these latter words, "the abundance of peace," to the peace and blessedness of the latter days, we may be satisfied by comparing these words with Psalms 72:7 ," In his days shall be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth:" and

Jeremiah 33:6 , "I will reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth:" also Isaiah 2:4 , Micah 4:3 , Isaiah 11:6-9 , and many other parallel places. The saints in heaven will be as much with Christ in reigning over the nations, and in the glory of his dominion at that time, as they will he with him in the honor of judging the world at the last day. That promise of Christ to his disciples, Matthew 19:28-29 , seems to have a special respect to the former of these. In Matthew 19:28, Christ promises to the disciples, that hereafter, "when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The saints in heaven reigning on earth in the glorious latter day, is described in language accommodated to this promise of Christ, Revelation 20:4 : "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given them. And they reigned with Christ." And the promise in the next verse, in that 19th of Matthew, seems to have its fulfillment at the same time: "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or fathers, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life;" i.e., in the time when the saints shall inherit the earth and reign on earth, the earth, with all its blessings and good things, shall be given in great abundance to the church, to be possessed by the saints. This shall they receive in this present world, and in the time to come everlasting life. The saints in heaven shall partake with Christ in the triumph and glory of those victories that he shall obtain in that future glorious time, over the kings and nations of the world, that are sometimes represented by his ruling them with a rod of iron, and dashing them in pieces as a potter's vessel. Which doubtless there is respect to in Revelation 2:26-27 : "He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: (and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken to shivers:) even as I received of my Father." And Psalms 149:5 , to the end: "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds;" i.e., in their separate state after death; compare Isaiah 57:1-2 . Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand: to execute vengeance upon the Heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all the saints." Accordingly when Christ appears riding forth to his victory over Antichrist, Revelation 19:1-21, the hosts of heaven appear going forth with him in robes of triumph, Revelation 19:14. And when Antichrist is destroyed, the inhabitants of heaven, and the holy apostles and prophets, are called upon to rejoice, Revelation 18:20. And accordingly the whole multitude of the inhabitants of heaven, on that occasion, do appear to exult and praise God with exceeding joy, Revelation 19:1-8, and Revelation 11:15; and are also represented as greatly rejoicing on occasion of the ruin of the heathen empire, in the days of Constantine, Revelation 12:10. And it is observable all along in the visions of that book, the hosts of heaven appear as much concerned and interested in the events appertaining to the kingdom of Christ here below, as the saints on earth. The day of the commencement of the church's latter day glory is eminently "the day of Christ's espousals; the day of the gladness of his heart, when as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so he will rejoice over his church." And then will all heaven exceedingly rejoice with him. And therefore they say at that time, Revelation 19:7 , "Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come."

Thus Abraham enjoys these things when they come to pass, that were of old promised to him, and that he saw beforehand, and rejoiced in. He will enjoy the fulfillment of the promise of all the families of the earth being blessed in his seed, when it shall be accomplished. And all the ancient patriarchs, who died in faith of promises of glorious things that should be accomplished in this

world, "who had not received the promises, but saw them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them," do actually enjoy them when fulfilled. David actually saw and enjoyed the fulfillment of that promise, in its due time, which was made to him many hundred years before, and was all his salvation and all his desire. Thus Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days pointed out by his own prophecy. Thus the saints of old that died in faith, not having received the promises, are made perfect, and have their faith crowned by the better things accomplished in these latter days of the gospel, Hebrews 11:39-40 , which they see and enjoy in their time.

3. The departed souls of saints have fellowship with Christ, in his blessed and eternal employment of glorifying the Father. The happiness of heaven consists not only in contemplation, and a mere passive enjoyment, but consists very much in action. And particularly in actively serving and glorifying God. This is expressly mentioned as a great part of the blessedness of the saints in their most perfect state, Revelation 22:3 : "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him." The angels are as a flame of fire in their ardor and activity in God’s service: the four animals, Revelation 6:1-17 (which are generally supposed to signify the angels), are represented as continually giving praise and glory to God, and are said not to rest day nor night, Revelation 6:8. The souls of departed saints are, doubtless, become as the angels of God in heaven in this respect. And Jesus Christ is the head of the whole glorious assembly; as in other things appertaining to their blessed state, so in this of their praising and glorifying the Father. When Christ, the night before he was crucified, prayed for his exaltation to glory, it was that he might glorify the Father: John 17:1 , "These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." And this he doubtless does, now he is in heaven; not only in fulfilling the Father’s will, in what he does as head of the church and ruler of the universe, but also in leading the heavenly assembly in their praises. When Christ instituted the Supper, and ate and drank with his disciples at his table (giving them therein a representation and pledge of their future feasting with him, and drinking new wine in his heavenly Father’s kingdom), he at that time led them in their praises to God, in that hymn that they sang. And so doubtless he leads his glorified disciples in heaven. David was the sweet psalmist of Israel, and he led the great congregation of God’s people in their songs of praise. Herein, as well as in innumerable other things, he was a type of Christ, who is often spoken of in Scripture by the name of David. And many of the psalms that David penned, were songs of praise, that he, by the spirit of prophecy, uttered in the name of Christ, as Head of the church, and leading the saints in their praises. Christ in heaven leads the glorious assembly in their praises to God, as Moses did the congregation of Israel at the Red Sea; which is implied in its being said, that "they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb," Revelation 15:2-3 . In Revelation 19:5 , John tells us, that "he heard a voice come out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great." Who can it be that utters this voice out of the throne, but the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, calling on the glorious assembly of saints to praise his Father and their Father, his God and their God? And what the consequence of this voice is, we have an account in the next words: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

02.04. Application

The use that I would make of what has been said on this subject is of EXHORTATION. Let us all be exhorted hence earnestly to seek after that great privilege that has been spoken of, that when "we are absent from the body, we may be present with the Lord." We cannot continue always in these earthly tabernacles: they are very frail, and will soon decay and fall; and are continually liable to be overthrown by innumerable means: our souls must soon leave them, and go into the eternal world. O, how infinitely great will the privilege and happiness of such be, who at that time shall go to be with Christ in his glory, in the manner that has been represented! The privilege of the twelve disciples was great, in being so constantly with Christ as his family, in his state of humiliation. The privilege of those three disciples was great, who were with him in the mount of his transfiguration; where was exhibited to them some little semblance of his future glory in heaven, such as they might behold in the present frail, feeble, and sinful state: they were greatly entertained and delighted with what they saw; and were for making tabernacles to dwell there, and return no more down the mount. And great was the privilege of Moses when he was with Christ in Mount Sinai, and besought him to show him his glory, and he saw his back parts as he passed by, and proclaimed his name. But is not that privilege infinitely greater, that has now been spoken of, the privilege of being with Christ in heaven, where he sits on the right hand of God, in the glory of the King and God of angels, and of the whole universe, shining forth as the great light, the bright sun of that world of glory; there to dwell in the full, constant and everlasting view of his beauty and brightness; there most freely and intimately to converse with him, and fully to enjoy his love, as his friends and spouse; there to have fellowship with him in the infinite pleasure and joy he has in the enjoyment of his Father; there to sit with him on his throne, and reign with him in the possession of all things, and partake with him in the joy and glory of his victory over his enemies, and the advancement of his kingdom in the world, and to join with him in joyful songs of praise to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God, forever and ever? Is not such a privilege worth the seeking after? But here, as a special enforcement of this exhortation, I would improve that dispensation of God’s holy providence, that is the sorrowful occasion of our coming together at this time, viz., the death of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, in the work of the gospel ministry, whose funeral is this day to be attended; together with what was observable in him, living and dying. In this dispensation of Providence, God puts us in mind of our mortality, and forewarns us that the time is approaching when we must be absent from the body, and "must all appear (as the apostle observes in the next verse but one to my text) before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive the things done in the body, according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad." And in him, whose death we are now called to consider and improve, we have not only an instance of mortality, but an instance of one that, being absent from the body, is present with the Lord; as we have all imaginable reason to conclude. And that, whether we consider the nature of the operations he was under, about the time whence he dates his conversion, or the nature and course of his inward exercises from that time forward, or his outward conversation and long space wherein he looked death in the face. His convictions of sin, preceding his first consolations in Christ (as appears by a written account he has left of his inward exercises

and experiences), were exceeding deep and thorough: his trouble and exercise of mind, through a sense of guilt and misery, very great and long continued, but yet sound and solid; consisting in no unsteady, violent and unaccountable hurries and frights, and strange perturbations of mind; but arising from the most serious consideration, and proper illumination of the conscience to discern and consider the true state of things. And the light let into his mind at conversion, and the influences and exercises that his mind was subject to at that time, appear very agreeable to reason and the gospel of Jesus Christ; the change very great and remarkable, without any appearance of strong impressions on the imagination, sudden flights and pangs of the affections, and vehement emotions in animal nature; but attended with proper intellectual views of the supreme glory of the divine Being, consisting in the infinite dignity and beauty of the perfections of his nature, and of the transcendent excellency of the way of salvation by Christ. This was about eight years ago, when he was about twenty-one years of age.

Thus God sanctified and made meet for his use, that vessel that he intended to make eminently a vessel of honor in his house, and which he had made of large capacity, having endowed him with very uncommon abilities and gifts of nature. He was a singular instance of a ready invention, natural eloquence, easy flowing expression, sprightly apprehension, quick discerning, and a very strong memory; and yet of a very penetrating genius, close and clear thought, and piercing judgment. He had an exact taste: his understanding was (if I may so express it) of a quick, strong and distinguishing scent. His learning was very considerable: he had a great taste for learning; and applied himself to his studies in so close a manner when he was at college, that he much injured his health; and was obliged on that account for a while to leave the college, throw by his studies and return home. He was esteemed one that excelled in learning in that society.

He had an extraordinary knowledge of men, as well as things. Had a great insight into human nature, and excelled most that ever I knew in a communicative faculty: he had a peculiar talent at accommodating himself to the capacities, tempers and circumstances, of those that he would instruct or counsel.

He had extraordinary gifts for the pulpit: I never had opportunity to hear him preach, but have often heard him pray: and I think his manner of addressing himself to God, and expressing himself before him, in that duty, almost inimitable; such (so far as I may judge) as I have very rarely known equaled. He expressed himself with that exact propriety and pertinency, in such significant, weighty, pungent expressions; with that decent appearance of sincerity, reverence, and solemnity, and great distance from all affectation, as forgetting the presence of men, and as being in the immediate presence of a great and holy God, that I have scarcely ever known paralleled. And his manner of preaching, by what I have often heard of it from good judges, was no less excellent; being clear and instructive, natural, nervous, forcible, and moving, and very searching and convincing. He nauseated an affected noisiness, and violent boisterousness in the pulpit; and yet much disrelished a flat, cold delivery, when the subject of discourse, and matter delivered, required affection and earnestness. Not only had he excellent talents for the study and the pulpit, but also for conversation. He was of a sociable disposition; and was remarkably free, entertaining, and profitable in ordinary discourse; and had much of a faculty of disputing, defending truth and confuting error. As he excelled in his judgment and knowledge of things in general, so especially in divinity. He was truly, for one of his standing, an extraordinary divine. But above all, in matters relating to experimental religion. In this, I know I have the concurring opinion of some that have

had a name for persons of the best judgment. And according to what ability I have to judge things of this nature, and according to my opportunities, which of late have been very great, I never knew his equal, of his age and standing, for clear, accurate notions of the nature and essence of true religion, and its distinctions from its various false appearances; which I suppose to be owing to these three things meeting together in him;--the strength of his natural genius, and the great opportunities he had of observation of others, in various parts, both white people and Indians, and his own great experience. His experiences of the holy influences of God's Spirit were not only great at his first conversion, but they were so, in a continued course, from that time forward; as appears by a record, or private journal, he kept of his daily inward exercises, from the time of his conversion, until he was disabled by the failing of his strength, a few days before his death. The change which he looked upon as his conversion, was not only a great change of the present views, affections, and frame of his mind; but was evidently the beginning of that work of God on his heart, which God carried on, in a very wonderful manner, from that time to his dying day. He greatly abhorred the way of such, as live on their first work, as though they had now got through their work, and are thence forward, by degrees, settled in a cold, lifeless, negligent, worldly frame; he had an ill opinion of such persons' religion.

[A few pages of text that are duplicated in the Memoirs of Mr. Brainerd's life are omitted at this point]

Oh that the things that were seen and heard in this extraordinary person, his holiness, heavenliness, labor and self-denial in life, his so remarkably devoting himself and his all, in heart and practice, to the glory of God, and the wonderful frame of mind manifested, in so steadfast a manner, under the expectation of death, and the pains and agonies that brought it on, may excite in us all, both ministers and people, a due sense of the greatness of the work we have to do in the world, the excellency and amiableness of thorough religion in experience and practice, and the blessedness of the end of such, whose death finishes such a life, and the infinite value of their eternal reward, when absent from the body and present with the Lord; and effectually stir us up to endeavors, that in the way of such a holy life we may at least come to so blessed an end. AMEN.

Chapter 22

03.00. Absent From The Body

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PREFACE

It has long been desired by the friends of Mr. Edwards, that a number of his manuscripts should be published, but the disadvantage under which all posthumous publications must necessarily appear, and the difficulty of getting any considerable work printed in this infant country hitherto, have proved sufficient obstacles to the execution of such a proposal. The first of these obstacles made me doubt, for a considerable time after these manuscripts came into my hands, whether I could, consistently with that regard which I owe to the honor of so worthy a parent, suffer any of them to appear in the world. However, being diffident of my own sentiments, and doubtful whether I were not over jealous in this matter, I determined to submit to the opinion of gentlemen, who are friends both to the character of Mr. Edwards and to the cause of truth. The consequence was, that they gave their advice for publishing them. The other obstacle was removed by a gentleman in the church of Scotland, who was formerly a correspondent of Mr. Edwards. He engaged a bookseller to undertake the work, and also signified his desire that these following discourses in particular might be made public.

Mr. Edwards had planned a body of divinity, in a new method, and in the form of a history, in which he was first to show, how the most remarkable events, in all ages from the fall to the present times, recorded in sacred and profane history, were adapted to promote the work of redemption, and then to trace, by the light of scripture prophecy, how the same work should be yet further carried on even to the end of the world. His heart was so much set on executing this plan, that he was considerably averse to accept the presidency of Princeton college, lest the duties of that office should put it out of his power. The outlines of that work are now offered to the public, as contained in a series of sermons, preached at Northampton in 1739,without any view to publication. On that account, the reader cannot reasonably expect all that from them, which he might justly have expected, had they been written with such a view, and prepared by the Author’s own hand for the press. As to elegance of composition, which is now esteemed so essential to all publications, it is well known, that the Author did not make that his chief study. However, his other writings, though destitute of the ornaments of fine language, have it seems that solid merit, which has procured both to themselves and to him a considerable reputation in the world, and with many an high esteem. It is hoped that the reader will find in these discourses many traces of plain good sense, sound reasoning, and thorough knowledge of the sacred oracles, and real unfeigned piety. And that, as the plan is new, and many of the sentiments uncommon, they may afford entertainment and improvement to the ingenious, the inquisitive, and the pious reader, may confirm their faith in God’s government of the world, in our holy Christian religion in general, and in many of its peculiar doctrines, may assist in studying with greater pleasure and advantage the historical and prophetic books of Scripture, and may excite to a conversation becoming the gospel. That this volume may

produce these happy effects in all who shall peruse it, is the hearty desire and prayer of the reader's most humble servant,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

New Haven, Feb. 25, 1773.

ADVERTISEMENT

THEY who have a relish for the study of the Scriptures, and have access to peruse the following sheets, will, I am persuaded, deem themselves much indebted to the Reverend Mr. Edwards of New Haven for consenting to publish them. Though the acute philosopher and deep divine appears in them, yet they are in the general better calculated for the instruction and improvement of ordinary Christians, than those of President Edwards' writings, where the abstruse nature of the subject, or the subtle objections of opposers of the truth, led him to more abstract and metaphysical reasonings. The manuscript being entrusted to my care, I have not presumed to make any change in the sentiments or composition. I have, however, taken the liberty to reduce it from the form of sermons, which it originally bore, to that of a continued treatise. And I have so altered and diversified the marks of the several divisions and subdivisions, that each class of heads might be easily distinguished.

JOHN ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, April 29, 1774.

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

Isaiah 51:8

For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be forever, and my navigation from generation to generation.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND DOCTRINE THE design of this chapter is to comfort the church under her sufferings, and the persecutions of her enemies. The argument of consolation insisted on is, the constancy and perpetuity of God's mercy and faithfulness towards her, which shall be manifest in continuing to work salvation for her, protecting her against all assaults of her enemies, and carrying her safely through all the changes of the world, and finally crowning her with victory and deliverance. In the text, this happiness of the church of God is set forth by comparing it with the contrary fate of her enemies that oppress her. And therein we may observe,

1. How short lived the power and prosperity of the church's enemies is, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool," i.e. however great their prosperity is, and however great their present glory. They shall by degrees consume and vanish away a secret curse of God, until they come to nothing. All their power and glory, and so their persecutions, shall eternally cease. They will be finally and irrecoverably ruined, as the finest and most glorious apparel will in time wear away, and be consumed by moths and rottenness. We learn who those are that shall thus consume away, by the foregoing verse, viz. those that are the enemies of God's people, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear

ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings."

2. The contrary happy lot and portion of God's church, expressed in these words, "My righteousness shalt be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." Who are meant as those that shall have the benefit of this, we also learn by the preceding verse, viz. They "that know righteousness," and "the people in whose heart is God's law," or, in one word, the church of God. And concerning this happiness of theirs here spoken of, we may observe two things, viz. 1. Wherein it consists. 2. Its continuance.

(1.) Wherein it consists, viz. In God's righteousness and salvation towards them. By God's righteousness here, is meant his faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant promises to his church, or his faithfulness towards his church and people in bestowing the benefits of the covenant of grace upon them. These benefits, though they are bestowed of free and sovereign grace, are altogether undeserved. Yet as God has been pleased, by the promises of the covenant of grace, to bind himself to bestow them, so they are bestowed in the exercise of God's righteousness or justice. And therefore the Apostle says, Hebrews 6:10, "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love." And so, 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So the word righteousness, is very often used in Scripture for God's covenant faithfulness. So it is used in Nehemiah 9:8, "Thou hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous." So we are often to understand righteousness and covenant mercy for the same thing, as Psalms 24:5, "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Psalms 36:10, "Continue thy loving kindness to them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart." And Psalms 51:14, "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." Daniel 9:16, "O Lord, according to thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away." — And so in innumerable other places. The other word here used is salvation. Of these two God's righteousness and his salvation, the one is the cause, of which the other is the effect. God's righteousness, or covenant mercy, is the root of which his salvation is the fruit. Both of them relate to the covenant of grace. The one is God's covenant mercy and faithfulness, the other intends that work of God by which this covenant mercy is accomplished in the fruits of it. For salvation is the sum of all those works of God by which the benefits that are by the covenant of grace are procured and bestowed.

2. We may observe its continuance, signified here by two expressions, forever, and from generation to generation. The latter seems to be explanatory of the former. The phrase forever, is variously used in Scripture. Sometimes thereby is meant as long as a man lives. So it is said, the servant that has his ear bored through with an awl to the door of his master, should be his forever. Sometimes thereby is meant during the continuance of the Jewish state. So of many of the ceremonial and Levitical laws it is said, that they should be statutes forever. Sometimes it means as long as the world shall stand, or to the end of the generations of men. So it is said, Ecclesiastes 1:4, "One generation passeth away, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever." Sometimes thereby is meant to all eternity. So it is said, "God is blessed for ever," Romans 1:25. And so it is said, John 6:51, "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever." — And which of these senses is here to be understood, the next words determine, viz. to the end of the world, or to the end of the generations of men. It is said in the next words, "and my salvation from generation to generation." Indeed the fruits of God's salvation shall remain after the end of the world, as

appears by the 6th verse, “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner, but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” But the work of salvation itself toward the church shall continue to be wrought until then, until the end of the world God will go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for the church, from all her enemies. For that is what the prophet is here speaking of, until the end of the world, until her enemies cease to be, as to any power to molest the church. And this expression, “from generation to generation,” may determine us as to the time which God continues to carry on the work of salvation for his church, both with respect to the beginning and end. It is from generation to generation, i.e. throughout all generations, beginning with the generations of men on the earth, and not ending until these generations end, at the end of the world. And therefore we deduce from these words this.

DOCTRINE THE WORK OF REDEMPTION IS A WORK THAT GOD CARRIES ON FROM THE FALL OF MAN TO THE END OF THE WORLD

THE generations of mankind on the earth did not begin until after the fall. The beginning of the posterity of our first parents was after the fall. For all their posterity, by ordinary generation, are partakers of the fall, and of the corruption of nature that followed from it. These generations, by which the human race is propagated, shall continue to the end of the world. So these two are the limits of the generations of men on the earth, the fall of man the beginning, and the end of the world, or the day of judgment, the end. The same are the limits of the work of redemption as to those progressive works of God, by which that redemption is brought about and accomplished, though not as to the fruits of it. For they, as was said before, shall be to all eternity. The work of redemption and the work of salvation are the same thing. What is sometimes in Scripture called God’s saving his people, is in other places called his redeeming them. So Christ is called both the Savior and the Redeemer of his people.

Before entering on the proposed History of the Work of Redemption, I would 1. Explain the terms made use of in the doctrine, — and, 2. Show what those things are that are designed to he accomplished by this great work of God.

First, I would show in what sense the terms of the doctrine are used. — And, 1. I would show how I would be understood when I use the word redemption, — and, 2. How I would be understood when I say, this work is a work of God carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world.

I. I would show how I would be understood when I use the word redemption. — And here it may be observed, that the work of redemption is sometimes understood in a more limited sense, for the purchase of salvation. For so the word strictly signifies, a purchase of deliverance. If we take the word in this restrained sense, the work of redemption was not so long in doing. But it was begun and finished with Christ’s humiliation. It was all wrought while Christ was upon earth. It was begun with Christ’s incarnation, and carried on through Christ’s life, and finished with his death, or the time of his remaining under the power of death, which ended in his resurrection. And so we say, that the day of Christ’s resurrection is the day when Christ finished the work of redemption, i.e. then the purchase was finished, and the work itself, and all that appertained to it, was virtually done and finished, but not actually. But then sometimes the work of redemption is taken more largely, including all that God works or accomplishes tending to this end, not only the purchasing

of redemption, but also all God's works that were properly preparatory to the purchase, or as applying the purchase and accomplishing the success of it. So the whole dispensation, as it includes the preparation and the purchase, and the application and success of Christ's redemption, is here called the work of redemption. All that Christ does in this great affair as mediator, in any of his offices, either of prophet, priest, or king, either when he was in this world, in his human nature, or before, or since, and not only what Christ the mediator has done, but also what the Father, or the Holy Ghost, has done, as united or confederated in this design of redeeming sinful men. Or, in one word, all that is wrought in the execution of the eternal covenant of redemption, this is what I call the work of redemption in the doctrine. For it is all but one work, one design. The various dispensations or works that belong to it, are but the several parts of one scheme. It is but one design that is formed, to which all the offices of Christ do directly tend, and in which all the persons of the Trinity do conspire, and all the various dispensations that belong to it are united. The several wheels are one machine, to answer one end, and produce one effect.

II. When I say, this work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, in order to the full understanding of my meaning in it, I would desire two or three things to be observed.

1. That it is not meant, that nothing was done in order to it before the fall of man. There were many things done in order to this work of redemption before that. Some things were done before the world was created, yea from all eternity. The persons of the Trinity were as it were confederated in a design and a covenant of redemption, in which covenant the Father had appointed the Son, and the Son had undertaken the work. And all things to be accomplished in the work were stipulated and agreed. And besides these, there were things done at the creation of the world, in order to that work, before man fell. For the world itself seems to have been created in order to it. The work of creation was in order to God's works of providence. So that if it be inquired, Which of these kinds of works are the greatest, the works of creation or the works of providence? I answer, the works of providence, because God's works of providence are the end of his works of creation, as the building an house, or the forming an engine or machine, is for its use. But God's main work of providence is this great work of God that the doctrine speaks of, as may more fully appear hereafter. The creation of heaven was in order to the work of redemption. It was to be an habitation for the redeemed, Matthew 25:34, "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Even the angels were created to be employed in this work. And therefore the apostle calls them, "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Hebrews 1:14. As to this lower world, it was doubtless created to be a stage upon which this great and wonderful work of redemption should be transacted. Therefore, as might be shown, in many respects this lower world is wisely fitted, in the formation, for such a state of man as he is in since the fall, under a possibility of redemption. So when it is said that the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, it is not meant, that all that ever was done in order to redemption has been done since the fall. Nor,

2. Is it meant that there will be no remaining fruits of this wok after the end of the world. The greatest fruits of all will be after that. That glory and blessedness that will be the sum of all the fruits, will remain to all the saints after that. The work of redemption is not an eternal work, i.e. it is not a work always a doing and never accomplished. But the fruits of this work are eternal fruits. The work has an issue. But in the issue the end will be obtained, which end will never have an

end. As those things that were in order to this work before the beginning of the world, as God's electing love, and the covenant of redemption, never had a beginning. So the fruits of this work, that shall be after the end of the world, never will have an end. And therefore,

3. When it is said in the doctrine, that this is a work that God is carrying on from the fall of man to the end of the world, what I mean is, that those things that belong to this work itself, and are parts of this scheme, are all this while accomplishing. There are things that are in order to it that are before the beginning of it, an d fruits of it that are after it is finished. But the work itself is so long a doing, even from the fall of man to the end of the world. It is all this while a carrying on. It was begun immediately upon the fall, and will continue to the end of the world, and then will be finished. The various dispensations of God that are in this space, do belong to the same work, and to the same design, and have all one issue, and therefore are all to he reckoned but as several parts of one work, as it were several successive motions of one machine, to bring about in the conclusion one great event. And here also we must distinguish between the parts of redemption itself, and the parts of the work by which that redemption is wrought out. There is a difference between the parts of the benefits procured and bestowed, and the parts of the work of God by which those benefits were procured and bestowed. As, for example, there is a difference between the parts of the benefit that the children of Israel received, consisting in their redemption out of Egypt, and the parts of that work of God by which this was wrought. The redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, considered as the benefit which they enjoyed, consisted of two parts, viz., their deliverance from their former Egyptian bondage and misery, and their being brought into a more happy state, as the servants of God, and heirs of Canaan. But there are many more things which are parts of that work of God which is called his work of redemption of Israel out of Egypt. To this belongs his calling of Moses, his sending him to Pharaoh, and all the signs and wonders he wrought in Egypt, and his bringing such terrible judgments on the Egyptians, and many other things.

It is this work by which God effects redemption that we are speaking of. This work is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world. And it is so in two respects.

(1) With respect to the effect wrought on the souls of the redeemed, which is common to all ages from the fall of man to the end of the world. This effect that I here speak of, is the application of redemption with respect to the souls of particular persons, in converting, justifying, sanctifying and glorifying of them. By these things the souls of particular persons are actually redeemed, and do receive the benefit of the work of redemption in its effect in their souls. And in this sense the work of redemption is carried on in all ages of the world, from the fall of man to the end of the world. The work of God in converting souls, opening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, raising dead souls to life, and rescuing the miserable captivated souls out of the hands or Satan, was begun soon after the fall of man, has been carried on in the world ever since to this day, and will be to the end of the world. God has always, ever since the first erecting of the church of the redeemed after the fall, had such a church in the world. Though oftentimes it has been reduced to a very narrow compass and to low circumstances. Yet it has never wholly failed. And as God carries on the work of converting the souls of fallen men through all these ages, so he goes on to justify them, to blot out all their sins, and to accept them as righteous in his sight, through the righteousness of Christ, and adopt and receive them from being the children of Satan, to be his own children. So also he goes on to sanctify or to carry on the work of his grace, which he has begun in them, and to comfort

them with the consolations of his Spirit, and to glorify them, to bestow upon them, when their bodies die, that eternal glory which is the fruit of the purchase of Christ. What is said, Romans 8:30, “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” I say this is applicable to all ages, from the fall, to the end of the world. The way that the work of redemption, with respect to these effects of it on the souls of the redeemed, is carried on from the fall to the end of the world, is by repeating and continually working the same work over again, though in different persons, from age to age. But,

(2) The work of redemption with respect to the grand design in general, as it respects the universal subject and end, is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world in a different manner, not merely by repeating or renewing the same effect in the different subjects of it, but by many successive works and dispensations of God, all tending to one great end and effect, all united as the several parts of a scheme, and all together making up one great work. Like a house or temple that is being built. First, the workmen are sent forth, then the materials are gathered, then the ground fitted, then the foundation is laid, then the superstructure is erected, one part after another, until at length the top stone is laid, and all is finished. Now the work of redemption in that large sense that has been explained, may be compared to such a building, that is carrying on from the fall of man to the end of the world. God went about it immediately after the fall of man. Some things were done towards it immediately, as may be shown hereafter. God has proceeded, as it were, getting materials and building, ever since. And so will proceed to the end of the world. Then the time will come when the top stone shall be brought forth, and all will appear complete and consummate. The glorious structure will then stand forth in its proper perfection. This work is carried on in the former respect that has been mentioned, viz. , as to the effect on the souls of particular persons that are redeemed, by its being an effect that is common to all ages. The work is carried on in this latter respect, viz. , as it respects the church of God, and the grand design in general. It is carried on, not only by that which is common to all ages, but by successive works wrought in different ages, all parts of one whole, or one great scheme. One work is brought about by various steps, one step in one age, and another in another. It is this carrying on of the work of redemption that I shall chiefly insist upon, though not excluding the former. For one necessarily supposes the other.

Having thus explained what I mean by the terms of the doctrine, that you may the more clearly see how the great design and work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, I say, in order to this,

I now proceed, in the second place, to show what is the design of this great work, or what things are designed to be done by it. In order to see how a design is carried on, we must first know what the design is. To know how a workman proceeds, and to understand the various steps he takes in order to accomplish a I piece of work, we need to be informed what he is about, or what the thing is that he intends to accomplish. Otherwise we may stand by, and see him do one thing after another, and be quite puzzled and in the dark, seeing nothing of his scheme, and understanding nothing of what he means by it. If an architect, with a great number of hands, were a building some great palace, and one that was a stranger to such things should stand by, and see some men digging in the earth, others bringing timber, others hewing stones, and the like, he might see that there was a great deal done. But if he knew not the design, it would all appear to him confusion. And therefore, that the great works and dispensations of God that belong to this great affair of

redemption may not appear like confusion to you, I would set before you briefly the main things designed to be accomplished in this great work, to accomplish which God began to work presently after the fall of man, and will continue working to the end of the world, when the whole work will appear completely finished. And the main things designed to be done by it are these that follow.

I. It is to put all God's enemies under his feet, and that the goodness of God should finally appear triumphing over all evil. Soon after the world was created, evil entered into the world in the fall of the angels and man. Presently after God had made rational creatures, there were enemies who rose up against him from among them. In the fall of man evil entered into this lower world, and God's enemies rose up against him here. Satan rose up against God, endeavoring to frustrate his design in the creation of this lower world, to destroy his workmanship here, and to wrest the government of this lower world out of his hands, and usurp the throne himself, and set up himself as god of this world instead of the God that made it. And to these ends he introduced sin into the world. Having made man God's enemy, he brought guilt on man, and brought death and the most extreme and dreadful misery into the world.

Now one great design of God in the affair of redemption was, to reduce and subdue those enemies of God, until they should all be put under God's feet,1 Corinthians 15:25, "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet." Things were originally so planned and designed, that he might disappoint and confound, and triumph over Satan, and that he might be bruised under Christ's feet, Genesis 3:15. The promise was given, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It was a part of God's original design in this work, to destroy the works of the devil, and confound him in all his purposes, 1 John 3:8, "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." It was a part of his design, to triumph over sin, and over the corruptions of men, and to root them out of the hearts of his people, by conforming them to himself. He designed also, that his grace should triumph over man's guilt, and that infinite demerit that there is in sin. Again, it was a part of his design, to triumph over death. This is the last enemy that shall be destroyed, yet that shall finally be vanquished and destroyed.

God thus appears gloriously above all evil, and triumphing over all his enemies, was one great thing that God intended by the work of redemption, and the work by which this was to be done, God immediately went about as soon as man fell, and so goes on until he fully accomplishes it in the end of the world.

II. In doing this, God's design was perfectly to restore all the ruins of the fall, so far as concerns the elect part of the world, by his Son. Therefore we read of the "restitution of all things," Acts 3:21, "Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of the restitution of all things," and of the "times of refreshing" from the presence of the Lord Jesus, Acts 3:19, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Man's soul was ruined by the fall. The image of God was ruined. Man's nature was corrupted and destroyed, and man became dead in sin. The design of God was, to restore the soul of man, to restore life to it, and the image of God, in conversion, and to carry on the restoration in sanctification, and to perfect it in glory. Man's body was ruined, by the fall it became subject to death. The design of God was, to restore it from this ruin, and not only to deliver it from death in the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself, in making it like unto Christ's glorious body.

The world was ruined, as to man, as effectually as if it had been reduced to chaos again. All heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was, to restore all, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth, Isaiah 65:17, “Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” 2 Peter 3:13, “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” The work by which this was to be done, was begun immediately after the fall, and so is carried on until all is finished at the end, when the whole world, heaven and earth, shall be restored. There shall be, as it were, new heavens, and a new earth, in a spiritual sense, at the end of the world. Thus it is represented, Revelation 21:1, “And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.”

III. Another great design of God in the work off redemption, was to gather together in one all things in Christ, in heaven and in earth, i.e. all elect creatures, to bring all elect creatures, in heaven and in earth, to an union one to another in one body, under one head, and to unite all together in one body to God the Father. This was begun soon after the fall, and is carried on through all ages of the world, and finished at the end of the world.

IV. God designed by this work to perfect and complete the glory of all the elect by Christ. It was a design of God to advance the elect to an exceeding pitch of glory, “such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has ever entered into the heart of man” He intended to bring them to perfect excellency and beauty in his image, and in holiness, which is the proper beauty of spiritual beings, and to advance them to a glorious degree of honor, and also to an ineffable pitch of pleasure and joy, and thus to glorify the whole church of elect men in soul and body, and with them to bring the glory of the elect angels to its highest pitch under one head. The work which tends to this, God began immediately after the fall, and carries on through all ages, and will have perfected at the end of the world.

V. In all this God designed to accomplish the glory of the blessed Trinity in an exceeding degree. God had a design of glorifying himself from eternity, to glorify each person in the Godhead. The end must be considered as first in the order of nature, and then the means. Therefore we must conceive, that God having professed this end, had then as it were the means to choose. And the principal mean that he pitched upon was this great work of redemption that we are speaking of. It was his design in this work to glorify his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. And it was his design, by the Son to glorify the Father, John 13:31-32, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God also shall glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.” It was his design that the Son should thus be glorified, and should glorify the Father by what should be accomplished by the Spirit to the glory of the Spirit, that the whole Trinity, conjunctly, and each person singly, might be exceedingly glorified. The work that was the appointed means of this, was begun immediately after the fall, and is carried on until, and finished at, the end of the world, when all this intended glory shall be fully accomplished in all things.

Having thus explained the terms made use of in the doctrine, and shown what the things are which are to be accomplished by this great work of God, I proceed now to the proposed History, that is, to show how what was designed by the work of redemption has been accomplished, in the various steps of this work, from the fall of man to the end of the world. In order to this, I would divide this whole space of time into three periods.

1st, Reaching from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ.

2nd, From Christ's incarnation until his resurrection, or the whole time of Christ's humiliation.

3rd, From thence to the end of the world.

It may be some may be ready to think this a very unequal division. And it is so indeed in some respects. It is so, because the second period is so much the greatest. For although it be so much shorter than either of the other, being but between thirty and forty years, whereas both the other contain thousands. Yet in this affair that we are now upon, it is more than both the others. —

I would therefore proceed to show distinctly how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the end of the world, through each of these periods in their order, which I would do under three propositions, one concerning each period.

I. That from the fall of man until the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming and working out redemption, and were forerunners and earnests of it.

II. That the time from Christ's incarnation, until his resurrection, was spent in procuring and purchasing redemption.

III. That the space of time from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, is all taken up in bringing about or accomplishing the great effect or success off that purchase. In a particular consideration of these three propositions, the great truth taught in the doctrine may perhaps appear in a clear light, and we may see how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall off man to the end off the world.

03.01. Period 1 Fall to Incarnation of Christ

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION

MY first task is, to show how the work of redemption is carried on from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, under the first proposition, viz. That the space of time from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, was taken up in doing those things that were forerunners and earnests of Christ's coming and working out redemption, and were preparatory to it. The great works of God in the world during this whole space of time, were all preparatory to this. There were many great changes and revolutions in the world. These were all only the turning of the wheels of providence in order to this, to make way for the coming of Christ, and what he was to do in the world. They all pointed hither, and all issued here. Hither tended especially all God's great works towards his church. The church was under various dispensations of providence, and in very various circumstances, before Christ came. But all these dispensations were to prepare the way for his coming. God wrought salvation for the souls of men through all that space of time, though the number was very small to what it was afterwards. And all this salvation was, as it were, by way of anticipation. All the souls that were saved before Christ came, were only as it were the earnests of the future harvest.

God wrought many lesser salvations and deliverances for his church and people before Christ came. These salvations were all but so many images and forerunners of the great salvation Christ was to work out when he should come. God revealed himself of old, from time to time, from the fall of man to the coming of Christ. The church during that space of time enjoyed the light of divine revelation, or God's Word. They had in a degree the light of the gospel. But all these revelations were only so many forerunners and earnests of the great light that he should bring who came to be the light of the world. That whole space of time was as it were the time of night, wherein the church of God was not indeed wholly without light. It was like the light of the moon and stars that we have in the night, a dim light in comparison of the light of the sun, and mixed with a great deal of darkness. It had no glory, by reason of the glory that excels, 2 Corinthians 3:10. The church had indeed the light of the sun, but it was only as reflected from the moon and stars. The church all that while was a minor. This the apostle evidently teaches in Galatians 4:1-3, "Now I say, that the heir as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all, but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world." But here, for the greater clearness and distinctness, I would subdivide this period, from the fall of man to the coming of Christ, into six lesser periods, or parts.

1st, Extending from the fall to the flood.

2nd, From thence to the calling of Abraham.

3rd, From thence to Moses.

4th, From thence to David.

5th, From David to the captivity into Babylon.

6th, From thence to the incarnation of Christ.

PART I / FROM THE FALL TO THE FLOOD

THIS was a period farthest of all distant from Christ's incarnation. Yet then this great work was begun to be carried on. Then was this glorious building begun, that will not be finished until the end of the world, as I would now show you how. And to this purpose I would observe.

I. As soon as ever man fell, Christ entered on his mediatorial work. Then it was that Christ first took on him the work and office of a mediator. He had undertaken it before the world was made. He stood engaged with the Father to appear as man's mediator, and to take on him that office when there should be occasion, from all eternity. But now the time was come. When man fell, then the occasion came. And then Christ immediately, without further delay, entered on his work, and took on him that office that he had stood engaged to take on him from eternity. As soon as ever man fell, Christ the eternal Son of God clothed himself with the mediatorial character, and therein presented himself before the Father. He immediately stepped in between an holy, infinite, offended Majesty, and offending mankind, and was accepted in his interposition. And so wrath was prevented from going forth in the full execution of that amazing curse that man had brought on himself.

It is manifest that Christ began to exercise the office of mediator between God and man as soon as ever man fell, because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately. There was mercy in the forbearance of God, that he did not destroy him, as he did the angels when they fell. But there is no mercy exercised toward fallen man but through a mediator. If God had not in mercy restrained Satan, he would immediately have seized on his prey. Christ began to do the part of an intercessor for man as soon as he fell. There is no mercy exercised towards man but what is obtained through Christ's intercession. Now Christ was entered on his work that he was to continue in throughout all ages of the world. From that day forward Christ took on him the care of the church of the elect. He took on him the care of fallen man in the exercise of all his offices. He undertook thenceforward to teach mankind in the exercise of his prophetic office, and also to intercede for fallen man in his priestly office. He took on him, as it were, the care and burden of the government of the church, and of the world of mankind, from this day forward. He from that time took upon him the care of the defense of his elect church from all their enemies. When Satan, the grand enemy, had conquered and overthrown man, the business of resisting and conquering him was committed to Christ. He thenceforward undertook to manage that subtle powerful adversary. He was then appointed the Captain of the Lord's hosts, and the Captain of their salvation, and always acted as such thenceforward. So he appeared from time to time, and he will continue to act as such to the end of the world. Henceforward this lower world, with all its concerns, was, as it were, devolved upon the Son of God for when man had sinned. God the Father would have no more to do with man immediately. He would no more have any immediate concern with this world of mankind, that had apostatized from and rebelled against him. He would henceforward have no concern with man, but only through a mediator, either in teaching men, or in governing or

bestowing any benefits on them. And therefore, when we read in sacred history what God did from time to time towards his church and people, and what he said to them, and how he revealed himself to them, we are to understand it especially of the second person of the Trinity. When we read of God's appearing after the fall, from time to time, in some visible form or outward symbol of his presence, we are ordinarily, if not universally, to understand it of the second person of the Trinity. This may be argued from John 1:18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He is therefore called "the Image of the invisible God," Colossians 1:15, intimating, that though God the Father be invisible, yet Christ is his image or representation, by which he is seen, or by which the church of God has often had a representation of him, that is not invisible. In particular, Christ has after appeared in an human form.

Yea, not only was this lower world devolved on Christ, that he might have the care and government of it, and order it agreeably to his design of redemption, but also in some respect the whole universe. The angels from that time were committed to him, to be subject to him in his mediatorial office, to be ministering spirits to him in this affair and accordingly were so from this time forward, as is manifest by the scripture history. We have accounts from time to time of their acting as ministering spirits in the affairs of the church of Christ. And therefore we may suppose, that immediately on the fall of man, it was made known in heaven among the angels, that God had a design of redemption with respect to fallen man, and that Christ had now taken upon him the office and work of a mediator between God and man, that they might know their business hence that which was to be subservient to Christ, in this office. And as Christ, in this office, has since that, as God-man and Mediator, been solemnly exalted and installed the King of heaven, and is thenceforward as God-man, Mediator, the light, and as it were, the Sun of heaven. This is agreeable to Revelation 21:23, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." So this revelation that was made in heaven among the angels, of Christ's now having taken on him the office of a mediator between God and man, was as it were the first dawning of this light in heaven. When Christ ascended into heaven after his passion, and was solemnly installed in the throne as King of heaven, then this sun rose in heaven, even the Lamb that is the light of the new Jerusalem. But the light began to dawn immediately after the fall.

II. Presently upon this the gospel was first revealed on earth, in these words, Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." We must suppose, that God's intention of redeeming fallen man was first signified in heaven, before it was signified on earth, because the business of the angels as ministering spirits of the Mediator required it. For as soon as ever Christ had taken on him the work of a mediator, it was requisite that the angels should be ready immediately to be subservient to him in that office, so that the light first dawned in heaven, but very soon after the same was signified on earth. In those words of God there was an intimation of another surety to be appointed for man, after the first surety had failed. This was the first revelation of the covenant of grace. This was the first dawning of the light of the gospel on earth. This lower world before the fall enjoyed noonday light, the light of the knowledge of God, the light of his glory, and the light of his favor. But when man fell, all this light was at once extinguished, and the world reduced back again to total darkness, a worse darkness than that which was in the beginning of the world, that we read

of in Genesis 1:2, “And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.” This was a darkness a thousand times less redeemable than that. Neither men nor angels could find out any way whereby this darkness might be scattered. This darkness appeared in its blackness then, when Adam and his wife saw that they were naked, and sewed fig leaves, and when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, and hid themselves among the trees of the garden, and when God first called them to an account, and said to Adam, “What is this that thou hast done? — Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldest not eat?” Then we may suppose that their hearts were filled with shame and terror. But these words of God, Genesis 3:15, were the first dawning of the light of the gospel after this darkness. Now first appeared some glimmering of light after this dismal darkness, which before this was without one glimpse of light, any beam of comfort, or any the least hope. It was an obscure revelation of the gospel, and was not made to Adam or Eve directly, but it was in what God said to the serpent. But yet it was very comprehensive, as might be easily shown, would it not take up too much time.

Here was a certain intimation of a merciful design by “the seed of the woman,” which was like the first glimmerings of the light of the sun in the east when the day first dawns. This intimation of mercy was given them even before sentence was pronounced on either Adam or Eve, from tenderness to them, to whom God designed mercy, lest they should be overborne with a sentence of condemnation, without having anything held forth whence they could gather any hope.

One of those great things that were intended to he done by the work of redemption, is more plainly intimated here than the rest, viz. God’s subduing his enemies under the feet of his Son. This was threatened now, and God’s design of this was now first declared, which was the work Christ had now undertaken, and which he soon began, and carried on thenceforward, and will perfectly accomplish at the end of the world. Satan probably had triumphed greatly in the fall of man, as though he had defeated the designs of God in the creation of man and the world in general. But in these words God gives him a plain intimation, that he should not finally triumph, but that a complete victory and triumph should be obtained over him by the seed of the woman. This revelation of the gospel in this verse was the first thing that Christ did in his prophetic office. You may remember, that it was said in the first of those three propositions that have been mentioned, that from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ’s coming and working out redemption, and were forerunners and earnests of it. And one of those things which God did in this time to prepare the way for Christ’s coming into the world, was to foretell and promise it, as he did from time to time, from age to age, until Christ came. This was the first promise that ever was given of it, the first prediction that ever was made of it on earth.

III. Soon after this, the custom of sacrificing was appointed, to be a steady type of the sacrifice of Christ until he should come, and offer up himself a sacrifice to God. Sacrificing was not a custom first established by the Levitical law of Moses. For it had been a part of God’s instituted worship long before, even from the beginning of God’s visible church on earth. We read of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, offering sacrifice, and before them Noah, and before him Abel. And this was by divine appointment. For it was a part of God’s worship in his church, that was offered up in faith, and that he accepted. This proves that it was by his institution. For sacrificing is no part of natural worship. The light of nature does not teach men to offer up beasts in sacrifice to God,

and seeing it was not enjoined by the law of nature, if it was acceptable to God, it must be by some positive command or institution. For God has declared his abhorrence of such worship as is taught by the precept of men without his institution, Isaiah 29:13, “Wherefore the Lord said, For as much as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men; therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work,” etc. And such worship as hath not a warrant from divine institution, cannot be offered up in faith, because faith has no foundation where there is no divine appointment. It cannot be offered up in faith of God’s acceptance. For men have no warrant to hope for God’s acceptance, in that which is not of his appointment, and in that to which he hath not promised his acceptance. Therefore it follows, that the custom of offering sacrifices to God was instituted soon after the fall. For the Scripture teaches us, that Abel offered “the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof,” Genesis 4:4 and that he was accepted of God in this offering, Hebrews 11:4. And there is nothing in the story that looks as though the institution was first given then when Abel offered up that sacrifice to God, but it appears as though Abel only therein complied with a custom already established. And it is very probable that it was instituted immediately after God had revealed the covenant or grace, in Genesis 3:15, which covenant and promise was the foundation on which the custom of sacrificing was built. That promise was the first stone that was laid towards this glorious building, the work of redemption, which will be finished at the end of the world. And the next stone which was laid upon that, was the institution of sacrifices, to be a type of the great sacrifice. The next thing that we have an account of after God had pronounced sentence on the serpent, on the woman, and on the man, was, that God made them coats of skins, and clothed them, which, by the generality of divines, are thought to be the skins of beasts slain in sacrifice. For we have no account of anything else that should be the occasion of man’s slaying beasts, but only to offer them in sacrifice, until after the flood. Men were not wont to eat the flesh of beasts as their common food until after the flood. The first food of man in paradise before the fall was the fruit of the trees of paradise. When he was turned out of paradise after the fall, then his food was the herb of the field, Genesis 3:18, “And thou shalt eat of the herb of the field.” The first grant that he had to eat flesh as his common food was after the flood, Genesis 9:3, “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.” So that it is likely that these skins that Adam and Eve were clothed with, were the skins of their sacrifices. God’s clothing them with these was a lively figure of their being clothed with the righteousness of Christ. This clothing was no clothing of their own obtaining, but it was God that gave it them. It is said, “God made them coats of skins, and clothed them,” as the righteousness our naked souls are clothed with, is not our righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God. It is he only clothes the naked soul. Our first parents, who were naked, were clothed at the expense of life. Beasts were slain, and resigned up their lives a sacrifice to God, to afford clothing to them to cover their nakedness. So doth Christ, to afford clothing to our naked souls. The skin signifies the life:

So, Job 2:4, “Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life,” i.e. life for life. Thus our first parents were covered with skins of sacrifices, as the tabernacle in the wilderness, which signified the church, was, when it was covered with rams’ skins dyed red, as though they were dipped in blood, to signify that Christ’s righteousness was wrought out through the pains of death, under which he shed his precious blood.

We observed before, that the light that the church enjoyed from the fall of man, until Christ came, was like the light which we enjoy in the night, not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the moon and stars, which light did foreshadow Christ the Sun of righteousness that was afterwards to arise. This light of the Sun of righteousness to come they had chiefly two ways. One was by predictions of Christ to come, whereby his coming was foretold and promised. The other was by types and shadows, whereby his coming and redemption were prefigured. The first thing that was done to prepare the way for Christ in the former of these ways, was in that promise that was just taken notice of in the foregoing particular. And the first thing of the latter kind, viz., of types, to foreshadow Christ's coming, was that institution of sacrifices that we are now upon. As that promise in Genesis 3:15 was the first dawn of gospel light after the fall in prophecy. So the institution of sacrifices was the first hint of it in types. The giving of that promise was the first thing that was done after the fall, in this work, in Christ's prophetic office, the institution of sacrifices was the first thing that we read of after the fall, by which especially Christ exhibited himself in his priestly office. The institution of sacrifices was a great thing done towards preparing the way for Christ's coming, and working out redemption. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the main of all the Old Testament types of Christ and his redemption. And it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin, and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious gospel, that reveals the great sacrifice in the visible church, and not only so, but through the world of mankind. For from this institution of sacrifices that was after the fall, all nations derived the custom of sacrificing. For this custom of offering up sacrifices to the gods, to atone for their sins, was common to all nations. No nation, however barbarous, was found without it anywhere. This is a great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. For no nation, but only the Jews, could tell how they came by this custom, or to what purpose it was to offer sacrifices to their deities. The light of nature did not teach them any such thing That did not teach them that the gods were hungry, and fed upon the flesh which they burnt in sacrifice. And yet they all had this custom, of which no other account can be given, but that they derived it from Noah, who had it from his ancestors, on whom God had enjoined it as a type of the great sacrifice of Christ. However, by this means all nations of the world had their minds possessed with this notion, that an atonement or sacrifice for sin was necessary. And a way was made for their more readily receiving the great doctrine of the gospel of Christ, which teaches us the atonement and sacrifice of Christ.

IV. God did soon after the fall begin actually to save the souls of men through Christ's redemption. In this Christ, who had lately taken upon him the work of Mediator between God and man, did first begin that work, wherein he appeared in the exercise of his kingly office, as in the sacrifices he was represented in his priestly office, and in the first prediction of redemption by Christ he had appeared in the exercise of his prophetic office. In that prediction the light of Christ's redemption first began to dawn in the prophecies of it, in the institution of sacrifices it first began to dawn in the types of it, in this, viz., his beginning actually to save men, it first began to dawn in the fruit of it.

It is probable, therefore, that Adam and Eve were the first fruits of Christ's redemption. It is probable by God's manner of treating them, by his comforting them as he did, after their awakenings and terrors. They were awakened, and ashamed with a sense of their guilt, after their fall, when their eyes were opened, and they saw that they were naked, and sewed fig leaves to cover their nakedness. As the sinner, under the first awakenings, is wont to endeavor to hide the

nakedness of his soul, by patching up a righteousness of his own. Then they were further terrified and awakened, by hearing the voice of God, as he was coming to condemn them. Their coverings of fig leaves do not answer the purpose, but notwithstanding these, they ran to hide themselves among the trees of the garden, because they were naked, not daring to trust to their fig leaves to hide their nakedness from God. Then they were further awakened by God's calling of them to a strict account. But while their terrors were raised to such a height, and they stood, as we may suppose, trembling and astonished before their judge, without anything to catch hold of whence they could gather any hope. Then God took care to hold forth some encouragement to them, to keep them from the dreadful effects of despair under their awakenings, by giving a hint of a design of mercy by a Savior, even before he pronounced sentence against them. And when after this he proceeded to pronounce sentence, whereby we may suppose their terrors were further raised, God soon after took care to encourage them, and to let them see, that he had not wholly cast them off, by taking a fatherly care of them in their fallen, naked, and miserable state, by making them coats of skins and clothing them. Which also manifested an acceptance of those sacrifices that they offered to God for sin, that those were the skins of, which were types of what God had promised, when he said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Which promise, there is reason to think, they believed and embraced. Eve seems plainly to express her hope in and dependence on that promise, in what she says at the birth of Cain, Genesis 4:1, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," i.e. as God has promised, that my seed should bruise the serpent's head. So now has God given me this pledge and token of it, that I have a seed born. She plainly owns, that this her child was from God, and hoped that her promised seed was to be of this her eldest son, though she was mistaken, as Abraham was with respect to Ishmael, as Jacob was with respect to Esau, and as Samuel was with respect to the first born of Jesse. And especially does what she said at the birth of Seth express her hope and dependence on the promise of God, see Genesis 4:25, "For God hath appointed me another seed, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

Thus it is exceeding probable, if not evident, that as Christ took on him the work of Mediator as soon as man fell, so that he now immediately began his work of redemption in its effect, and that he immediately encountered his great enemy the devil, whom he had undertaken to conquer, and rescued those two first captives out or his hands, therein baffling him, soon after his triumph for the victory he had obtained over them, whereby he bad made them his captives. And though he was, as it were, sure of them and all their posterity, Christ the Redeemer Soon showed him, that he was mistaken, and that he was able to subdue him, and deliver fallen man. He let him see it, in delivering those first captives of his, and so soon gave him an instance of the fulfillment of that threatening, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and in this instance a presage of the fulfillment of one great thing he had undertaken, viz. his subduing all his enemies under his feet.

After this we have another instance of redemption in one of their children, viz. in righteous Abel, as the Scripture calls him, whose soul perhaps was the first that went to heaven through Christ's redemption. In him we have at least the first instance of the death of a redeemed person that is recorded in Scripture. If he was the first, then as the redemption of Christ began to dawn before in the souls of men in their conversion and justification, in him it first began to dawn in glorification. And in him the angels began first to do the part of ministering spirits to Christ, in going forth to conduct the souls of the redeemed to glory. And in him the elect angels in heaven had the first

opportunity to see so wonderful a thing as the soul of one of the fallen race of mankind, that had been sunk by the fall into such an abyss of sin and misery, brought to heaven, and in the enjoyment of heavenly glory, which was a much greater thing than if they had seen him returned to the earthly paradise. Thus they by this saw the glorious effect of Christ's redemption, in the great honor and happiness that was procured for sinful miserable creatures by it.

V. The next remarkable thing that God did in the farther carrying on of this great affair of redemption, that I shall take notice of, was the first remarkable pouring out of the Spirit through Christ that ever was, which was in the days of Enos. This seems to have been the next remarkable thing that was done toward erecting this glorious building that God had begun and laid the foundation of in Christ the Mediator. We read, Genesis 4:26, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The meaning of these words has been a considerable controversy among divines. We cannot suppose the meaning is, that that time was the first that ever man performed the duty of prayer. Prayer is a duty of natural religion, and a duty to which a spirit of piety does most naturally lead men. Prayer is as it were the very breath of a spirit of piety. And we cannot suppose therefore, that those holy men that had been before for above two hundred years, had lived all that while without any prayer. Therefore some divines think, that the meaning is, that then men first began to perform public worship, or to call upon the name Of the Lord in public assemblies. Whether it be so to be understood or no, yet so much must necessarily be understood by it, viz. that there was something new in the visible church of God with respect to the duty of prayer, or calling upon the name of the Lord, that there was a great addition to the performance of this duty. In some respect or other it was carried far beyond what it ever had been before, which must be the consequence of a remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God.

If it was now first that men were stirred up to get together in assemblies to help and assist one another in seeking God, so as they never had done before, it argues something extraordinary as the cause, and could be from nothing but uncommon influences of God's Spirit. We see by experience, that a remarkable pouring out of God's Spirit is always attended with such an effect, viz. a great increase of the performance of the duty of prayer. When the Spirit of God begins a work on men's hearts, it immediately sets them to calling on the name of the Lord. As it was with Paul after the Spirit of God had laid hold of him, then the next news is, "Behold, he prayeth!" So it has been in all remarkable pourings out of the Spirit of God that we have any particular account of in Scripture. So it is foretold it will be at the great pouring out of the Spirit of God in the latter days. It is foretold, that it will be poured out as a spirit of grace and supplications, Zechariah 12:10. See also Zephaniah 3:9, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." And when it is said, "Then began men to call upon' the name of the Lord," no more can be intended by it' than that this was the first remarkable season of this nature that ever was. It was the beginning, or the first of such a kind of work of God, such a pouring out of the Spirit of God. After such a manner such an 'expression' is commonly used in Scripture. So, 1 Samuel 14:35, "And Saul built an altar unto the Lord; the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord." In the Hebrew it is, as you may see in the margin, "that altar he began to build unto the Lord." Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which first began to be spoken by the Lord?"

It my be observed, that from the fall of man, to this day wherein we live, the work of redemption in its effect has mainly been carried on by remarkable pourings out of the Spirit of God. Though there

be a more constant influence of God's Spirit always in some degree attending his ordinances. Yet the way in which the greatest things have been done towards carrying on this work, always has been by remarkable pourings out of the Spirit at special seasons of mercy, as may fully appear hereafter in our further prosecution of the subject we are upon. And this pouring out of the Spirit in the days of Enos, was the first remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God that ever was. There had been a saving work of God on the hearts of some before. But now God was pleased to grant a more large effusion of his Spirit, for the bringing in an harvest of souls to Christ, so that in this we see that great building that is the subject of our present discourse, which God laid the foundation of immediately after the fall of man, carried on further, and built higher, than ever it had been before.

VI. The next thing I shall take notice of, is the eminently holy life of Enoch, who we have reason to think was a saint of greater eminency than any ever had been before him. In this respect the work of redemption was carried on to a greater height than ever it had been before. With respect to its effect in the visible church in general, we observed just now how it was carried higher in the days of Enos than ever it had been before. Probably Enoch was one of the saints of that harvest, for he lived all the days that he did live on earth, in the days of Enos. And with respect to the degree to which this work was carried in the soul of a particular person, it was raised to a greater height in Enoch than ever before. His soul, as it was built on Christ, was built up in holiness to a greater height than there had been any instance of before. He was a wonderful instance of Christ's redemption, and the efficacy of his grace.

VII. In Enoch's time, God did more expressly reveal the coming of Christ than he had done before, in the prophecy of Enoch that we have an account of in Jude 1:14-15, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, Saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches Which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Here Enoch prophesies of the coming of Christ. It does not seem to be confined to any particular coming of Christ, but it has respect in general to Christ's coming in his kingdom, and is fulfilled in a degree in both the first and second coming of Christ, and indeed in every remarkable manifestation Christ has made of himself in the world, for the saving of his people, and the destroying of his enemies. It is very parallel in this respect with many other prophecies of the coming of Christ, that were given under the Old Testament. In particular, it seems to be parallel with that great prophecy of Christ's coming in his kingdom that we have in Daniel 7:1-28, whence the Jews principally took their notion of the kingdom of heaven. See Daniel 7:10, "A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." And Daniel 7:13-14, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And though it is not unlikely that Enoch might have a more immediate respect in this prophecy to the approaching destruction of the old world by the flood, which was a remarkable resemblance of Christ's destruction of all his enemies at his second coming, yet it doubtless looked beyond the type to the anti-type. And as

this prophecy of Christ's coming is more express than any had been before. So it is an instance of the increase of that gospel light that began to dawn presently after the fall of man, and is an instance of that building that is the subject, of our present discourse, being yet further carried on, and built up higher than ever it had been before. And here, by the way, I would observe, that the increase of gospel light, and the carrying on the work of redemption, as it respects the elect church in general, from the first erecting of the church to the end of the world, is very much after the same manner as the carrying on of the same work and the same light in a particular soul, from the time of its conversion, until it is perfected and crowned in glory. The work in a particular soul has its ups and downs. Sometimes the light shines brighter, and sometimes it is a dark time. Sometimes grace seems to prevail, at other times it seems to languish for a great while together, and corruption prevails, and then grace revives again. But in general, grace is growing. From its first infusion, until it is perfected in glory, the kingdom of Christ is building up in the soul. So it is with respect to the great affair in general, as it relates to the universal subject of it, as it is carried on from the first beginning of it. after the fall, until it is perfected at the end of the world, as will more fully appear by a particular view of this affair from beginning to end, in the prosecution of this subject, if God give opportunity to carry it through as I propose.

VIII. The next remarkable thing towards carrying on this work, that we have an account of in Scripture, is the translation of Enoch into heaven. The account we have of it is in Genesis 5:24, "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." Here Moses, in giving an account of the genealogy of those that were of the line of Noah, does not say concerning Enoch, he lived so long and he died, as he does of the rest. But, he was not, for God took him, i.e. he translated him, in body and soul carried him to heaven without dying, as it is explained in Hebrews 11:5, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." By this wonderful work of God, the work of redemption was carried to a greater height in several respects, than it had been before.

You may remember, that when I was showing what were the great things that God aimed at in the work of redemption, or what the main things were that he intended to bring to pass, I among other things mentioned (p. 23) the perfect restoring the ruins of the fall with respect to the elect, and restoring man from that destruction that he had brought on himself, both in soul and body. Now this translation of Enoch was the first instance that ever was of restoring the ruins of the fall with respect to the body. There had been many instances of restoring the soul of man by Christ's redemption, but none of redeeming and actually saving the body until now. All the bodies of the elect are to be saved as well as their souls. At the end of the world, all the bodies of the saints shall actually be redeemed, those that then shall have been dead, by a resurrection, and others, that then shall be living, by causing them to pass under a glorious change. There was a number of the bodies of saints raised and glorified, at the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Before that there was an instance of a body glorified in Elijah. But the first instance of all was this of Enoch, that we are now speaking of And the work of redemption by this was carried on further than ever it had been before. By this wonderful work of God, there was a great increase of gospel light to the church of God, in this respect, that hereby the church had a clearer manifestation of a future state, and of the glorious reward of the saints in heaven. We are told, 2 Timothy 1:10, "That life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." And the more of this is brought to light, the more clearly does the light shine in that respect. What was said in the Old Testament of a future state, is

very obscure, in comparison with the more full, plain, and abundant revelation given of it in the New. But yet even in those early days, the church of God, in this instance, was favored with an instance of it set before their eyes, In that one of their brethren was actually taken up to heaven without dying, which we have all reason to think the church of God knew then, as they afterwards knew Elijah's translation. And as this was a clearer manifestation of a future state than the church had had before, so it was a pledge or earnest of that future glorification of all the saints which God intended through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

IX. The next thing that I shall observe, was the upholding the church of God in the family of which Christ was to proceed, in the time of that great and general defection of the world of mankind that was before the flood. The church of God, in all probability, was small, in comparison with the rest of the world, from the beginning of the time that mankind first began to multiply on the face of the earth, or from the time of Cain's defection, and departing from among the people of God, the time we read of, Genesis 4:16. When "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod," which being interpreted, is the land of banishment. I say, from that time of Cain's departure and separation from the church of God, it is probable that the church of God was small in comparison with the rest of the world. The church seems to have been kept up chiefly in the posterity of Seth, for this was the seed that God appointed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. But we cannot reasonably suppose, that Seth's posterity were one fiftieth part of the world, "For Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when Seth was born." But Cain, who seems to have been the ringleader of those that were not of the church, was Adam's eldest child, and probably was born soon after the fall, which doubtless was soon after Adam's creation, so that there was time for Cain to have many sons before Seth was born, and besides many other children, that probably Adam and Eve had before this time, agreeably to God's blessing that he gave them, when he said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," and many of these children might have children. The story of Cain before Seth was born, seems to represent as though there were great numbers of men on the earth, Genesis 4:14, is "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him." And all those that were then in being when Seth was born, must be supposed then to stand in equal capacity of multiplying their posterity with him. Therefore, as I said before, Seth's posterity were but a small part of the inhabitants of the world. But after the days of Enos and Enoch (for Enoch was translated before Enos died) I say, after their days, the church of God greatly diminished, in proportion as multitudes that were of the line of Seth, and had been born in the church of God, fell away, and joined with the wicked world, principally by means of intermarriages with them, as Genesis 6:1-2; Genesis 6:4, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." By the sons of God here, are doubtless meant the children of the church. It is a denomination often given them in Scripture. They intermarried with the wicked world, and so had their hearts led away from God, and there was a great and continual defection from the church. And the church of God, that used to be a restraint on the wicked world,

diminished exceedingly, and so wickedness went on without restraint. And Satan, that old serpent the devil, that tempted our first parents, and set up himself as god of this world, raged exceedingly, and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually, and the earth was filled with violence. It seemed to be deluged with wickedness now, as it was with water afterwards. Mankind in general were drowned in this deluge. Almost all were swallowed up in it. And now Satan made a most violent and potent attempt to swallow up the church of God, and had almost done it. But yet God restored it in the midst of all this flood of wickedness and violence. He kept it up in that line of which Christ was to proceed. He would not suffer it to be destroyed, for a blessing was in it. The Lord the Redeemer was in this branch of mankind, and was afterwards to proceed from it. There was a particular family that was a root in which the great Redeemer of the world was, and whence the branch of righteousness was afterwards to shoot forth. And therefore, however the branches were lopped off, and the tree seemed to be destroyed. Yet God, in the midst of all this, kept alive this root, by his wonderful redeeming power and grace, so that the gates of hell could not prevail against it.

Thus I have shown how God carried on the great affair of redemption, how the building went on that God began after the fall, during this first period of the times of the Old Testament, viz. from the fall of man, until God brought the flood on the earth. And I would take notice upon it, that though the history which Moses gives of the great works of God during that space be very short. Yet it is exceeding comprehensive and instructive. And it may also be profitable for us here to observe, the efficacy of that purchase or redemption that had such great effects even in the old world so many ages before Christ appeared himself to purchase redemption, that his blood should have such great efficacy so long before it was shed.

03.02. Period 1 Part 2 Flood to Abraham

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION PART II

FROM THE FLOOD TO THE CALLING OF ABRAHAM

I PROCEED now to show how the same work was carried on through the second period of the Old Testament, that from the beginning of the flood until the calling of Abraham. For though that mighty, overflowing, universal deluge of waters overthrew the world, yet it did not overthrow this building of God, the work of redemption. But this went on yet, and instead of being overthrown, continued to be built up, and was carried on to a further preparation for the great Savior's coming into the world, and working out redemption for his people. And here,

I. The flood itself was a work of God that belonged to this great affair, and tended to promote it. All the great and mighty works of God from the fall of man to the end of the world, are reducible to this work, and, if seen in a right view of them, will appear as parts of it, and so many steps that God has taken in order to it, or as carrying it on, and doubtless so great a work, so remarkable and universal a catastrophe, as the deluge was, cannot be excepted. It was a work that God wrought in order to it, as thereby God removed out of the way the enemies and obstacles of it, that were ready to overthrow it.

Satan seems to have been In a dreadful rage just before the flood, and his rage then doubtless was, as it always has been, chiefly against the church of God to overthrow it, and he had filled the earth with violence and rage against it. He had drawn over almost all the world to be on his side, and they listed under his banner against Christ and his church. We read, that the earth " was filled with violence," and doubtless that violence was chiefly against the church, in fulfillment of what was foretold, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." And their enmity and violence was so great and the enemies of the church so numerous, the whole world being against the church, that it was come to the last extremity. Noah's reproofs, and his preaching of righteousness, were utterly disregarded. God's Spirit had striven with them an hundred and twenty years, and all in vain, and the church was almost swallowed up. It seems to have been reduced to so narrow limits, as to be confined to one family. And there was no prospect of anything else but of their totally swallowing up the church, and that in a very little time, and so wholly destroying that small root that had the blessing in it, or whence the Redeemer was to proceed. And therefore, God's destroying those enemies of the church by the flood, belongs to this affair of redemption. For it was one thing that was done in fulfillment of the covenant of grace, as it was revealed to Adam, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head." This destruction was only a destruction of the seed of the serpent in the midst of their most violent rage against the seed of the woman, and so delivering the seed of the woman from them, when in utmost peril by them.

We read of scarce any great destruction of nations anywhere in Scripture, but that one main reason given for it is, their enmity and injuries against God's church. Doubtless this was one main reason of the destruction of all nations by the flood. The giants that were in those days, in all likelihood, got themselves their renown by their great exploits against Heaven, and against Christ and his church, the remaining sons of God that had not corrupted themselves.

We read, that just before the world shall be destroyed by fire, the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, shall gather together against the church as the sand of the sea, and shall go up on the breadth of the earth, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and then fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them, Revelation 20:8-9. And it seems as though there was that which was very parallel to it, just before the world was destroyed by water. And therefore their destruction was a work of God that did as much belong to the work of redemption, as the destruction of the Egyptians belonged to the redemption of the children of Israel out of Egypt, or as the destruction of Sennacherib's mighty army, that had compassed about Jerusalem to destroy it, belonged to God's redemption of that city from them. By means of this flood, all the enemies of God's church, against whom that little handful had no strength, were swept off at once. God took their part, and appeared for them, against their enemies, and drowned those of whom they had been afraid, in the flood of water, as he drowned the enemies of Israel that pursued them in the Red Sea.

Indeed God could have taken other methods to deliver his church. He could have converted all the world instead of drowning it, and so he could have taken another method than drowning the Egyptians in the Red Sea. But that is no argument, that the method that he did take, was not a method to show his redeeming mercy to them. By the wicked world's being drowned, the wicked, the enemies of God's people, were dispossessed of the earth, and the whole earth given to Noah and his family to possess in quiet, as God made room for the Israelites in Canaan, by casting out their enemies from before them. And God's thus taking the possession of the enemies of the church and giving it all to his church, was agreeable to that promise of the covenant of grace, Psalms 37:9-11, "For evil doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

II. Another thing here belonging to the same work, was God's so wonderfully preserving that family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, when all the rest of the world was drowned. God's drowning the world, and saving Noah and his family, both were works reducible to this great work. The saving Noah and his family belonged to it two ways. As that family was the family of which the Redeemer was to proceed, and as that family was the church that he had redeemed, it was the mystical body of Christ that was there saved. The manner of God's saving those persons, when all the world besides was so overthrown, was very wonderful and remarkable. It was a wonderful and remarkable type of the redemption of Christ, of that redemption that Is sealed by the baptism of water, and is so spoken of in the New Testament, as 1 Peter 3:20-21, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure, whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. "That water that washed away

the filth of the world, that cleared the world of wicked men, was a type of the blood of Christ, that takes away the sin of the world. That water that delivered Noah and his sons from their enemies, is a type of the blood that delivers God's church from their sins, their worst enemies. That water that was so plentiful and abundant, that it filled the world, and reached above the tops of the highest mountains, was a type of that blood, the sufficiency of which is so abundant, that it is sufficient for the whole world, sufficient to bury the highest mountains of sin. The ark, that was the refuge and hiding place of the church in this time of storm and flood, was a type of Christ, the true hiding place of the church from the storms and floods of God's wrath.

III. The next thing I would observe is, the new grant of the earth God made to Noah and his family immediately after the flood, as founded on the covenant of grace. The sacrifice of Christ was represented by Noah's building an altar to the Lord, and offering a sacrifice of every clean beast, and every clean fowl. And we have an account of God's accepting this sacrifice. And thereupon he blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, and with his seed, promising to destroy the earth in like manner no more, signifying how that it is by the sacrifice of Christ that God's favor is obtained, and his people are in safety from God's destroying judgments, and do obtain the blessing of the Lord. And God now, on occasion of this sacrifice that Noah offered to God, gives him and his posterity a new grant of the earth, a new power of dominion over the creatures, as founded on that sacrifice, and so founded on the covenant of grace. And so it is to be looked upon as a diverse grant from that which was made to Adam, that we have, Genesis 1:28, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Which grant was not founded on the covenant of grace, for it was given to Adam while he was under the covenant of works, and therefore was antiquated when that covenant ceased. The first grant of the earth to Adam was founded on the first covenant. Therefore, when that first covenant was broken, the right conveyed to him by that first covenant was forfeited and lost. And hence it came to pass, that the earth was taken away from mankind by the flood. For the first grant was forfeited, and God had never made another after that, until after the flood. if the first covenant had not been broken, God never would have drowned the world, and go have taken it away from mankind. For then the first grant made to mankind would have stood good. But that was broken, and so God, after a while destroyed the earth, when the wickedness of man was great. But after the flood, on Noah's. offering a sacrifice that represented the sacrifice of Christ, God in smelling a sweet savor, or accepting that sacrifice, as it was a representation of the true sacrifice of Christ, which is a sweet savor indeed to God, gives Noah a new grant of the earth, founded on that sacrifice of Christ, or that covenant of grace which is by that sacrifice of Christ, with a promise annexed, that now the earth should no more be destroyed, until the consummation of all things, as you may see in Genesis 8:20-22, and Genesis 9:1-3, Genesis 9:7. The reason why such a promise, that God would no more destroy the earth, was added to this grant made to Noah, and not to that made to Adam, was because this was founded on the covenant of grace, of which Christ was the surety, and therefore could not be broken. And therefore it comes to pass now, that though the wickedness of man has dreadfully raged, and the earth has been filled with violence and wickedness thousands of times, and one age after another, and much more dreadful and aggravated wickedness than the world was full of before the flood, being against so much greater light and mercy, especially in these days of the gospel. Yet God's patience holds out. God does not destroy the earth; his mercy and forbearance abide according to

his promise. His grant established with Noah and his sons abides firm and good, being founded on the covenant of grace.

IV. On this God renews with Noah and his sons the covenant of grace, Genesis 9:9-10, “And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, etc. which was the covenant of grace, which even the brute creation have this benefit of, that it shall never be destroyed again until the consummation of all things. When we have this expression in Scripture, my covenant, it commonly is to be understood of the covenant of grace. The manner of expression, “I will establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you,” shows plainly, that it was a covenant already in being, that had been made already, and that Noah would understand what covenant it was by that denomination, viz. the covenant of grace.

V. God’s disappointing the design of building the city and tower of Babel. This work of God belongs to the great work of redemption. For that building was undertaken in opposition to this great building of God that we are speaking of. Men’s going about to build such a city and tower was an effect of the corruption that mankind were now soon fallen into. This city and tower was set up in opposition to the city of God, as the god that they built it to, was their pride. Being sunk into a disposition to forsake the true God, the first idol they set up in his room, was themselves, their own glory and fame. And as this city and tower had their foundation laid in the pride and vanity of men, and the haughtiness of their minds, so it was built on a foundation exceedingly contrary to the nature of the foundation of the kingdom of Christ, and his redeemed city, which has its foundation laid in humility.

Therefore God saw that it tended to frustrate the design of that great building that was founded, not in the haughtiness of men, but Christ’s blood. And therefore the thing that they did displeased the Lord, and he baffled and confounded the design, and did not suffer them to bring it to perfection, as God will frustrate and confound all other buildings, that are set up in opposition to the great building of the work of redemption. In the second chapter of Isaiah (Isaiah 2:1-22), where the prophet is foretelling God’s setting up the kingdom of Christ in the world, he foretells how God will, in order to it, bring down the haughtiness of men, and how the day of the Lord shall be on every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, etc. Christ’s kingdom is established, by bringing down every high thing to make way for it, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, “For the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God.” What is done in a particular soul, to make way for the setting up of Christ’s kingdom, is to destroy Babel in that soul.

They intended to have built Babel up to heaven. That building that is the subject we are upon, is a building that is intended to be built so high, that its top shall reach to heaven indeed, as it will to the highest heavens at the end of the world, when it shall be finished. And therefore God would not suffer the building of his enemies, that they designed to build up to heaven in opposition to it, to prosper. If they had gone on and prospered in building that city and tower, it might have kept the world of wicked men, the enemies of the church, together, as that was their design. They might have remained united in one vast, powerful city, and so they might have been too powerful for the city of God, and quite swallowed it up. This city of Babel is the same with the city of Babylon. For Babylon in the original is Babel. But Babylon was a city that is always spoken of in Scripture as chiefly opposite to the city of God. Babylon, and Jerusalem, or Zion, are opposed to each other

often both in the Old Testament and New. This city was a powerful and terrible enemy to the city of God afterwards, notwithstanding this great check put to the building of it in the beginning. But it might have been, and probably would have been vastly more powerful, and able to vex and destroy the church of God, if it had not been thus checked.

Thus it was in kindness to his church in the world, and in prosecution of the great design of redemption, that God put a stop to the building of the city and tower of Babel.

VI. The dispersing of the nations and dividing the earth among its inhabitants, immediately after God had caused the building of Babel to cease. This was done so as most to suit that great design of redemption. And particularly, God therein had an eye to the future propagation of the gospel among the nations. They were so placed, the bounds of their habitation so limited round about the land of Canaan, the place laid out for the habitation of God's people, as most suited the design of propagating the gospel among them, Deuteronomy 32:8, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Acts 17:26-27, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him." The land of Canaan was the most conveniently situated of any place in the world for the purpose of spreading the light of the gospel thence among the nations in general. The inhabited world was chiefly in the Roman empire in the times immediately after Christ, which was in the countries round about Jerusalem, and so properly situated for the purpose of diffusing the light of the gospel among them from that place. The devil seeing the advantage of this situation of the nations for promoting the great work of redemption, and the disadvantage of it with respect to the interests of his kingdom, afterward led away many nations into the remotest parts of the world, to that end, to get them out of the way of the gospel. Thus he led some into America, and others into northern cold regions, that are almost inaccessible.

VII. Another thing I would mention in this period, was God's preserving the true religion in the line of which Christ was to proceed, when the world in general apostatized to idolatry, and the church was in imminent danger of being swallowed up in the general corruption. Although God had lately wrought so wonderfully for the deliverance of his church, and had shown so great mercy towards it, as for its sake even to destroy all the rest of the world, and although be had lately renewed and established his covenant of grace with Noah and his sons, yet so prone is the corrupt heart of man to depart from God, and to sink into the depths of wickedness, and so prone to darkness, delusion, and idolatry, that the world soon after the flood fell into gross idolatry. Before Abraham the distemper was become almost universal. The earth was become very corrupt at the time of the building of Babel. Even God's people themselves, even that line of which Christ was to come, were corrupted in a measure with idolatry, Joshua 24:2, "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods." The other side of the flood means beyond the river Euphrates, where the ancestors of Abraham lived.

We are not to understand, that they were wholly drawn off to idolatry, to forsake the true God. For God is said to be the God of Nahor, Genesis 31:53, "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us." But they only partook in some measure of the general

and almost universal corruption of the times. Solomon was in a measure infected with idolatrous corruption. The children of Israel in Egypt are said to serve other gods, though yet there was the true church of God among them. There were images kept for a considerable time in the family of Jacob, the corruption being brought from Padanaram, whence he fetched his wives. This was the second time that the church was almost brought to nothing by the corruption and general defection of the world from true religion. But still the true religion was kept up in the family of which Christ was to proceed. This is another instance of God's remarkably preserving his church in a time of a general deluge of wickedness. Although the god of this world raged, and had almost swallowed up God's church, yet God did not suffer the gates of hell to prevail against it.

Chapter 25

03.03. Period 1 Part 3 Calling of Abraham to Moses

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION PART III

FROM THE CALLING OF ABRAHAM TO MOSES

I PROCEED now to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the third period of the times of the Old Testament, beginning with the calling of Abraham, and extending to Moses. And here,

I. It pleased God now to separate that person of whom Christ was to come, from the rest of the world, that his church might be upheld in his family and posterity until Christ should come, as he did in calling Abraham out of his own country, and from his kindred, to go into a distant country that God should show him, and bringing him first out of Ur of the Chaldees to Charran, and then to the land of Canaan.

It was before observed, that the corruption of the world with idolatry was now become general, mankind were almost wholly overrun with idolatry. God therefore saw it necessary, in order to uphold true religion in the world, that there should be a family separated from the rest of the world. It proved to be high time to take this course, lest the church of Christ should wholly be carried away with the apostasy. For the church of God itself, that had been upheld in the line of Abraham's ancestors, was already considerably corrupted. Abraham's own country and kindred had most of them fallen off. Wthout some extraordinary interposition of Providence, in all likelihood, in a generation or two more, the true religion in this line would have been extinct. And therefore God saw it to be time to call Abraham, the person in whose family he intended to uphold the true religion, out of his own country, and from his kindred, to a far distant country, that his posterity might there remain a people separate from all the rest of the world. So the true religion might be upheld there, while all mankind besides were swallowed up in heathenism. The land of the Chaldees, that Abraham was called to go out of, was the country about Babel (Babel or Babylon) which was the chief city of the land of Chaldea. Learned men suppose, by what they gather from some of the most ancient accounts of things, that it was in this land that idolatry first began, that Babel and Chaldea were the original and chief seat of the worship of idols, whence it spread into other nations. And therefore the land of the Chaldeans, or the country of Babylon, is in Scripture called the land of graven images, as you may see, Jeremiah 50:35, together with Jeremiah 50:38, "A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up; for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols." God calls Abraham out of this idolatrous country, to a great distance from it. And when be came there, he gave him no inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on, but he remained a stranger and a sojourner, that he and his family might be kept separate from all the world. This was a new thing. God had

never taken such a method before. His church had not in this manner been separated from the rest of the world until now, but were wont to dwell with them, without any bar or fence to keep them separate, the mischievous consequences of which had been found once and again. The effect before the flood, of God's people living intermingled with the wicked world, without any remarkable wall of separation, was, that the sons of the church joined in marriage with others, and thereby almost all soon became infected, and the church was almost brought to nothing. The method that God took then to fence the church was, to drown the wicked world, and save the church in the ark. And now the world, before Abraham was called, was become corrupt again. But now God took another method. He did not destroy the wicked world, and save Abraham and his wife, and Lot, in an ark, but he calls these persons to go and live separate from the rest of the world. This was a new thing, and a great thing, that God did toward the work of redemption. This thing was done now about the middle of the space of time between the fall of man and the coming of Christ. There were about two thousand years yet to come before Christ the great Redeemer was to come. But by this calling of Abraham, the ancestor of Christ, a foundation was laid for the upholding the church of Christ in the world, until Christ should come. For the world having become idolatrous, there was a necessity that the seed of the woman should be thus separated from the idolatrous world in order to that. And then it was needful that there should be a particular nation separated from the rest of the world, to receive the types and prophecies that were needful to be given of Christ, to prepare the way for his coming, that to them might he committed the oracles of God, and that by them the history of God's great works of creation and providence might be upheld, and that so Christ might be born of this nation, and that from hence the light of the gospel might shine forth to the rest of the world. These ends could not be well obtained, if God's people, through all these two thousand years, had lived intermixed with the heathen world. So that this calling of Abraham may be looked upon as a kind of a new foundation laid for the visible church of God, in a more distinct and regular state, to be upheld and built up on this foundation from henceforward, until Christ should actually come, and then through him to be propagated to all nations. So that Abraham being the person in whom this foundation is laid, is represented in Scripture as though he were the father of all the church, the father of all them that believe, as it were a root whence the visible church thenceforward through Christ, Abraham's root and offspring, rose as a tree, distinct from all other plants, of which tree Christ was the branch of righteousness, and from which tree, after Christ came, the natural branches were broken off, and the Gentiles were grafted into the same tree. So that Abraham still remains the father of the church, or root of the tree, through Christ his seed. It is the same tree that flourishes from that small beginning, that was in Abraham's time, and has in these days of the gospel spread its branches over a great part of the earth, and will fill the whole earth in due time, and at the end of the world shall be transplanted from an earthly soil into the paradise of God.

II. There accompanied this a more particular and full revelation and confirmation of the covenant of grace than ever had been before. There had before this been, as it were, two particular and solemn editions or confirmations of this covenant, one at the beginning of the first period, which was that whereby the covenant of grace was revealed to our first parents, soon after the fall, the other at the beginning of the second period, whereby God solemnly renewed the covenant of grace with Noah and his family soon after the flood. And now there is a third, at the beginning of the third period, at and after the calling of Abraham. And it now being much nearer the time of the coming of Christ than when the covenant of grace was first revealed, it being, as was said before,

about halfway between the fall and the coming of Christ' the revelation of the covenant now was much more full than any that had been before. The covenant was now more particularly revealed. It was now revealed, not only that Christ should be, but it was revealed to Abraham, that he should be his seed, and it was now promised, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him. And God was much in the promises of this to Abraham. The first promise was when he first called him, Genesis 12:2, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." And again the same promise was renewed after he came into the land of Canaan, Genesis 13:14 etc. And the covenant was again renewed after Abraham had returned from the slaughter of the kings, Genesis 15:5-6. And again, after his offering up Isaac, Genesis 22:16-18. In this renewal of the covenant of grace with Abraham, several particulars concerning that covenant were revealed more fully than ever had been before, not only that Christ was to be of Abraham's seed, but also, the calling of the Gentiles, and the bringing all nations into the church, that all the families of the earth were to be blessed, was now made known. And then the great condition of the covenant of grace, which is faith, was now more fully made known. Genesis 15:5-6, "And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Which is much taken notice of in the New Testament, as that whence Abraham was called the father of them that believe. And as there was now a further revelation of the covenant of grace, so there was a further confirmation of it by seals and pledges, than ever had been before. Particularly, God did now institute a certain sacrament, to be a steady seal of this covenant in the visible church, until Christ should come, viz. circumcision. Circumcision was a seal of this covenant of grace, as appears by the first institution, as we have an account of it in Genesis 17:1-27. It there appears to be a seal of that covenant by which God promised to make Abraham a father of many nations, as appears by Genesis 17:5, compared with Genesis 17:9-10. And we are expressly taught, that it was a seal of the righteousness of faith, Romans 4:11. Speaking of Abraham, the apostle says, "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith." As I observed before, God called Abraham, that his family and posterity might be kept separate from the rest of the world, until Christ should come, which God saw to be necessary on the aforementioned accounts. And this sacrament was the principal wall of separation. It chiefly distinguished Abraham's seed from the world, and kept up a distinction and separation more than any other particular observance whatsoever. And besides this, there were other occasional seals, pledges, and confirmations, that Abraham had of this covenant. Particularly, God gave Abraham a remarkable pledge of the fulfillment of the promise he had made him, in his victory over Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him. Chedorlaomer seems to have been a great emperor, that reigned over a great part of the world at that day. Though he had his seat at Elam, which was not much if anything short of a thousand miles distant from the land of Canaan, yet he extended his empire so as to reign over many parts of the land of Canaan, as appears by Genesis 14:4-7. It is supposed by learned men, that he was a king of the Assyrian empire at that day, which had been before begun by Nimrod at Babel. And as it was the honor of kings in those days to build new cities to be made the seat of their empire, as appears by Genesis 10:10-12 so it is conjectured, that he had gone forth and built him a city in Elam, and made that his seat, and that those other kings, who came with him, were his deputies in the several cities and countries where they reigned. But yet as mighty an empire as he had, and as great an army as he now came with into the land where Abraham was, yet Abraham, only with his trained servants, that were born in his own house, conquered, subdued,

and baffled this mighty emperor, and the kings that came with him, and all their army. This he received of God as a pledge of what he had promised, viz. the victory that Christ his seed should obtain over the nations of the earth, whereby he should possess the gates of his enemies. It is plainly spoken of as such in the 41st of Isaiah. In that chapter is foretold the future glorious victory the church shall obtain over the nations of the world, as you may see in Isaiah 41:1; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 41:15, etc. But here this victory of Abraham over such a great emperor and his mighty forces, is spoken of as a pledge and earnest of this victory of the church, as you may see in Isaiah 41:2-3, “Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings: He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely; even by the way that he had not gone with his feet.”

Another remarkable confirmation Abraham received of the covenant of grace, was when he returned from the slaughter of the kings, when Melchisedec the king of Salem, the priest of the most high God, that great type of Christ, met him, and blessed him, and brought forth bread and wine. The bread and wine signified the same blessings of the covenant of grace, that the bread and wine do in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper. So that as Abraham had a seal of the covenant in circumcision that was equivalent to baptism, so now we had a seal of it equivalent to the Lord’s supper. And Meichisedec’s coming to meet him with such a seal of the covenant of grace, on the occasion of this victory of his over the kings of the north, confirms, that that victory was a pledge of God’s fulfillment of the same covenant. For that is the mercy that Melchisedec with his bread and wine takes notice of, as you may see by what he says in Genesis 14:19-20.

Another confirmation that God gave Abraham of the covenant of grace, was the vision that he had in the deep sleep that fell upon him, of the smoking furnace, and burning lamp, that passed between the parts of the sacrifice, as in the latter part of the 15th chapter of Genesis (Genesis 15:1-21). The sacrifice, as all sacrifices do, signified the sacrifice of Christ. The smoking furnace that passed through the midst of that sacrifice first, signified the sufferings of Christ. But the burning lamp that followed, which shone with a clear bright light, signifies the glory that followed Christ’s sufferings, and was procured by them.

Another remarkable pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfillment of the covenant of grace, was his giving of the child of whom Christ was to come, in his old age. This is spoken of as such in Scripture, Hebrews 11:11-12, and also Romans 4:18. etc.

Again, another remarkable pledge that God gave Abraham of the fulfillment of the covenant of grace, was his delivering Isaac, after he was laid upon the wood of the sacrifice to be slain. This was a confirmation of Abraham’s faith in the promise that God had made of Christ, that he should be of Isaac’s posterity, and was a representation of the resurrection of Christ, as you may see, Hebrews 11:17-19. And because this was given as a confirmation of the covenant of grace, therefore God renewed that covenant with Abraham on this occasion, as you may see, Genesis 24:15, etc.

Thus you see how much more fully the covenant of grace was revealed and confirmed in Abraham’s time than ever it had been before, by means of which Abraham seems to have had a more clear understanding and sight of Christ the great Redeemer, and the future things that were to be accomplished by him, than any of the saints that had gone before. And therefore Christ takes

notice of it, that Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it, and was glad, John 8:56. So great an advance did it please God now to make in this building, which he had been carrying on from the beginning of the world.

III. The next thing that I would take notice of here, is God's preserving the patriarchs for so long a time in the midst of the wicked inhabitants of Canaan, and from all other enemies. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were those of whom Christ was to proceed. They were now separated from the world, that in them his church might be upheld. Therefore, in preserving them, the great design of redemption was upheld and carried on. He preserved them, and kept the inhabitants of the land where they sojourned from destroying them, which was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. For the inhabitants of the land were at that day exceedingly wicked, though they grew more wicked afterwards. This appears by Genesis 15:16, "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full," as much as to say, though it be very great, yet it is not yet full. And their great wickedness also appears by Abraham and Isaac's aversion to their children marrying any of the daughters of the land. Abraham, when he was old, could not be content until he had made his servant swear that he would not take a wife for his son of the daughters of the land. And Isaac and Rebecca were content to send away Jacob to so great a distance as Padanaram, to take him a wife thence. And when Esau married some of the daughters of the land, we are told, that they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca.

Another argument of their great wickedness, was the instances we have in Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zebojin, which were some of the cities of Canaan, though they were probably notoriously wicked. And they being thus wicked, were likely to have the most bitter enmity against these holy men, agreeable to what was declared at first, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman. and between thy seed and her seed." Their holy lives were a continual condemnation of their wickedness. And besides, it could not be otherwise, but that they must be much in reproving their wickedness, as we find Lot was in Sodom, who, we are told, vexed his righteous soul with their unlawful deeds, and was a preacher of righteousness to them. And they were the more exposed to them, being strangers and sojourners in the land, and having no inheritance there as yet. Men are more apt to find fault with strangers, and to be irritated by anything in them that offends them, as they were with Lot in Sodom. He very gently reproved their wickedness, and they say upon it, "This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a ruler and a judge," and threatened what they would do to him. But God wonderfully preserved Abraham and Lot, and Isaac and Jacob, and their families, amongst them, though they were few in number, and they might quickly have destroyed them, which is taken notice of as a wonderful instance of God's preserving mercy toward his Church, Psalms 105:12, etc. "When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it; when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." This preservation was in some instances especially very remarkable, those instances that we have an account of, wherein the people of the land were greatly irritated and provoked, as they were by Simeon and Levi's treatment of the Shechemites, as you may see in Genesis 34:30, etc. God then strangely preserved Jacob and his family, restraining the provoked people by an unusual terror on their minds, as you many see in Genesis 35:5, "And the terror of God was upon the cities that were

round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob." And God's preserving them, not only from the Canaanites, is here to be taken notice of, but his preserving them from all others that intended mischief to them, as his preserving Jacob and his company, when pursued by Laban, full of rage, and a disposition to overtake him as an enemy. God met him, and rebuked him, and said to him, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." How wonderfully did he also preserve him from Esau his brother, when he came forth with an army, with a full design to cut him off! How did God, in answer to his prayer, when he wrestled with Christ at Penuel, wonderfully turn Esau's heart, and make him, instead of meeting him as an enemy with slaughter and destruction, to meet him as a friend and brother, doing him no harm! And thus were this handful, this little root that had the blessing of the Redeemer in it, preserved in the midst of enemies and dangers, which was not unlike to the preserving the ark in the midst of the tempestuous deluge.

IV. The next thing I would mention is, the awful destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighboring cities. This tended to promote the great design and work that is the subject of my present undertaking, two ways. it did so, as it tended powerfully to restrain the inhabitants of the land from injuring those holy strangers that God hand brought to sojourn amongst them. Lot was one of those strangers, he came into the land with Abraham, and Sodom was destroyed for their abusive disregard of Lot, the preacher of righteousness, that God had sent among them. And their destruction came just upon their committing a most injurious and abominable insult on Lot, and the strangers that were come into his house, even those angels, whom they probably took to be some of Lot's former acquaintance come from the country that he came from, to visit him. They in a most outrageous manner beset Lot's house, intending a monstrous abuse and act of violence on those strangers that were come thither, and threatening to serve Lot worse than them. But in the midst of this, God smote them with blindness, and the next morning the city and the country about it was overthrown in a most terrible storm of fire and brimstone, which dreadful destruction, as it was in the sight of the rest of the inhabitants of the land, and therefore greatly tended to restrain them from hurting those holy strangers any more, doubtless struck a dread and terror on their minds, and made them afraid to hurt them, and probably was one principal means to restrain them, and preserve the patriarchs. And when that reason is given why the inhabitants of the land did not pursue after Jacob, when they were so provoked by the destruction of the Shechemites, viz. "that the terror of the Lord was upon them," it is very probable, that this was the terror that was set home upon them. They remembered the amazing destruction of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, that came upon them upon their abusive treatment of Lot, and so dared not hurt Jacob and his family, though they were so much provoked to it.

Another way that this awful destruction tended to promote this great affair of redemption, was, that hereby God did remarkably exhibit the terrors of his law, to make men sensible of their need of redeeming mercy. The work of redemption never was carried on without this. The law, from the beginning, is made use of as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. But under the Old Testament there was much more need of some extraordinary, visible, and sensible manifestation of God's wrath against sin, than in the days of the gospel, since a future state, and the eternal misery of hell, are more clearly revealed, and since the awful justice of God against the sins of men has been so wonderfully displayed in the sufferings of Christ. And therefore the revelation that God gave of himself in those days, used to be accompanied with much more terror than it is in these

days of the gospel. So when God appeared at Mount Sinai to give the law, it was with thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. But some external awful manifestations of God's wrath against sin were on some accounts especially necessary before the giving of the law. And therefore, before the flood, the terrors of the law handed down by tradition from Adam served. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years himself, to tell the church of God's awful threatenings, announced in the covenant made with him, and how dreadful the consequences of the fall were, as he was an eye witness and subject, and others, that conversed with Adam, lived until the flood. And the destruction of the world by the flood served to exhibit the terrors of the law, and manifest the wrath of God against sin, and so to make men sensible of the absolute necessity of redeeming mercy. And some that saw the flood were alive in Abraham's time. But this was now in a great measure forgotten. Now therefore God was pleased again, in a most amazing manner, to show his wrath against sin, in the destruction of these cities, which was after such a manner as to be the liveliest image of hell of anything that ever had been. Therefore the apostle Jude says, "They suffer the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 1:7. God rained storms of fire and brimstone upon them. The way that they were destroyed probably was by thick flashes of lightning. The streams of brimstone were so thick as to burn up all these cities, so that they perished in the flames of divine wrath. By this might be seen the dreadful wrath of God against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, which tended to show men the necessity of redemption, and so to promote that great work

V. God again renewed and confirmed the covenant of grace to Isaac and to Jacob. He did so to Isaac, as you may see, Genesis 26:3-4, "And I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars in heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." And afterwards it was renewed and confirmed to Jacob, first in Isaac's blessing of him, wherein he acted and spoke by extraordinary divine direction. In that blessing, the blessings of the covenant of grace were established with Jacob and his seed, as Genesis 27:29, "Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." And therefore Esau, in missing of this blessing, missed of being blessed as an heir of the benefits of the covenant of grace. This covenant was again renewed and confirmed to Jacob at Bethel, in his vision of the ladder that reached to heaven, which ladder was a symbol of the way of salvation by Christ. For the stone that Jacob rested on was a type of Christ, the stone of Israel, which the spiritual Israel or Jacob rests upon. As is evident, because this stone was on this occasion anointed, and was made use of as an altar. But we know that Christ is the anointed of God, and is the only true altar of God. While Jacob was resting on this stone, and saw this ladder, God appears to him as his covenant God, and renews the covenant of grace with him, as in Genesis 28:14, "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And Jacob had another remarkable confirmation of this covenant at Penuel, where he wrestled with God, and prevailed, where Christ appeared to him in a human form, in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to receive into a personal union with his divine nature. And God renewed his covenant with him again, after he was come out of Padanaram, and was come up to Bethel, to the stone that he had rested on, and where he had the vision of the ladder, as you may see in Genesis 35:10. etc.

Thus the covenant of grace was now often renewed, much oftener than it had been before. The light of the gospel now began to shine much brighter, as the time drew nearer that Christ should come.

VI. The next thing I would observe, is God's remarkably preserving the family of which Christ was to proceed from perishing by famine, by the instrumentality of Joseph. When there was a seven years' famine approaching, God was pleased, by a wonderful providence, to send Joseph into Egypt, there to provide for, and feed Jacob and his family, and to keep the holy seed alive, which otherwise would have perished. Joseph was sent into Egypt for that end, as he observes, Genesis 50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to save much people alive." How often had this holy root, that had the future branch of righteousness, the glorious Redeemer, in it, been in danger of being destroyed! But God wonderfully preserved it. This salvation of the house of Israel by the hand of Joseph, was upon some accounts very much a resemblance of the salvation of Christ. The children of Israel were saved by Joseph their kinsman and brother, from perishing by famine, as he that saves the souls of the spiritual Israel from spiritual famine is their near kinsman, and one that is not ashamed to call them brethren. Joseph was a brother, that they had hated, and sold, and as it were killed, for they had designed to kill him. So Christ is one that we naturally hate, and, by our wicked lives, have sold for the vain things of the world, and that by our sins we have slain. Joseph was first in a state of humiliation, he was a servant, as Christ appeared in the form of a servant. He then was cast into a dungeon, as Christ descended into the grave. Then when he rose out of the dungeon, he was in a state of great exaltation, at the king's right hand as his deputy, to reign over all his kingdom, to provide food, to preserve life. Being in this state of exaltation, he dispenses food to his brethren, and so gives them life. So Christ was exalted at God's right hand to be a prince and savior to his brethren, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, and them that hated, and had sold him.

VII. After this there was a prophecy given forth of Christ, on some accounts, more particular than ever any had been before, even that which was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah. This was more particular than ever any had been before, as it showed of whose posterity he was to he. When God called Abraham, it was revealed that he was to be of Abraham's posterity. Before, we have no account of any revelation concerning Christ's pedigree, confined to narrower limits than the posterity of Noah. After this it was confined to still narrower limits. For though Abraham had many sons, yet it was revealed, that Christ was to be of Isaac's posterity. And then it was limited more still. For when Isaac had two sons, it was revealed that Christ was to be of Israel's posterity. And now, though Israel had twelve sons, yet it is revealed that Christ should be of Judah's posterity. Christ is the lion of the tribe of Judah. Respect is chiefly had to his great acts, when it is said here, Genesis 49:8, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion. Who shall rouse him up?" And then this prediction is more particular concerning the time of Christ's coming, than any had been before, as in Genesis 49:10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The prophecy here, of the calling of the Gentiles consequent on Christ's coming, seems to be more plain than any had been before, in the expression, to him shall the gathering of the people be.

Thus you see how that gospel light which dawned immediately after the fall of man, gradually increases.

VIII. The work of redemption was carried on in this period, in God's wonderfully preserving the children of Israel in Egypt, when the power of Egypt was engaged utterly to destroy them. They seemed to be wholly in the hands of the Egyptians. They were their servants, and were subject to the power of Pharaoh. And Pharaoh set himself to weaken them with hard bondage. And when he saw that did not do, he set himself to extirpate the race of them, by commanding that every male child should be drowned. But after all that Pharaoh could do, God wonderfully preserved them. And not only so, but increased them exceedingly, so that, instead of being extirpated, they greatly multiplied.

IX. Here is to be observed, not only the preservation of the nation, but God's wonderfully preserving and upholding his invisible church in that nation, when in danger of being overwhelmed in the idolatry of Egypt. The children of Israel being long among the Egyptians, and being servants under them, and so not under advantages to keep God's ordinances among themselves, and maintain any public worship or public instruction, whereby the true religion might be upheld, and there being now no written Word of God, they, by degrees, in a great measure lost the true religion, and borrowed the idolatry of Egypt, and the greater part of the people fell away to the worship of their gods. This we learn by Ezekiel 20:6-8. and by Ezekiel 23:8 This now was the third time that God's church was almost swallowed up and carried away with the wickedness of the world, once before the flood, the other time, before the calling of Abraham, and now, the third time, in Egypt. But yet God did not suffer his church to be quite overwhelmed. He still saved it, like the ark in the flood, and as he saved Moses in the midst of the waters, in an ark of bulrushes, where he was in the utmost danger of being swallowed up. The true religion was still kept up with some. And God had still a people among them, even in this miserable, corrupt, and dark time. The parents of Moses were true servants of God, as we may learn by Hebrews 11:23, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

I have now gone through the third period of the Old Testament time, and have shown how the work of redemption was carried on from the calling of Abraham to Moses, in which we have seen many great things done towards this work, and a great advancement of this building, beyond what had been before.

03.04. Period 1 Part 4 Moses to David

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION PART IV

FROM MOSES TO DAVID

I PROCEED to the fourth period, which reaches from Moses to David. I would show how the work of redemption was carried on through this also.

I. The first thing that offers itself to be considered, is the redemption of the church of God out of Egypt, the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions of the church of God, and that which was the greatest pledge and forerunner of the future redemption of Christ, of any, and is much more insisted on in Scripture than any other of those redemptions. And indeed it was the greatest type of Christ's redemption of any providential event whatsoever. This redemption was by Jesus Christ, as is evident from this, that it was wrought by him that appeared to Moses in the bush, for that was the person that sent Moses to redeem that people. But that was Christ, as is evident, because he is called the angel of the Lord, Exodus 3:2-3. The bush represented the human nature of Christ, that is called the branch. The bush grew on Mount Sinai or Horeb, which is a word that signifies a dry place, as the human nature of Christ was a root out of a dry ground. The bush burning with fire, represented the sufferings of Christ, in the fire of God's wrath. It burned and was not consumed. So Christ, though he suffered extremely, yet perished not, but overcame at last, and rose from his sufferings. Because this great mystery of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ was here represented, therefore Moses says, "I will turn aside, and behold this great sight." A great sight he might well call it, when there was represented, God manifest in the flesh, and suffering a dreadful death, and rising from the dead. This glorious Redeemer was he that redeemed the church out of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh, as Christ, by his death and sufferings, redeemed his people from Satan, the spiritual Pharaoh. He redeemed them from hard service and cruel drudgery, as Christ redeems his people from the cruel slavery of sin and Satan. He redeemed them, as it is said, from the iron furnace, as Christ redeems his church from a furnace of fire and everlasting burning. He redeemed them with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and great and terrible judgments on their enemies, as Christ with mighty power triumphs over principalities and powers, and executes terrible judgments on his church's enemies, bruising the serpent's head. He saved them, when others were destroyed, by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb, as God's church is saved from death by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, when the rest of the world is destroyed. God brought forth the people sorely against the will of the Egyptians, when they could not bear to let them go, so Christ rescues his people out of the hands of the devil, sorely against his will, when his proud heart cannot bear to be overcome. In that redemption, Christ did not only redeem the people from the Egyptians, but he redeemed them from the devils, the gods of Egypt. For before, they had been in a state of servitude to the gods of

Egypt, as well as to the men. And Christ, the seed of the woman, did now, in a very remarkable manner, fulfill the curse on the serpent in bruising his head, Exodus 12:12, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment.” Hell was as much and more engaged in that affair, than Egypt was. The pride and cruelty of Satan, that old serpent, was more concerned in it than Pharaoh’s. He did his utmost against the people, and to his utmost opposed their redemption. But it is said, that when God redeemed his people out of Egypt, he broke the heads of the dragons in the waters, and broke the head of leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness, Psalms 74:12-14. God forced their enemies to let them go, that they might serve him, as also Zacharias observes with respect to the church under the gospel, Luke 1:74-75. The people of Israel went out with an high hand, and Christ went before them in a pillar of cloud and fire. There was a glorious triumph over earth and hell in that deliverance. And when Pharaoh and his hosts, and Satan by them, pursued the people, Christ overthrew them in the Red Sea. The Lord triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider he cast into the sea, and there they slept their last sleep, and never followed the children of Israel any more. As all Christ’s enemies are overthrown in his blood, which by its abundant sufficiency, and the greatness of the sufferings with which it was shed, may well be represented by a sea. The Red Sea did represent Christ’s blood, as is evident, because the apostle compares the children of Israel’s passage through the Red Sea to baptism, 1 Corinthians 10:1-2. But we all know that the water of baptism represents Christ’s blood.

Thus Christ, the angel of God’s presence, in his love and his pity, redeemed his people, and carried them in the days of old as on eagles’ wings, so that none of their proud and spiteful enemies, neither Egyptians nor devils, could touch them. This was quite a new thing that God did towards this great work of redemption. God never had done anything like it before, Deuteronomy 4:32-34. This was a great advancement of the work of redemption, that had been begun and carried on from the fall of man, a great step taken in divine providence towards a preparation for Christ’s coming into the world, and working out his great and eternal redemption. For this was the people of whom Christ was to come. And now we may see how that plant flourished that God had planted in Abraham. Though the family of which Christ was to come, had been in a degree separated from the rest of the world before, in the calling of Abraham. Yet that separation that was then made, appeared not to be sufficient, without further separation. For though by that separation, they were kept as strangers and sojourners, kept from being united with other people in the same political societies. Yet they remained mixed among them, by which means, as it had proved, they had been in danger of wholly losing the true religion, and of being overrun with the idolatry of their neighbors. God now, therefore, by this redemption, separated them as a nation from all other nations, to subsist by themselves in their own political and ecclesiastical state, without having any concern with the heathen nations, that they might so be kept separate until Christ should come, and so that the church of Christ might be upheld, and might keep the oracles of God, until that time, that in them might be kept up those types and prophecies of Christ, and those histories, and other divine previous instructions, that were necessary to prepare the way for Christ’s coming.

II. As this people were separated to be God’s peculiar people, so all other people upon the face of the whole earth were wholly rejected and given over to heathenism. This, so far as the providence

of God was concerned in it, belongs to the great affair of redemption that we are upon, and was one thing that God ordered in his providence to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and the great salvation he was to accomplish in the world, for it was only to prepare the way for the more glorious and signal victory and triumph of Christ's power and grace over the wicked and miserable world, and that Christ's salvation of the world of mankind might become the more sensible. This is the account the Scripture itself gives us of the matter, Romans 11:30-32. The apostle there speaking to the Gentiles that had formerly been heathens, says, "As ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy, For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." It was the will of God, that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, should be concluded in visible and professed unbelief, that so God's mercy and Christ's salvation towards them all might be visible and sensible. For the apostle is not speaking only of that unbelief that is natural to all God's professing people as well as others, but that which appears, and is visible, such as the Jews fell into, when they openly rejected Christ, and ceased to be a professing people. The apostle observes, how that first the Gentiles, even the Gentile nations, were included in a professed unbelief and open opposition to the true religion, before Christ came, to prepare the way for the calling of the Gentiles, which was soon after Christ came, that God's mercy might be the more visible to them, and that the Jews were rejected, and apostatized from the visible church, to prepare the way for the calling of the Jews, which shall be in the latter days. So that it may be seen of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, that they are visibly redeemed by Christ, from being visibly aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope, and without God in the world.

We cannot certainly determine precisely at what time the apostasy of the Gentile nations from the true God, or their being concluded in visible unbelief, became universal. Their falling away was a gradual thing, as we observed before. It was general in Abraham's time, but not universal. For then we find Melchisedec, one of the kings of Canaan, was priest of the most high God. And after this the true religion was kept up for a while among some of the rest of Abraham's posterity, besides the family of Jacob, and also in some of the posterity of Nahor, as we have instances of, in Job, and his three friends, and Elihu. The land of Uz, where Job lived, was a land possessed by the posterity of Uz, or Huz, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, of whom we read, Genesis 22:21. Bildad the Shuhite was of the offspring of Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah, Genesis 25:1-2, and Elihu the Buzite, was of Buz the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. So the true religion lasted among some other people besides the Israelites, a while after Abraham. But it did not last long. And it is probable that the time of their total rejection, and giving up to idolatry, was about the time when God separated the children of Israel from Egypt to serve him, for they are often put in mind on that occasion, that God had now separated them to be his peculiar people, or to be distinguished from all other people upon earth, to be his people alone, to be his portion, when others were rejected. This seems to hold forth thus much to us, that God now chose them in such a manner, that this visible choice of them was accompanied with a visible rejection of all other nations in the world, that God visibly came, and took up his residence with them, as forsaking all other nations. And so, as the first calling of the Gentiles after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews, so the first calling of the Jews to be God's people, when they were called out of Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles.

Thus all the Gentile nations throughout the whole world, all nations, but only the Israelites, and those that embodied themselves with them, were left and given up to idolatry, and so continued a great many ages, even from this time until Christ came, which was about fifteen hundred years. They were concluded so long a time in unbelief, that there might be a thorough proof of the necessity of a Savior, that it might appear by so long a trial, past all contradiction, that mankind were utterly insufficient to deliver themselves from that gross darkness and misery, and subjection to the devil, that they had fallen under, that it might appear that all the wisdom of the philosophers, and the wisest men that the heathen had among them, could not deliver them from their darkness, for the greater glory to Jesus Christ, who, when he came, enlightened and delivered them by his glorious gospel. Herein the wonderful wisdom of God appear, in thus preparing the way for Christ's redemption. This the Scripture teaches us, as in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Here I might consider as another work of God, whereby the general work of redemption was carried on, that wonderful deliverance which he wrought for the children of Israel at the Red Sea, when they were pursued by the hosts of the Egyptians, and were just ready to be swallowed up by them, there being, to human appearance no possibility of an escape. But as this may be referred to their redemption out of Egypt, and considered as a part of that more general work, I shall not further enlarge it.

III. The next thing that I shall take notice of here, that was done towards the work of redemption, is God's giving the moral law in so awful a manner at Mount Sinai. This was another new thing that God did, a new step taken in this great affair, Deuteronomy 4:33, "Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? And it was a great thing that God did towards this work, and that whether we consider it as delivered as a new exhibition of the covenant of works, or given as a rule of life. The covenant of works was here exhibited to be as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, not only for the use of that nation in the ages of the Old Testament, but for the use of God's church throughout all ages of the world, as an instrument that the great Redeemer makes use of to convince men of their sin and misery, and helpless state, and of God's awful and tremendous majesty and justice as a lawgiver, and so to make men sensible of the necessity of Christ as a savior. The work of redemption, in its saving effect on men's souls, in all the progress of it to the end of it, is not carried on without the use of this law that was now delivered at Sinai.

It was given in an awful manner, with a terrible voice, exceedingly loud and awful, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled, and Moses himself, though so intimate a friend of God, yet said, I exceedingly fear and quake, the voice being accompanied with thunders and lightning, the mountain burning with fire to the midst of heaven, and the earth itself shaking and trembling, to make all sensible how great that authority, power, and justice was, that stood engaged to exact the fulfillment of this law, and to see it fully executed, and how strictly God would require the fulfillment, and how terrible his wrath would be against every breaker of it, that men being sensible of these things, might have a thorough trial of themselves, and might prove their own hearts, and know how impossible it is for them to have salvation by the works of the law, and might see the absolute necessity they stood in of a mediator.

If we regard this law now given at Mount Sinai, not as the covenant of works, but as a rule of life, so it is made use of by the Redeemer, from that time to the end of the world, as a directory to his people, to show them the way in which they must walk as they would go to heaven. For a way of sincere and universal obedience to this law is the narrow way that leads to life.

IV. The next thing that is observable in this period, was God's giving the typical law, in which I suppose to be included most or all those precepts that were given by Moses, that did not properly belong to the moral law, not only those laws that are commonly called ceremonial, in distinction from judicial laws, which are the laws prescribing the ceremonies and circumstances of the Jewish worship, and their ecclesiastical state. But also many, if not all those divine laws that were political, and for regulating the Jewish commonwealth, commonly called judicial laws, these were at best many of them typical. The giving this typical law was another great thing that God did in this period, tending to build up this glorious structure of redemption that God had been carrying on from the beginning of the world. There had been many typical events of providence before, that represented Christ and his redemption, and some typical ordinances, as particularly those two of sacrifices and circumcision. But now, instead of representing the great Redeemer in a few institutions, God gives forth a law full of nothing else but various and innumerable typical representations of good things to come, by which that nation were directed how, every year, month, and day, in their religious actions, and in their conduct of themselves, in all that appertained to their ecclesiastical and civil state, to show forth something of Christ, one observance showing one thing, exhibiting one doctrine, or one benefit, another, another. So that the whole nation by this law was, as it were, constituted in a typical state. Thus the gospel was abundantly held forth to that nation, so that there is scarce any doctrine of it, but is particularly taught and exhibited by some observance of this law, though it was in shadows, and under a veil, as Moses put a veil on his face when it shone. To this typical law belong all the precepts that relate to building the tabernacle, that was set up in the wilderness, and all the form, circumstances, and utensils of it.

V. About this time was given to God's church the first written Word of God that ever was enjoyed by God's people This was another great thing done towards the affair of redemption, a new and glorious advancement of the building. Not far from this time, was the beginning of the great written rule, which God has given for the regulation of the faith, worship, and practice of his church in all ages henceforward to the end of the world, which rule grew, and was added to from that time, for many ages, until it was finished, and the canon of Scripture completed by the apostle John. It is not very material, whether the first written word that ever was, was the ten commandments written on the tables of stone with the finger of God, or the book of Job, and whether the book of Job was written by Moses, as some suppose, or by Elihu, as others. If it was written by Elihu, it was written before this period that we are now upon, but yet could not be far from it, as appears by considering whose posterity the persons were that are spoken of in it, together with Job's great age, that was past before this was written. The written Word of God is the main instrument Christ has made use of to carry on his work of redemption in all ages since it was given. There was a necessity now of the Word of God being committed to writing, for a steady rule to God's church. Before this, the church had the Word of God by tradition, either by immediate tradition from eminent men that were inspired, that were then living. (For it was a common thing in those days, before there was a written word, for God to reveal himself immediately to eminent persons, as appears by the book of

Job, and many other things that might be mentioned, in the book of Genesis.) Or else they had it by tradition from former generations, which might be had with tolerable certainty in ages preceding this, by reason of the long lives of men. Noah might converse with Adam, and receive traditions from him, and Noah lived until about Abraham's time. And the sons of Jacob lived a considerable time to deliver the revelations made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their posterity in Egypt. But the distance from the beginning of things was become so great, and the lives of men become so short, being brought down to the present standard about Moses' time. And God having now separated a nation to be a peculiar people, partly for that end to be the keepers of the oracles of God, God saw it to be a needful and convenient time now to commit his word to writing, to remain henceforward for a steady rule throughout all ages. And therefore, besides the book of Job, Christ wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone, with his own finger, and after this the whole law, as containing the substance of the five books of Moses, was by God's special command committed to writing, which was called the book of the law, and was laid up in the tabernacle, to be kept there for the use of the church, as you may see, Deuteronomy 31:24-26.

VI. God was pleased now wonderfully to represent the progress of his redeemed church through the world to their eternal inheritance, by the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan. Here all the various steps of the redemption of the church by Christ were represented, from the beginning to its consummation in glory. The state they are redeemed from is represented by Egypt, and their bondage there, which they left. The purchase of their redemption was represented by the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, which was offered up that night that God slew all the first born of Egypt. The beginning of the application of the redemption of Christ's church in their conversion, was represented by Israel's going out of Egypt, and passing through the Red Sea in so extraordinary and miraculous a manner. The travel of the church through this evil world, and the various changes through which the church passes, in the different stages of it, were represented by the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness. The manner of their being conducted by Christ, was represented by the Israelites being led by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. The manner of the church's being supported in their progress, and supplied from the beginning to the end of it, with spiritual food, and continual daily communications from God, was represented by God's supplying the children of Israel with bread, or manna, from heaven, and water out of the rock. The dangers that the saints must meet with in their course through the world, were represented by the fiery flying serpents which the children of Israel met with in the wilderness. The conflicts the church has with her enemies, were represented by their battle with the Amalekites, and others they met with there. And so innumerable other things might be mentioned, wherein the things they met with were lively images of things which the church and saints meet with in all ages of the world. That these things are typical of things that pertain to the Christian church, is manifest from 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them from ensamples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Here the apostle is speaking of those very things which we have now mentioned, and he says expressly, that they happened unto them for types, so it is in the original.

VII. Another thing here must not be omitted, which was a great and remarkable dispensation of providence, respecting the whole world of mankind, which was finished in this period, and that was, the shortening the days of man's life, whereby it was brought down from being between nine hundred and a thousand years, to be but about seventy or eighty. The life of man began to be

shortened immediately after the flood. It was brought down the first generation to six hundred years, amid the next to between four and five hundred years. And so the life of man gradually grew shorter and shorter, until about the time of the great mortality that was in the congregation of Israel, after they had murmured at the report of the spies, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness, whereby all the men of war died. And then the life of man was reduced to its present standard. As Moses observes in that psalm that he wrote on occasion of that mortality, Psalms 90:10, “The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” This great dispensation of God tended to promote the grand design of the redemption of Christ. Man’s life being cut so very short in this world, tended to prepare the way for poor, mortal, short lived men, the more joyfully to entertain the glad tidings of everlasting life in another world, that are brought to light by the gospel, and more readily to embrace a savior, that purchases and offers such a blessing. If men’s lives were still commonly about nine hundred years, how much less would they have to move them to regard the proffers of a future life, how much greater temptation would they have to rest in the things of this world, they being of such long continuance, and to neglect any other life but this? This probably contributed greatly to the wickedness of the antediluvians. But now, how much greater motives have men to seek redemption, and a better life than this, by the great Redeemer, since the life of man is not one twelfth part of what it used to be. Men now universally die at the age when men formerly used to be but as it were setting out in the world!

VIII. The same work was carried on in preserving that people, of whom Christ was to come, from totally perishing in the wilderness, by a constant miracle of forty years continuance. I observed before many times, how God preserved those of whom the Redeemer wag to proceed in a very wonderful manner, as he preserved Noah and his family from the flood, and as he preserved Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with their families, from the wicked inhabitants of Canaan, and as he preserved Jacob and his family from perishing by the famine, by Joseph in Egypt. But this preservation of the children of Israel for so long a time in the wilderness, was on some accounts more remarkable than any of them, for it was by a continual miracle or so long duration. There was, as may be fairly computed, at first two millions of souls in that congregation, that could not subsist any better without meat and drink than other men. But if this had been withheld, they must all have perished, every man, woman, and child, in less than one month’s time, so that there would not have been one of them left. But yet this vast multitude subsisted for forty years together, in a dry barren wilderness, without sowing or reaping, or tilling any land, having their bread daily rained down to them out of heaven, and being furnished with water to satisfy them all, out of a rock, and the same clothes with which they came out of Egypt, lasting, without wearing out all that time. Never was any instance like this, of a nation being so upheld for so long a time together. Thus God upheld his church by a continual miracle, and kept alive that people in whom was the blessing, the promised seed, and great Redeemer of the world.

IX. God was pleased, in this time of the children of Israel’s being in the wilderness, to give a further revelation of Christ the Redeemer in the predictions of him, than had been before. Here are three prophecies given at this time that I would take notice of. The first is that of Balaam, Numbers 24:17-19, “I shall see him, but not now, I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy

all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." This is a plainer prophecy of Christ, especially with regard to his kingly office, than any that had been before. But we have another, that God gave by Moses, that is plainer still, especially with regard to his prophetic office, in Deuteronomy 18:18, etc. "I will raise up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him," etc. This is a plainer prophecy of Christ than any that had been before, in this respect that all the prophecies that had been before of Christ, were in figurative mystical language. The first prophecy was so, That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "That in their seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," were also mystical, which prophecy is not so particular, because the expression, thy seed, is general, and not plainly limited to any particular person. The prophecy of Jacob in blessing Judah, Genesis 49:8 is in mystical language, and so is that of Balaam, which speaks of Christ under the figurative expression of a star. But this is a plain prophecy, without being veiled in any mystical language at all.

There are several things contained in this prophecy of Christ. Here is his mediator office in general, Genesis 49:16. Here it is revealed how he should be a person to stand between them and God, that was so terrible a being, a being of such awful majesty, holiness, and justice, that they could not have come to him, and have intercourse with him immediately, without a mediator to stand between them, because, if they came to such a dreadful sin-revenging God immediately, they should die, God would prove a consuming fire to them. And then here is a particular revelation of Christ with respect to his prophetic office, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee," etc. And further, it is revealed what kind of a prophet he should be, a prophet like Moses, who was the head and leader of all the people, and who, under God, had been their redeemer, to bring them out of the house of bondage, was, as it were, their shepherd by whom God led them through the Red Sea and wilderness, and was an intercessor for them with God, and was both a prophet and a king in the congregation. For Moses had the power of a king among them. It is said of him, Deuteronomy 33:5, He was king in Jeshurun, and he was the prophet by whom God as it were built up his church, and delivered his instructions of worship. Thus Christ was to be a prophet like unto Moses, so that this is both the plainest and fullest prophecy of Christ that ever had been from the beginning of the world to this time. The next prophecy that I shall take notice of, respects only the calling of the Gentiles, which should be after Christ's coming, of which God gave a very plain prophecy by Moses in the wilderness, Deuteronomy 32:21. Here is a very plain prophecy of the rejection of the Jews and calling the Gentiles. They moved God to jealousy by that which was not a god, by casting him off, and taking other gods, that were no gods, in his room. So God declares that he will move them to jealousy in the like manner, by casting them off, and taking other people, that had not been his people, in their room. The Apostle Paul takes notice of this prophecy, as foretelling the calling of the Gentiles, in Romans 10:19-20, "But I say, Did not Israel know! First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest to them that asked not after me."

Thus you see how the light or the gospel, which first began to dawn and glimmer immediately after the fall, gradually increases the nearer we come to Christ's time.

X. Another thing by which God carried on this work in this time, was a remarkable pouring out of his Spirit on the young generation in the wilderness. The generation that was grown up when they came out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, was a very disobedient and perverse generation. They were tainted with the idolatry and wickedness of Egypt, and were not weaned from it, as the prophet Ezekiel takes notice, Ezekiel 20:6-8. Hence they made the golden calf in imitation of the idolatry of Egypt, that was wont to worship a bull or an ox, and therefore cattle are called the abomination of the Egyptians, i.e. their idol. This generation God was exceeding angry with, and swore in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest. But the younger generation were not so, the generation that were under twenty years old when they came out of Egypt, and those that were born in the wilderness, the generation spoken of, Numbers 14:31, "But your little ones, who ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land that ye have despised." This was the generation with whom the covenant was renewed, as we have an account in Deuteronomy, and that entered into the land of Canaan. This generation God was pleased to make a generation to his praise, and they were eminent for piety, as appears by many things said in Scripture about them, as, particularly, Jeremiah 2:2-3, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase." Here the generation that went after God in the wilderness, is spoken of with very high commendations, as eminent for holiness, "Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase." And their love to God is spoken of as distinguished like the love of a bride at her espousals. The going after God in the wilderness that is here spoken of, is not the going of the children of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai. But their following God through that dreadful wilderness, that the congregation long wandered in, after they went back from Kadesh-barnea, which is spoken of, Deuteronomy 8:15, "Who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water." Though this generation had a much greater trial, than the generation of their fathers had before they came to Kadesh-barnea, yet they never murmured against God in any wise, as their fathers had done. But their trials had a contrary effect upon them, to awaken them, convince, and humble them, and fit them for great mercy. They were awakened by those awful judgments of God that he inflicted on their fathers, whereby their carcasses fell in the wilderness. And God poured out his Spirit with those awakening provisions toward their fathers, and their own travel in the wilderness, and the word preached to them by Moses, whereby they were greatly awakened, and made to see the badness of their own hearts, and were humbled, and at length multitudes of them converted, as Deuteronomy 8:2-3, "And thou shalt remember the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years In the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee," etc. And, Deuteronomy 8:15, "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end." And therefore it is said, Hosea 13:5, "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought." God allured them, and brought them into that wilderness, and spake comfortably to them, as it was foretold that he would do afterwards, Hosea 2:14.

Those terrible judgments that were executed in the congregation after their turning back from Kadesh-barnea, in the matter of Korah, and the matter of Peor, were chiefly on the old generation, whom God consumed in the wilderness. Those rebellions were chiefly among the elders of the congregation, who were of the older generation that God had given up to their hearts lust. They walked in their own counsels. God was grieved with their manners forty years in the wilderness. But that this younger congregation were eminent for piety, appears by all their history. The former generation were wicked, and were followed with curses. But this was holy, and wonderful blessings followed them. God did great things for them, he fought for them, and gave them the possession of Canaan. And it is God's manner, when he hath very great mercies to bestow on a visible people, first, to fit them for them, and then to bestow them on them. So it was here. They believed in God, and by faith overcame Sihon and Og, and the giants of Canaan, and are commended for cleaving to the Lord. Joshua 23:8, "Joshua says unto them, Cleave unto the Lord, as ye have done unto this day." And so Israel did all the while that generation lived. But when Joshua and all that generation were dead, there arose another generation that knew not the Lord. This pious generation showed a laudable and fervent zeal for God on several occasions, on occasion of Achan's sin, but especially when they suspected the two tribes and a half had set up an altar in opposition to the altar of burnt offering. There never was any generation of Israel that so much good and so little evil is mentioned of, as this generation. It is further observable, that in the time of this generation was the second general circumcision, whereby the reproach of Israel was fully rolled away. They became pure. When afterwards they were polluted by Achan, they purged themselves again. The men of the former generation being dead, and God having sanctified this younger generation to himself, he solemnly renewed his covenant with them, as we have a particular account in Deuteronomy 29:1-29. We find that such solemn renovations of the covenant commonly accompanied any remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, causing a general reformation. So we find it was in Hezekiah's and Josiah's times. It is questionable whether there ever was a time of so great a flourishing of religion in the Israelite church, as in that generation, and as, in the Christian church, religion was in its most flourishing circumstances in the day of its espousals, or first setting up of that church, in the days of the apostles. So it seems to have been with the Jewish church in the days of its first establishment in Moses' and Joshua's times.

Thus God at this time did gloriously advance the work of redemption, both by his word and Spirit. By this pouring out of the Spirit of God, the work of redemption was promoted, not only as it was in itself a glorious instance of the carrying on of that redemption in the application of it. But as this was what God made use of as a means of the good and orderly establishment of the church of Israel at its first beginning, when it was first settled in the regular observance of God's ordinances, Canaan, even as the pouring out of the Spirit, in the beginning of the Christian church, was a great means God made use of for the well establishing the Christian church in the world in all succeeding ages.

XI. The next thing I would observe, was God's bringing the people of Israel under the hand of Joshua, and settling them in that land where Christ was to be born, and which was the great type of the heavenly Canaan, which Christ has purchased. This was done by Joshua, who was of Joseph's posterity, and was an eminent type of Christ, and is therefore called the shepherd, the stone of Israel, in Jacob's blessing of Joseph, Genesis 49:24. Being such a type of Christ, he bore the name of Christ. Joshua and Jesus are the same name, only the one is Hebrew, the other is

Greek. And therefore, in the New Testament, which was originally written in Greek, Joshua is called Jesus, Acts 7:45. “Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus,” i.e. Joshua, Hebrews 4:8, “If Jesus had given them rest, he would not have spoken of another day,” i.e. if Joshua bad given them rest.

God wonderfully possessed his people of this land, conquering the former inhabitants of it, and the mighty giants, as Christ conquered the devil, first conquering the great kings of that part of the land that was on the eastern side of Jordan, Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and then dividing the river Jordan, as before he had done the Red Sea, causing the walls of Jericho to fall down at the sound of the trumpets of the priests, that sound typifying the sound of the gospel by the preaching of the gospel ministers, the walls of the accursed city Jericho signifying the walls of Satan’s kingdom, and after this wonderfully destroying the mighty host of the Amorites under the five kings, causing the sun and moon to stand still, to help the people against their enemies, at the prayer of the typical Jesus, plainly holding this forth, that God would make the whole course of nature to be subservient to the affair of redemption, so that everything should yield to the purposes of that work, and give place to the welfare of God’s redeemed people.

Thus did Christ show his great love to his elect, that he would make the course of nature, in the frame of the world that he had made, and that he governed, to give place to their happiness and prosperity, and showed that the sun and moon, and all things, visible and invisible, were theirs by his purchase. At the same time, Christ fought as the captain of their host, and cast down great hailstones upon their enemies, by which more were slain than by the sword of the children of Israel. And after this Christ gave the people a mighty victory over a yet greater army in the northern part of the land, that were gathered together at the waters of Merom, as the sand of the sea shore, as it is said, Joshua 11:4.

Thus God gave the people whence Christ was to proceed, the land where he was to be born, and live, and preach, and work miracles, and die, and rise again, and whence he was to ascend into heaven, as the land which was a great type of heaven, which is another thing whereby a great advance was made in the affair of redemption.

XII. Another thing that God did towards carrying on this affair, was his actually setting up his stated worship among the people, as it had been before instituted in the wilderness. This worship was appointed at Mount Sinai, wholly in subservience to this great affair of redemption. It was to make way for the coming of Christ, and the innumerable ceremonial observances of it were typical of him and his redemption. This worship was chiefly instituted at Mount Sinai, but it was gradually set up in practice. It was partly set up in the wilderness, where the tabernacle and its vessels were made, but there were many parts of their instituted worship that could not be observed in the wilderness, by reason of their unsettled, itinerant state there. And then there were many precepts that respect the land of Canaan, and their cities and places of habitation there, which therefore could not be put in practice, until they came into that land. But now, when this was brought to pass, God set up his tabernacle in the midst of his people, as he had before promised them, Leviticus 26:11, “I will set up my tabernacle amongst you.” The tabernacle was set at Shiloh, Joshua 18:1, and the priests and Levites had their offices appointed them, and the cities of refuge were appointed. And now the people were in a condition to observe their feasts of the first fruits, and their feasts of ingathering, and to bring all their tithes and appointed offerings to the Lord, and most parts of God’s worship

were set up, though there were some things that were not observed until afterwards.

XIII. The next thing I would take notice of, was God's wonderfully preserving that people, from this time forward, when all the males went up, three times in the year, to the place where God's ark was. The people of Israel were generally surrounded with enemies, that sought all opportunities to destroy them, and dispossess them of their land. Until David's time there were great numbers in the land of the remains of the Canaanites, and the other former inhabitants of the land, that were bitter enemies to the people of Israel. And these had from year to year, three times in the year, a fair opportunity of overrunning their country, and getting possession of their cities, when all the males were gone, and only the women, and those who were not able to go up, were left behind. And yet they were remarkably preserved throughout all generations at such seasons, agreeable to the promise that God had made, Exodus 34:24, "Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." So wonderfully did God order affairs, and influence the hearts of their enemies, that though they were so full of enmity against Israel, and desired to dispossess them of their land, and had so fair an opportunity so often in their hands, that the whole country was left naked and empty of all that could resist them. It would have been only for them to have gone and taken possession. They could have had it without opposition. They were so eager to take other opportunities against them. Yet we never read, in all their history, of any of their enemies taking these opportunities against them, which could be no less than a continual miracle, that God, for the preservation of his church, kept up for so many generations, even throughout the ages of the old Testament. It was surely a wonderful dispensation of divine providence to maintain and promote God's great design of redemption.

XIV. God's preserving his church and the true religion from being wholly extinct in the frequent apostasies of the Israelites in the time of the judges. How prone was that people to forsake the true God, that had done such wonderful things for them, and to fall into idolatry! and how did the land, from time to time, seem to be almost overrun with idolatry! But yet God never suffered his true worship to be totally rooted out. His tabernacle stood, the ark was preserved, the book of the law was kept from being destroyed, God's priesthood was upheld, and God still had a church among the people, and time after time, when religion seemed to be almost gone, and it was come to the last extremity, then God granted a revival, and sent some angel or prophet, or raised up some eminent person, to be an instrument of their reformation.

XV. God's preserving that nation from being destroyed, and delivering them from time to time, although they were so often subdued and brought under the dominion of their enemies. It is a wonder, not only that the true religion was not wholly rooted out, and so the church destroyed that way, but also that the very nation in which that church was, was not utterly destroyed, they were so often brought under the power of their enemies. Once while they were subdued by Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia, another while they were brought under the Moabites, and then they were sold into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan. Then they were under the dominion of the Midianites. Then were sorely distressed by the children of Ammon, and then by the Philistines. But yet God, in all these dangers, preserved them, and kept them from being wholly overthrown. And from time to time, when it was come to extremity, and God saw that they were upon the very brink of ruin, then God raised up a deliverer, agreeable to Deuteronomy 32:36, "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left."

Those remarkable dispensations of Providence are very lively and elegantly set forth by the Psalmist, Psalms 106:34. etc.

These deliverers that God raised up from time to time were all types of Christ, the great redeemer and deliverer of his church, and some of them very remarkably so, as, particularly, Barak, Jephtha, Gideon, and Samson, in very many particulars, and above all in the acts of Samson, as might be shown, were it not that this would take up too much time.

XVI. It is observable, that when Christ appeared to manage the affairs of his church in this period, he often appeared in the form of that nature that he took upon him in his incarnation. So he seems to have appeared to Moses from time to time, and particularly at that time when God spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, and he beheld the similitude of the Lord (Numbers 12:8) after he had besought him to show him his glory, which was the most remarkable vision that ever he had of Christ. There was a twofold discovery that Moses had of Christ. One was spiritual, made to his mind, by the word that was proclaimed, when he proclaimed his name, saying, “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation,” Exodus 34:6-7, etc. Another was external, which was that which Moses saw, when Christ passed by, and put him in a cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, so that Moses saw his back parts. What he saw was doubtless the back parts of a glorious human form, in which Christ appeared to him, and in all likelihood the form of his glorified human nature, in which he should afterwards appear. He saw not his face, for it is not to be supposed that any man could subsist under a sight of the glory of Christ’s human nature as it now appears. So it was an human form in which Christ appeared to the seventy elders, of which we have an account, Exodus 24:9-11, “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet, as It were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.” So Christ appeared afterwards to Joshua in the form of the human nature, Joshua 5:13-14, “And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, he lift up his eyes, find looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” And so he appeared to Gideon, Judges 6:11. etc. and so also to Manoah, Judges 13:17-21. Here Christ appeared to Manoah in a representation both of his incarnation and death, of his incarnation, in that he appeared in a human form, and of his death and sufferings, represented by the sacrifice of a kid, and by his ascending up in the flame of the sacrifice, intimating, that it was he that was the great sacrifice, that must be offered up to God for a sweet savor, in the fire of his wrath, as that kid was burned and ascended up in the flame. Christ thus appeared, time after time, in the form of that nature he was afterwards to take upon him, because he now appeared on the same design, and to carry on the same work, that he was to appear in that nature to work out and carry on.

XVII. Another thing I would mention, done in this period towards the work of redemption, is the beginning of a succession of prophets, and erecting a school of the prophets, in Samuel’s time. There was something of this spirit of prophecy in Israel after Moses, before Samuel, Joshua and

many of the judges had a degree of it. Deborah was a prophetess, and some of the high priests were inspired with this spirit, particularly Eli. And that space of time was not wholly without instances of those that were set apart of God especially to this office, and so were called prophets. Such an one we read of. Judges 6:8, “The Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them,” etc. Such an one he seems to have been that we read of, 1 Samuel 2:27, “And there came a man of God to Eli,” etc. But there was no such order of men upheld in Israel for any constancy, before Samuel, the want of it is taken notice of in 1 Samuel 3:1, “And the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision.” But in Samuel there was begun a succession of prophets, that was maintained continually from that time, at least with very little interruption, until the spirit of prophecy ceased, about Malachi’s time. And therefore Samuel is spoken of in the New Testament as the beginning of this succession of prophets, Acts 3:24, “And all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days.” After Samuel was Nathan, and Gad, and Iddo, and Heman, and Asaph, and others. And afterwards, in the latter end of Solomon’s reign, we read of Ahijah, and in Jeroboam and Rehoboam’s time we read of prophets, and so continually one prophet succeeded another, until the captivity. We read in the writings of those prophets that are inserted into the canon of the Scriptures, of prophets as being a constant order of men upheld in the land in those days. And in the time of the captivity there were prophets still, as Ezekiel and Daniel, and after the captivity there were prophets, as Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi. And because God intended a constant succession of prophets from Samuel’s time, therefore in his time was begun a school of the prophets, that is, a school of young men, that were trained up under some great prophet, who was their master and teacher in the study of divine things, and the practice of holiness, to fit them for this office as God should call them to it. Those young men that belonged to these schools, were called the sons of the prophets, and oftentimes they are called prophets. These at first were under the tuition of Samuel, Thus we read of Samuel’s being appointed over them, 1 Samuel 19:20, “And when they saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them.” The company of prophets that we read of, 1 Samuel 10:5, were the same. Afterwards we read of their being under Elijah. Elisha was one of his sons, but he desired to have a double portion of his spirit as his successor, as his first born, as the eldest son was wont to have a double portion of the estate of his father. Therefore the sons of the prophets, when they perceived that the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha, submitted themselves to him, and owned him for their master, as they had done Elijah before him, as you may see, 2 Kings 2:15, “And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho, saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they bowed themselves to the ground before him.” And so after this Elisha was their master or teacher, he had the care and instruction of them, as you may see, 2 Kings 4:38, “And Elisha came again to Gilgal, and there was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and see the pottage for the sons of the prophets,” In Elijah’s and Elisha’s time, there were several places where there resided companies of these sons of the prophets, as there was one at Bethel, and another at Jericho, and another at Gilgal, unless that at Gilgal and Jericho were the same. And possibly that which is called the college, where the prophetess Huldah resided, was another at Jerusalem, see 2 Kings 22:14. It is there said of Huldah the prophetess, that “she dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college.” They had houses built, where they used to dwell together, and therefore those at Jericho being multiplied, and finding their house too little for them, desired leave of their master and teacher

Elisha, that they might go and hew timber to build a bigger, as you may see, 2 Kings 6:1-2. At some times there were numbers of these sons of the prophets in Israel, for when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, it is said, that Obadiah took an hundred of them, and hid them by fifty in a cave, 1 Kings 18:4.

These schools of the prophets being set up by Samuel, and afterwards kept up by such great prophets as Elijah and Elisha, must be of divine appointment, and accordingly we find, that those sons of the prophets were often favored with a degree of inspiration, while they continued under tuition in the schools of the prophets. And God commonly, when he called any prophet to the constant exercise of the prophetic office, and to some extraordinary service, took them out of these schools, though not universally. Hence the prophet Amos, speaking of his being called to the prophetic office, says, that he was one that had not been educated in the schools of the prophets, and was not one of the sons of the prophets, Amos 7:14-15. But Amos' taking notice of it as remarkable, that he should be called to be a prophet that had not been educated at the schools of the prophets, shows that it was God's ordinary manner to take his prophets out of these schools, for therein he did but bless his own institution.

Now this remarkable dispensation of Providence that we are upon, viz. God's beginning a constant succession of prophets in Samuel's time, that was to last for many ages. And to that end, establishing a school of the prophets under Samuel, thenceforward to be continued in Israel, was a step that God took in that great affair of redemption that we are upon. For the main business of this succession of prophets was, to foreshadow Christ and the glorious redemption that he was to accomplish, and so to prepare the way for his coming, as appears by that aforementioned place, Acts 3:24, and by Acts 10:43, "To him give all the prophets witness," and by Acts 3:18, "But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." As I observed before, the Old Testament time was like a time of night wherein the church was not wholly without light, but had not the light of the sun directly, but as reflected from the stars. Now these prophets were the stars that reflected the light of the sun, and accordingly they spoke abundantly of Jesus Christ, as appears by what we have of their prophecies in writing. And they made it very much their business, when they studied in their schools or colleges, and elsewhere, to search out the work of redemption, agreeable to what the apostle Peter says of them, 1 Peter 1:10-11, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We are told, that the church of the Redeemer is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, the Redeemer himself being the chief corner stone, Ephesians 2:20. This was the first thing of the nature that ever was done in the world, and it was a great thing that God did towards further advancing this great building of redemption. There had been before occasional prophecies of Christ, as was shown. But now the time drawing nearer when the Redeemer should come, it pleased God to appoint a certain order of men, in constant succession, whose main business it should be, to foreshadow Christ and his redemption, and as his forerunners to prepare the way for his coming. And God established schools, wherein multitudes were instructed and trained up to that end, Revelation 19:10, "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Chapter 27

03.05a. Period 1 Part 5 David to Babylonian Captivity

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION PART V

FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

I COME now to the fifth period of the times of the Old Testament, beginning with David, and extending to the Babylonian captivity, and would now proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this period also. And here,

I. The first thing to be taken notice of, is God's anointing that person that was to be the ancestor of Christ, to be king over his people. The dispensations of Providence that have been taken notice of through the last period, from Moses to this time, respect the people whence Christ was to proceed. But now the scripture history leads us to consider God's providence towards that particular person whence Christ was to proceed, viz. David. It pleased God at this time remarkably to select out that person of whom Christ was to come, from all the thousands of Israel, and to put a most honorable mark of distinction upon him, by anointing him to be king over his people. It was only God that could find him out. His father's house is spoken of as being little in Israel, and he was the youngest of all the sons of his father, and was least expected to be the man that God had chosen, by Samuel. God had before, in the former ages of the world, remarkably distinguished the persons from whom Christ was to come, as he did Seth, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. But the last that we have any account of God's marking out in any notable manner, the very person of whom Christ was to come, was in Jacob's blessing his son Judah, unless we reckon Nahshon's advancement in the wilderness to be the head of the tribe of Judah. But this distinction of the person of whom Christ was to come, in David, was very honorable, for it was God's anointing him to be king over his people. And there was something further denoted by David's anointing, than was in the anointing of Saul. God anointed Saul to be king personally, but God intended something further by sending Samuel to anoint David, viz. to establish the crown of Israel in him and in his family, as long as Israel continued to be a kingdom. And not only so, but what was infinitely more still, establishing the crown of his universal church, his spiritual Israel, in his seed, to the end of the world, and throughout all eternity. This was a great dispensation of God, and a great step taken towards a further advancing of the work of redemption, according as the time drew near wherein Christ was to come. David, as he was the ancestor of Christ, so he was the greatest personal type of Christ of all under the Old Testament. The types of Christ were of three sorts, types of institution, or instituted types, and providential, and personal types. The ordinance of sacrificing was the greatest of the instituted types. The redemption out of Egypt was the greatest of the providential types. David was the greatest of the personal types. Hence Christ is often called David in the prophecies of Scripture, as Ezekiel 34:23-24, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: — my servant David a

prince among them," and so in many other places. And he is very often spoken of as the seed of David, and the Son of David.

David being the ancestor and great type of Christ, his being solemnly anointed by God to be king over his people that the kingdom of his church might be continued in his family forever, may in some respects be looked on as an anointing of Christ himself. Christ was as it were anointed in him. Therefore Christ's anointing and David's anointing are spoken of under one in Scripture, as Psalms 89:20. "I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him." And David's throne and Christ's are spoken of as one, Luke 1:32, "And the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David." Acts 2:30, "David knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."

Thus God's beginning of the kingdom of his church in the house of David, was, as it were, a new establishing of the kingdom of Christ, the beginning of it in a state of such visibility as it thenceforward continued in. It was as it were God's planting the root, whence that branch of righteousness was afterwards to spring up, that was to be the everlasting king of his church. Therefore this everlasting king is called the branch from the stem of Jesse. Isaiah 11:1, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Jeremiah 23:5, "Behold, the days Come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper." So, Jeremiah 33:15, "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." So Christ, in the New Testament, is called the root and offspring of David, Revelation 22:16.

It is observable, that God anointed David after Saul to reign in his room. He took away the crown from him and his family, who was higher in stature than any of his people, and was in their eyes fittest to bear rule, to give it to David, who was low of stature, and in comparison, of despicable appearance. So God was pleased to show how Christ, who appeared despicable, without form or comeliness, and was despised and rejected of men, should take the kingdom from the great ones of the earth. And also it is observable, that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, as Jacob the younger brother supplanted Esau, and got the birthright and blessing from him. As Pharez, another of Christ's ancestors, supplanted Zarah in the birth, and as Isaac, another of the ancestors of Christ, cast out his elder brother Ishmael, thus was that frequent saying of Christ fulfilled, "The last shall be first, and the first last."

II. The next thing I would observe, is God's so preserving David's life, by a series of wonderful provisions, until Saul's death. I before took notice of the wonderful preservation of other particular persons that were the ancestors of Christ, as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and have observed how, in that Christ the great Redeemer was to proceed, from them, that in their preservation, the work of redemption itself may he looked upon as preserved from being defeated, and the whole church, which is redeemed through him, from being overthrown. But the preservation of David was no less remarkable than that of any others that have been already taken notice of. How often was it so, that there was but a step between him and death. The first instance of it we have in his encountering a lion and a bear, when they had caught a lamb out of his flock, which, without miraculous assistance, could at once have rent this young stripling in pieces, as they could the lamb that he delivered from them. So afterwards the root and offspring of David was

preserved from the roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour, and conquered him and rescued the poor souls of men, that were as lambs in the mouth of this lion. Another remarkable instance was, in preserving him from that mighty giant Goliath, who was strong enough to have taken him, and picked him to pieces with his fingers, and given his flesh to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of the air, as he threatened him. But God preserved him from him, and gave him the victory over him, so that he cut off his head with his own sword, and made him therein the deliverer of his people, as Christ slew the spiritual Goliath with his own weapon, the cross, and so delivered his people. And how remarkably did God preserve him from being slain by Saul, when he first sought his life, by giving him his daughter to be a snare to him, that the hand of the Philistines might be upon him, requiring him to pay for her by an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that so his life might be exposed to them, and in preserving him afterwards, when Saul spake to Jonathan, and to all his servants, to kill David, and in inclining Jonathan, instead of killing him, as his father bade him, to love him as his own soul, and to be a great instrument of his preservation, even so as to expose his own life to preserve David, though one would have thought that none would have been more willing to have David killed than Jonathan, seeing that he was competitor with him for his father's crown, and again saving him, when Saul threw a javelin at him to smite him even to the wall, and again preserving him, when he sent messengers to his house, to watch him, and to kill him, when Michal, Saul's daughter, let him down through a window, and when he afterwards sent messengers, once and again, to Naioth in Ramah, to take him, and they were remarkably prevented time after time, by being seized with miraculous impressions of the Spirit of God, and afterwards, when Saul, being resolute in the affair, went himself, he also was among the prophets. And after this, how wonderfully was David's life preserved at Gath, among the Philistines, when he went to Achish the king of Gath, and was there in the hands of the Philistines, who, one would have thought, would have dispatched him at once, he having so much provoked them by his exploits against them. And he was again wonderfully preserved at Keilah, when he had entered into a fenced town, where Saul thought he was sure of him. And how wonderfully was he preserved from Saul, when he pursued and hunted him in the mountains! How remarkably did God deliver him in the wilderness of Maon, when Saul and his army were compassing David about! How was he delivered in the cave of Engedi, when, instead of Saul's killing David, God delivered Saul into his hands in the cave, and he cut off his skirt, and might as easily have cut off his head, and afterwards delivering him in like manner in the wilderness of Ziph, and afterwards again preserving him in the land of the Philistines, though David had fought against the Philistines, and conquered them at Keilah, since he was last among them, which one would think, would have been sufficient warning to them not to trust him, or let him escape a second time, if ever they had him in their hands again. But yet now, when they had a second opportunity, God wonderfully turned their hearts to him to befriend and protect him, instead of destroying him!

Thus was the precious seed that virtually contained the Redeemer, and all the blessings of his redemption, wonderfully preserved, when hell and earth were conspired against it to destroy it. How often does David himself take notice of this, with praise and admiration, in the book of Psalms!

III. About this time, the written Word of God, or the canon of Scripture, was added to by Samuel. I have before observed, how that the canon of Scripture was begun, and the first written Word of God, the first written rule of faith and manners that ever was, was given to the church about

Moses' time. And many, and I know not but most divines, think it was added to by Joshua, and that he wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy, and most of the book of Joshua. Others think that Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were written by Samuel. However that was, this we have good evidence of, that Samuel made an addition to the canon of Scripture, for Samuel is manifestly mentioned in the New Testament, as one of the prophets whose writings we have in the Scriptures, in that aforementioned, Acts 3:24, "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." By that expression, "as many as have spoken," cannot be meant, as many as have spoken by word of mouth, for never was any prophet but what did that. But the meaning must be, as many as have spoken by writing, so that what they have spoken has come down to us, that we may see what it is. And the way that Samuel spoke of these times of Christ and the gospel, was by giving the history of those things that typified them, and pointed to them, particularly the things concerning David that he wrote. The Spirit of God moved him to commit those things to writing, chiefly for that reason, because they pointed to Christ, and the times of the gospel, and, as was said before, this was the main business of all that succession of prophets, that began in Samuel, to foreshadow these times. That Samuel added to the canon of the Scriptures, seems further to appear from 1 Chronicles 29:29, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer."

Whether the book of Joshua was written by Samuel or not, yet it is the general opinion of divines, that the books of Judges, and Ruth, and part of the first book of Samuel, were penned by him. The book of Ruth was penned for that reason, because, though it seemed to treat of private affairs, yet the persons chiefly spoken of in that book were of the family whence David and Christ proceeded, and so pointed to what the apostle Peter observed of Samuel and the other prophets, in the third chapter of Acts. The thus adding to the canon of the Scriptures, the great and main instrument of the application of redemption, is to be looked upon as a further carrying on of that work, and an addition made to that great building.

IV. Another thing God did towards this work, at that time, was his inspiring David to show forth Christ and his redemption, in divine songs, which should be for the use of the church, in public worship, throughout all ages. David was himself endued with the spirit of prophecy. He is called a prophet, Acts 2:29-30, "Let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day: therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath," etc. So that herein he was a type of Christ, that he was both a prophet and a king. We have no certain account of the time when David was first endued with the spirit of prophecy, but it is manifest, that it either was at the time that Samuel anointed him, or very soon after, for he appears soon after actuated by this spirit, in the affair of Goliath. And then great part of the psalms were penned in the time of his troubles, before he came to the crown, as might be made manifest by an induction of particulars. The oil that was used in anointing David was a type of the Spirit of God, and the type and the anti-type were given both together, as we are told, 1 Samuel 16:13, "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. And it is probable, that it now came upon him in its prophetic influences. The way that this Spirit influenced him was, to inspire him to show forth Christ, and the glorious things of his redemption, in divine songs, sweetly expressing the breathings of a pious soul, full of admiration of the glorious things of the Redeemer,

inflamed with divine love, and lifted up with praise, and therefore he is called the sweet psalmist of Israel. 2 Samuel 23:1, “Now these be the last words of David: David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel.” The main subjects of these sweet songs were the glorious things of the gospel, as is evident by the interpretation that is often put upon them, and the use that is made of them in the New Testament, for there is no one book of the Old Testament that is so often quoted in the New, as the book of Psalms. Joyfully did this holy man sing of those great things of Christ’s redemption, that had been the hope and expectation of God’s church and people from the beginning of the church of God on earth. And joyfully did others follow him in it, as Asaph, Heman, Ethan, and others, for the book of Psalms was not all penned by David, though the greater part of it was. Hereby the canon of Scripture was further added to, and an excellent portion of divine writ was it that was added. This was a great advancement that God made in this building, and the light of the gospel, which had been gradually growing from the fall, was exceedingly increased by it. For whereas before there was but here and there a prophecy given of Christ in a great many ages, now here Christ is spoken of by his ancestor David abundantly, in multitudes of songs, speaking of his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension into heaven, his satisfaction, intercession, his prophetic, kingly, and priestly office, his glorious benefits in this life and that which is to come, his union with the church, and the blessedness of the church in him, the calling of the Gentiles, the future glory of the church near the end of the world, and Christ’s coming to the final judgment. All these things, and many more, concerning Christ arid his redemption, are abundantly spoken of in the book of Psalms. This was also a glorious advancement of the affair of redemption, as God hereby gave his church a book of divine songs for their use in that part of their public worship, viz. singing his praises, throughout all ages to the end of the world. It is manifest the book of Psalms was given of God for this end. It was used in the church of Israel by God’s appointment. This is manifest by the title of many of the psalms, in which they are inscribed to the chief musician, i.e. to the man that was appointed to be the leader of divine songs in the temple, in the public worship of Israel. So David is called the sweet psalmist of Israel, because he penned psalms for the use of the church of Israel, and accordingly we have an account that they were actually made use of in the church of Israel for that end, even ages after David was dead, as 2 Chronicles 29:30, “Moreover, Hezekiah the king, and the princes, commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer.” And we find that the same are appointed in the New Testament to be made use of in the Christian church, in their worship, Ephesians 5:19. “Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.” Colossians 3:16, “Admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.” And so they have been, and will to the end of the world be made use of in the church to celebrate the praises of God. The people of God were wont sometimes to worship God by singing songs to his praise before, as they did at the Red Sea. And they had Moses’ prophetic song, in Deuteronomy 32:1-52, committed to them for that end. And Deborah and Barak, and Hannah sung praises to God. But now first did God commit to his church a book of divine songs for their constant use.

V. The next thing I would take notice of, is God’s actually exalting David to the throne of Israel, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it. God was determined to do it, and he made everything give place that stood in the way of it. He removed Saul and his sons out of the way, and first set David over the tribe of Judah. And then, having removed Ishbosheth, set him over all Israel. Thus did God fulfill his word to David. He took him from the sheepfold, and made him king

over his people Israel, Psalms 78:70-71. And now the throne of Israel was established in that family in which it was to continue forever, even forever and ever.

VI. Now first it was that God proceeded to choose a particular city out of all the tribes of Israel to place his name there. There is several times mention made in the law of Moses, of the children of Israel's bringing their oblations to the place which God should choose, as Deuteronomy 12:5-7, and so in many other places. But God had never proceeded to do it until now. The tabernacle and ark were never fixed, but sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another, but now God proceeded to choose Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem was never thoroughly conquered, or taken out of the hands of the Jebusites, until David's time. It is said in Joshua 15:63, "As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out. But the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day." But now David wholly subdued it, as we have an account in 2 Samuel 5:1-25. And now God proceeded to choose that city to place his name there, as appears by David's bringing up the ark thither soon after. And therefore this is mentioned afterwards as the first time God proceeded to choose a city to place his name there, 2 Chronicles 6:5-6, and 2 Chronicles 12:13. Afterwards God proceeded to show David the very place where he would have his temple built, viz. in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. This city of Jerusalem is therefore called the holy city, and it was the greatest type of the church of Christ in all the Old Testament. It was redeemed by David, the captain of the hosts of Israel, out of the hands of the Jebusites, to be God's city, the holy place of his rest forever where he would dwell, as Christ, the captain of his people's salvation, redeems his church out of the hands of devils, to be his holy and beloved city. And therefore, how often does the Scripture, when speaking of Christ's redemption of his church, call it by the names of Zion and Jerusalem? This was the city that God had appointed to be the place of the first gathering and erecting of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, of that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God on the apostles and primitive Christians, and the place whence the gospel was to sound forth into all the world, the place of the first Christian church, that was to be, as it were, the mother of all other churches through the world, agreeable to that prophecy, Isaiah 2:3-4, "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: — and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people," etc.

Thus God chose Mount Sion whence the gospel was to be sounded forth, as the law had been from Mount Sinai.

VII. The next thing to be observed here, is God's solemnly renewing the covenant of grace with David, and promising that the Messiah should be of his seed. We have an account of it in the seventh chapter of the second book of Samuel (2 Samuel 7:1-29). It was done on occasion of the thoughts David entertained of building God an house. On this occasion God sends Nathan the prophet to him, with the glorious promises of the covenant of grace. It is especially contained in these words in the 16th verse, "and thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee, thy throne shall be established for ever." Which promise has respect to Christ, the seed of David, and is fulfilled in him only. For the kingdom of David has long since ceased, any otherwise than as it is upheld in Christ. The temporal kingdom of the house of David has now ceased for a great many ages, much longer than ever it stood. That this covenant that God now established with David by Nathan the prophet, was the covenant of grace, is evident by the plain testimony of Scripture, in Isaiah 55:1-3. There we have Christ inviting sinners to come to the

waters, etc. And in Isaiah 55:3, he says, “Incline your ear, come unto me, hear, and your souls shall live, and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David.” Here Christ offers to poor sinners, if they will come to him, to give them an interest in the same everlasting covenant that he had made with David, conveying to them the same sure mercies. But, what is that covenant that sinners obtain an interest in, when they come to Christ, but the covenant of grace? This was the fifth solemn establishment of the covenant of grace with the church after the fall. The covenant of grace was revealed and established all along. But there had been particular seasons, wherein God had in a very solemn manner renewed this covenant with his church giving forth a new edition and establishment of it, revealing it in a new manner. This was flow the fifth solemn establishment of that covenant. The first was with Adam, the second was with Noah, the third was with the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fourth was in the wilderness by Moses, and now the fifth is this made to David. This establishment of the covenant of grace with David, David always esteemed the greatest smile of God upon him, the greatest honor of all that God had put upon him. He prized it, and rejoiced in it above all the other blessings of his reign. You may see how joyfully and thankfully he received it, when Nathan came to him with the glorious message, in 2 Samuel 7:18, etc. And so David, in his last words, declares this to be all his salvation, and all his desire, as you may see, 2 Samuel 23:5, “He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: — for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.

VIII. It was by David that God first gave his people Israel the possession of the whole promised land. I have before shown, how God’s giving the possession of the promised land belonged to the covenant of grace. This was done in a great measure by Joshua, but not fully. Joshua did not wholly subdue that part of the promised land that was strictly called the land of Canaan. And that was divided by lot to the several tribes, but there were great numbers of the old inhabitants left unsubdued, as we read in the books of Joshua and Judges. And there were many left to prove Israel, and to be thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes. There were the Jebusites in Jerusalem, and many of the Canaanites, and the whole nation of the Philistines, who all dwelt in that part of the land that was divided by lot, and chiefly in that part of the land that belonged to the tribes of Judah and Ephraim. And thus these remains of the old inhabitants of Canaan continued unsubdued until David’s time, but he wholly subdued them all. Which is agreeable to what Stephen observes, Acts 7:45, “Which also our fathers brought in with Jesus (i.e. Joshua) into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David.” They were until the days of David in driving them out, before they had wholly subdued them. But David entirely brought them under. He subdued the Jebusites, and he subdued the whole nation of the Philistines, and all the rest of the remains of the seven nations of Canaan, 1 Chronicles 18:1, “Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hands of the Philistines.”

After this, all the remains of the former inhabitants of Canaan were made bond servants to the Israelites. The posterity of the Gibeonites became servants before, hewers of wood and drawers of water, for the house of God. But Solomon, David’s son and successor, put all the other remains of the seven nations of Canaan to bond service, at least made them pay a tribute of bond service, as you may see, 1 Kings 9:20-22. And hence we read of the children of Solomon’s servants, after the return from the Babylonian captivity, Ezra 2:55, and Nehemiah 11:3. They were the children or

posterity of the seven nations of Canaan, that Solomon had subjected to bond service.

Thus David subdued the whole land of Canaan, strictly so called. But then that was not one half, nor quarter, of the land God had promised to their fathers. The land that God had often promised to their fathers, included all the countries from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. These were the bounds of the land promised to Abraham, Genesis 15:18, “In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” So again God promised at Mount Sinai, Exodus 23:31, “And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand: and thou shalt drive them out before thee.” So again, Deuteronomy 11:24, “Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be.” Again, the same promise is made to Joshua, Joshua 1:3-4, “Every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon, have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses, from the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea, towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.” But the land that Joshua gave the people the possession of, was but a little part of this land. And the people never had had the possession of it until now when God gave it them by David. This large country did not only include that Canaan that was divided by lot to those who came in with Joshua, but the land of the Moabites and Ammonites, the land of the Amalekites, and the rest of the Edomites, and the country of Zobah. All these nations were subdued and brought under the children of Israel by David. And be put garrisons in the several countries, and they became David’s servants, as we have a particular account in 2 Samuel 8:1-18. And David extended their border to the river Euphrates, as was promised. See 2 Samuel 8:3, “and David smote also Hadadezer the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates.” And accordingly we read, that Solomon his son reigned over all the regions on this side the river, 1 Kings 4:24, “For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river.” This Artaxerxes king of Persia takes notice of long after, Ezra 4:20, “There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river, and toll, tribute, and custom was paid unto them.” So that Joshua, that type of Christ, did but begin the work of giving Israel the possession of the promised land, but left it to be finished by that much greater type and ancestor of Christ, even David, who subdued far more of that land than ever Joshua had done. And in this extent of his and Solomon’s dominion was some resemblance of the great extent of Christ’s kingdom. And therefore the extent of Christ’s kingdom is set forth by this very thing, of its being over all lands, from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and over all lands from thence to the river Euphrates, as Psalms 72:8, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” See also 1 Kings 8:56.

03.05b. Period 1 Part 5 (Cont'd)

IX. God by David perfected the Jewish worship, and added to it several new institutions. The law was given by Moses, but yet all the institutions of the Jewish worship were not given by Moses. Some were added by divine direction. So this greatest of all personal types of Christ did not only perfect Joshua's work, in giving Israel the possession of the promised land, but he also finished Moses' work, in perfecting the instituted worship of Israel. Thus there must be a number of typical prophets, priests, and princes, to complete one figure or shadow of Christ the anti-type, he being the substance of all the types and shadows. Of so much more glory was Christ accounted worthy, than Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon, and all the great prophets, priests, and princes, judges, and saviors of the Old Testament put together. The ordinances of David are mentioned as of parallel validity with those of Moses, 2 Chronicles 23:18, "Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David." The worship of Israel was perfected by David, by the addition that be made to the ceremonial law, which we have an account of in 1 Chronicles 23:1-32; 1 Chronicles 24:1-31; 1 Chronicles 25:1-31; 1 Chronicles 26:1-32, consisting in the several orders and courses into which David divided the Levites, and the work and business to which he appointed them, different from what Moses had appointed them to, and also in the divisions of the priests the sons of Aaron into four and twenty courses, assigning to every course their business in the house of the Lord, and their particular stated times of attendance there, and appointing some of the Levites to a new office, that had not been appointed before. That was the office of singers, and particularly ordering and regulating of them in that office, as you may see in 1 Chronicles 25:1-31, and appointing others of the Levites by law to the several services of porters, treasurers, officers, and judges. And these ordinances of David were kept up henceforth in the church of Israel, as long as the Jewish church lasted. Thus we find the several orders of priests, and the Levites, the porters, and singers, after the captivity. So we find the courses of the priests appointed by David still continuing in the New Testament. So Zacharias the father of John the Baptist was a priest of the course of Abia, which is the same with the course of Abijab appointed by David, that we read of 1 Chronicles 24:10.

Thus David as well as Moses was made like to Christ the son of David, in this respect, that by him God gave a new ecclesiastical establishment, and new institutions of worship. David did not only add to the institutions of Moses, but by those additions he abolished some of the old institutions of Moses that had been in force until that time, particularly those laws of Moses that appointed the business of the Levites, which we have in the third and fourth chapters of Numbers, which very much consisted in their charge of the several parts and utensils of the tabernacle there assigned to them, and in carrying those several parts of the tabernacle. But those laws were now abolished by David. And they were no more to carry those things, as they had been used to do until David's time. But David appointed them to other work instead of it, see 1 Chronicles 23:26, "And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof" a

sure evidence that the ceremonial law given by Moses is not perpetual, as the Jews suppose, but might be wholly abolished by Christ. Or if David, a type of the Messiah, might abolish the law of Moses in part, much more might the Messiah himself abolish the whole.

David, by God's appointment, abolished all use of the tabernacle, that was built by Moses, and of which he had the pattern from God. For God now revealed it to David to be his will, that a temple should be built, that should be instead of the tabernacle, a great presage of what Christ, the son of David, would do, when he should come, viz. abolish the whole Jewish ecclesiastical constitution, which was but as a movable tabernacle, to set up the spiritual gospel temple, which was to be far more glorious, and of greater extent, and was to last forever. David had the pattern of all things pertaining to the temple showed him, even in like manner as Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle. And Solomon built the temple according to that pattern which he had from his father David, which he received from God. 1 Chronicles 28:11-12, "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlors thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the delicate things." And, 1 Chronicles 28:19, "All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his band upon me, even all the works of this pattern."

X. The canon of Scripture seems at or after the close of David's reign to be added to by the prophets Nathan and Gad. It appeals probable by the Scriptures that they carried on the history of the two books of Samuel from the place where Samuel left it, and finished it. These two books of Samuel seem to be the book that in the Scripture is called the book of Samuel the seer, and Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer, as in 1 Chronicles 29:29, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."

XI. The next thing I would take notice of, is God's wonderfully continuing the kingdom of his visible people in the line of Christ's legal ancestors, as long as they remained an independent kingdom. Thus it was without any interruption worth taking notice of. Indeed the kingdom of all the tribes of Israel was not kept in that line but the dominion of that part of Israel in which the true worship of God was upheld. So that part that were God's visible people, was always kept in the family of David, as long as there was any such thing as an independent king of Israel, according to his promise to David, and not only in the family of David, but always in that part of David's posterity that was the line whence Christ was legally descended, so that the very person that was Christ's legal ancestor was always in the throne, excepting Jehoaha, who reigned three months, and Zedekiah, as you may see in Matthew's genealogy of Christ.

Christ was legally descended from the kings of Judah, though he was not naturally descended from them. He was both legally and naturally descended from David. He was naturally descended from Nathan the son of David, for Mary his mother was one of the posterity of David by Nathan, as you may see in Luke's genealogy. But Joseph, the reputed and legal father of Christ, was naturally descended of Solomon and his successors, as we have an account in Matthew's genealogy. Jesus Christ, though he was not the natural son of Joseph, yet, by the law and constitution of the Jews, he was Joseph's heir, because he was the lawful son of Joseph's lawful wife, conceived

while she was his legally espoused wife. The Holy Ghost raised up seed to him. A person by the law of Moses, might be. the legal son and heir of another, whose natural son he was not, as sometimes a man raised up seed to his brother. A brother, in some cases, was to build up a brother's house, so the Holy Ghost built up Joseph's house. And Joseph being in the direct line of the kings of Judah, Of the house of David, he was the legal heir of the crown of David, and Christ being legally his first born son, he was his heir. And so Christ, by the law, was the proper heir of the crown of David, and is therefore said to sit upon the throne of his father David The crown of God's people was wonderfully kept in the line of Christ's legal ancestors. When David was old, and not able any longer to manage the affairs of the kingdom, Adonijah, one of his sons, set up to be king and seemed to have obtained his purpose. All things for a while seemed fair on his side, and he thought himself strong. The thing he aimed at seemed to be accomplished. But so it was, Adonijah was not the son of David that was the ancestor of Joseph, the legal father of Christ. And therefore how wonderfully did Providence work here! What a strange and sudden revolution! All Adonijah's kingdom and glory vanished away as soon as it was begun. And Solomon, the legal ancestor of Christ, was established in the throne. And after Solomon's death, when Jeroboam had conspired against the family, and Rehoboam carried himself so that it was a wonder all Israel was not provoked to forsake him, and ten tribes did actually forsake him, and set up Jeroboam in opposition to him. And though he was a wicked man, and deserved to have been rejected altogether from being king. Yet he being the legal ancestor of Christ, God kept the kingdom of the two tribes, in which the true religion was upheld, in his possession. And though he had been wicked, and his son Abijam was another wicked prince, yet they being legal ancestors of Christ, God still continued the crown in the family, and gave it to Abijam's son Asa. And afterwards, though many of the kings of Judah were very 'wicked men, and horridly provoked God, as particularly Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, Manasseh and Amon. Yet God did not take away the crown from their family, but gave it to their sons, because they were the ancestors of Christ. God's remembering his covenant that he had established with David, is given as the reason why God did thus, notwithstanding their wicked lives, as 1 Kings 15:4. speaking there of Abijam's wickedness, it is said, "Nevertheless, for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem." So, 2 Chronicles 21:7, speaking there of Jehoram's great wickedness, it is said, " Howbeit, the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light unto him, and to his sons for ever." The crown of the ten tribes was changed from one family to another continually. First, Jeroboam took it, but the crown remained in his family but for one generation after his death, it only descended to his son Nadab. And then Baasha, that was of another family, took it, and it remained in his posterity but one generation after his death. And then Zimri, that was his servant, and not of his posterity, took it. And then, without descending at all to his posterity, Omri, that was of another family, took it. and the crown continued in his family for three successions. And then Jehu, that was of another family, took it, and the crown continued in his family for three or four successions. And then Shalluin, that was of another family, took it. And the crown did not descend at all to his posterity, but Menahem, that was of another family, took it. And it remained in his family but one generation after him. And then Pekab, that was of another family, took it. And after him Hoshea, that was still of another family, took it. So great a difference was there between the crown of Israel and the crown of Judah, the one was continued evermore in the same family, and with very little interruption, in one right line. The other was continually tossed

about from one family to another, as if it were the sport of fortune. The reason was not, because the kings of Judah, many of them, were better than the kings of Israel, but the one had the blessing in them. They were the ancestors of Christ, whose right it was to sit on the throne of Israel. But with the kings of Israel it was not so. And therefore divine Providence exercised a continual care, through all the changes that happened through so many generations, and such a long space of time, to keep the crown of Judah in one direct line, in fulfillment of the everlasting covenant he had made with David, the mercies of which covenant were sure mercies. But in the other case there was no such covenant, and so no such care of Providence. And here it must not be omitted, that there was once a very strong conspiracy of the kings of Syria and Israel, in the time of that wicked king of Judah, Ahaz, to dispossess Ahaz and his family of the throne of Judah, and to set one of another family, even the son of Tabeal on it, as you may see in Isaiah 7:6, “Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal.” And they seemed very likely to accomplish their purpose. — There seemed to be so great a likelihood of it, that the hearts of the people sunk within them, they gave up the cause. It is said, “The heart of Aliaz and his people was moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.” And on this occasion God sent the prophet Isaiah to encourage the people, and tell them that it should not come to pass. And because it looked so much like a gone cause, that Ahaz and the people would very difficulty believe that it would not be, therefore God directs the prophet to give them this sign of it, viz. that Christ should be born of the legal seed of Ahaz, as Isaiah 7:14, “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” This was a good sign, and a great confirmation of the truth of what God promised by Isaiah, viz. that the kings of Syria and Israel should never accomplish their purpose of dispossessing the family of Ahaz of the crown of Judah, and setting up the son of Tabeal, for Christ the Immanuel was to be of them. I have mentioned this dispensation of Providence in this place, because though it was continued for so long a time, yet it began in Solomon’s succession to the throne of his father David.

XII. The next thing I would take notice of is, the building of the temple, a great type of three things, viz. of Christ, especially the human nature of Christ, of the church of Christ, and of heaven. The tabernacle seemed rather to represent the church in its movable, changeable state, here in this world. But that beautiful, glorious, costly structure of the temple, that succeeded the tabernacle, and was a fixed, and not a movable thing, seems especially to represent the church in its glorified state in heaven. This temple was built according to the pattern shown by the Holy Ghost to David, and by divine direction given to David, in the place where was the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, in Mount Moriah, 2 Chronicles 3:1, in the same mountain, and doubtless in the very same place, where Abraham offered up his son Isaac. For that is said to be a mountain in the land of Moriah, Genesis 22:2, which mountain was called the Mountain of the Lord, as this mountain of the temple was, Genesis 22:14 “And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh; as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.” This was the house where Christ dwelt, until he came to dwell in the temple of his body, or human nature, which was the anti-type of this temple, as appears, because Christ, on occasion of showing him the temple of Jerusalem, says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days will I raise it up,” speaking of the temple of his body, John 2:19-20. This house, or an house built in this place, continued to be the house of God, the place of the worship of his church, until Christ came. Here was the place that God chose, where all their sacrifices were offered up, until the great sacrifice came, and made the sacrifice and oblation to

cease. Into his temple in this place the Lord came, even the messenger of the covenant. Here he often delivered his heavenly doctrine, and wrought miracles. Here his church was gathered by the pouring out of the Spirit, after his ascension. Luke 24:53. Speaking of the disciples, after Christ's ascension, it is said, "And they were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." And, Acts 2:46, speaking of the multitudes that were converted by that great outpouring of the Spirit that was on the day of Pentecost, it is said, "And they continued daily with one accord in the temple." And, Acts 5:42, speaking of the apostles, "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." And hence the sound of the gospel went forth, and the church spread into all the world.

XIII. It Is here worthy to be observed, that at this time, in Solomon's reign, after the temple was finished, the Jewish church was risen to its highest external glory. The Jewish church, or the ordinances and constitution of it, is compared to the moon, in Revelation 12:1, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon tinder her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." As this church was like the moon in many other respects, so it was in this, that it waxed and waned like the moon. From the first foundation of it, that was laid in the covenant made with Abraham, when this moon was now beginning to appear, it had to this time been gradually increasing in its glory. This time, wherein the temple was finished and dedicated, was about the middle between the calling of Abraham and the coming of Christ, and now it was full moon. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually decreased, until Christ came, as I shall have occasion more particularly to observe afterwards.

Now the church of Israel was in its highest external glory. Now Israel was multiplied exceedingly, so that they seemed to have become like the sand on the sea shore, 1 Kings 4:20. Now the kingdom of Israel was firmly established in the right family, the family of which Christ was to come. Now God had chosen the city where he would place his name. Now God had fully given his people the possession of the promised land. And they now possessed the dominion of it all in quietness and peace, even from the river of Egypt, to the great river Euphrates. All those nations that had formerly been their enemies, quietly submitted to them. None pretended to rebel against them. Now the Jewish worship in all its ordinances was fully settled. Now, instead of a movable tent and tabernacle, they had a glorious temple, the most magnificent, beautiful, and costly structure, that there was then, ever had been, or ever has been since. Now the people enjoyed peace and plenty, and sat every man under his vine and fig tree, eating and drinking, and making merry, as 1 Kings 4:20. Now they were in the highest pitch of earthly prosperity, silver being as plenty as stones, and the land full of gold and precious stones, and other precious foreign commodities, which were brought by Solomon's ships from Ophir, and which came from other parts of the world. Now they had a king reigning over them that was the wisest of men, and probably the greatest earthly prince that ever was. Now their fame went abroad into all the earth, so that they came from the utmost parts of the earth to see their glory and their happiness.

Thus God was pleased, in one of the ancestors of Christ, remarkably to shadow forth the kingdom of Christ reigning in his glory. David, that was a man of war, a man who had shed much blood, and whose life was full of troubles and conflicts, was more of a representation of Christ in his state of humiliation, his militant state, wherein he was conflicting with his enemies. But Solomon, that was a man of peace, was a representation more especially of Christ exalted, triumphing, and reigning in his kingdom of peace. And the happy glorious state of the Jewish church at that time, did

remarkably represent two things. 1. That glorious state of the church on earth that shall be in the latter ages of the world, those days of peace, when nation shall not lift sword against nation, nor learn war any more. 2. The future glorified state of the church in heaven. The earthly Canaan never was so lively a type of the heavenly Canaan, as it was then, when the happy people of Israel did indeed enjoy it as a land flowing with mill and honey.

XIV. After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually declined more and more until Christ came, yet not so but that the work of redemption still went on. Whatever failed or declined, God still carried on this work from age to age. This building was still advancing higher and higher. Things still went on, during the decline of the Jewish church, towards a further preparation of things for the coming of Christ, as well as during its increase. For so wonderfully were things ordered by the infinitely wise Governor of the world, that whatever happened was ordered for good to this general design and made a means of promoting it. When the people of the Jews flourished, and were in prosperity, he made that to contribute to the promoting this design. And when they were in adversity, God made that also to contribute to the carrying on of the same design. While the Jewish church was in its increasing state, the work of redemption was carried on by their increase. When they came to their declining state, which they were in from Solomon's time until Christ, God carried on the work of redemption by that. That decline itself was one thing that God made use of as a further preparation for Christ's coming. As the moon, from the time of its full, is approaching nearer and nearer to her conjunction with the sun, so her light is still more and more decreasing. Until at length, when the conjunction comes, it is wholly swallowed up in the light of the sun. So it was with the Jewish church from the time of its highest glory in Solomon's time. In the latter end of Solomon's reign, the state of things began to darken, by Solomon's corrupting himself with idolatry, which much obscured the glory of this mighty and wise prince. And withal troubles began to arise in his kingdom. And after his death the kingdom was divided, and ten tribes revolted, and with drew their subjection from the house of David, with a falling away from the true worship of God in the temple at Jerusalem, and setting up the golden calves of Bethel and Dan. And presently after this the number of the ten tribes was greatly diminished in the battle of Jeroboam with Abijah, wherein there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men, which loss the kingdom of Israel probably never in any measure recovered. The ten tribes finally apostatized from the true God under Jeroboam, and the kingdom of Judah was greatly corrupted, and from that time forward were more generally in a corrupt state than otherwise. In Ahab's time the kingdom of Israel did not only worship the calves of Bethel and Dan, but the worship of Baal was introduced. Before, they pretended to worship the true God by these images, the calves of Jerohoam, but now Ahab introduced idolatry, and the direct worship of false gods in the room of the true God. And soon after the worship of Baal was introduced into the kingdom of Judah, viz. in Jehoram's reign, by his marrying Athaliah the daughter of Ahab. After this God began to cut Israel short, by finally destroying and sending into captivity that part of the land that was beyond Jordan, as you may see in 2 Kings 10:32, etc. And then after this Tiglathpileser subdued and captivated all the northern parts of the land, 2 Kings 15:29. And then at last all the land of the ten tribes was subdued by Salmaneser. And they were finally carried captive out of their own land. After this also the kingdom of Judah was carried captive into Babylon, and a great part of the nation never returned. Those that returned were but a small number, compared with what had been carried captive. And for the most part after this they were dependent on the power of other states, being subject one while to the kings of Persia, then to the monarchy of the Grecians, and then to the

Romans. And before Christ's time, the church of the Jews was become exceeding corrupt, overrun with superstition and self righteousness. And how small a flock was the church of Christ in the days of his incarnation!

God, by this gradual decline of the Jewish state and church from Solomon's time, prepared the way for the coming of Christ several ways.

1. The decline of the glory of this legal dispensation, made way for the introduction of the more glorious dispensation of the gospel. The decline of the glory of the legal dispensation, was to make way for the introduction of the evangelical dispensation, that was so much more glorious, that the legal dispensation had no glory in comparison with it. The glory of the ancient dispensation, such as it was in Solomon's time, consisting so much in external glory, was but a childish glory, compared with the spiritual glory of the dispensation introduced by Christ. The church, under the Old Testament was a child under tutors and governors, and God dealt with it as a child. Those pompous externals are called by the apostle, weak and beggarly elements. It was fit that those things should be diminished as Christ approached. As John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ speaking of Christ, says, "He must increase, but I must decrease," John 3:30. It is fit that the twinkling star should gradually withdraw their glory, when the sun is approaching towards his rising. The glory of the Jewish dispensation must be gradually diminished, to prepare the way for the more joyful reception of the spiritual glory of the gospel. If the Jewish church, when Christ came, had been in the same external glory that it was in, in the reign of Solomon, men would have had their eyes so dazzled with it, that they would not have been likely joyfully to exchange such great external glory, for only the spiritual glory of the poor despised Jesus. Again,

2. This gradual decline of the glory of the Jewish state tended to prepare the way for Christ's coming another way, viz. as it tended to make the glory of God's power in the great effects of Christ's redemption, the more conspicuous. God's people being so diminished and weakened by one step after another, until Christ came, was very much like the diminishing Gideon's army. God told Gideon, that the people that was with him, was to many for him to deliver the Midianites into their hands lest Israel should vaunt themselves against him, saying "My own hand hath saved me." And therefore all that were fearful were commanded to return. And there returned twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand. But still they were too many, and there by trying the people at the water, they were reduced to three hundred men. So the people in Solomon's time were too many, and mighty, and glorious for Christ therefore he diminished them, first, by sending off the ten tribes. And then he diminished them again by the captivity into Babylon. And then they were further diminished by the great and general corruption that there was when Christ came, so that Christ found very few godly persons among them. And with a small handful of disciples, Christ conquered the world. Thus high things were brought down, that Christ might be exalted.

3. This prepared the way for Christ's coming, as it made the salvation of those Jews that were saved by Christ, to be more sensible and visible. Though the greater part of the nation of the Jews was rejected, and the Gentiles called in their room, yet there were a great many thousands of the Jews that were saved by Christ after his resurrection, Acts 21:20. They being taken from so low a state under temporal calamity in their bondage to the Romans, and from a state of great superstition and wickedness, that the Jewish nation was then fallen into. It made their redemption the more sensibly and visibly glorious.

I have taken notice of this dispensation of Providence In the gradual decline of the Jewish church in this place, because it began in the reign of Solomon.

XV. I would here take notice of the additions that were made to the canon of Scripture in or soon after the reign of Solomon. There were considerable additions made by Solomon himself, who wrote the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastics, probably near the close of his reign. His writing the Song of Songs, as it is called, is what is especially here to he taken notice of, which is wholly on the subject that we are upon, viz. Christ and his redemption, representing the high and glorious relation, and union, and love, that is between Christ and his redeemed church. And the history of the Scripture seems, in Solomon's reign, and some of the next succeeding reigns, to have been added to by the prophets Nathan and Ahijah, and Shemaiah and Iddo. It is probable that part of the history which we have In the first of Kings, was written by them, by what is said, 2 Chronicles 9:29 and in 2 Chronicles 12:15 and in 2 Chronicles 13:22.

XVI. God's wonderfully upholding his church and the true religion through this period. It was very wonderful considering the many and great apostasies that were of that people to idolatry. When the ten tribes had generally and finally forsaken the true worship of God, God kept up the true religion in the kingdom of Judah. And when they corrupted themselves, as they very often did exceedingly, and idolatry was ready totally to swallow all up, yet God kept the lamp alive, and was often pleased, when things seemed to be come to an extremity, and religion at its last gasp, to grant blessed revivals by remarkable outpourings of his Spirit, particularly in Hezekiah's and Josiah's time.

XVII. God remarkably kept the book of the law from being lost in times of general and long continued neglect of and enmity against it. The most remarkable instance of this kind that we have, was the preservation of the book of the law in the time of the great apostasy during the greatest part of the long reign of Manasseh, which lasted fifty-five years, and then after that the reign of Amon his son. This while the book of the law was so much neglected, and such a careless and profane management of the affairs of the temple prevailed, that the book of the law, that used to be laid up by the side of the ark in the Holy of Holies, was lost for a long time, nobody knew where it was. But yet God preserved it from being finally lost. In Josiah's time, when they came to repair the temple, it was found buried in rubbish, after it had been lost so long that Josiah himself seems to have been much a stranger to it until now. See 2 Kings 22:8, etc.

XVIII. God's remarkably preserving the tribe of which Christ was to proceed, from being ruined through the many and great dangers of this period. The visible church of Christ from Solomon's reign, was mainly in the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Benjamin, that was annexed to them, was but a very small tribe, and the tribe of Judah exceeding large. And as Judah took Benjamin under his covert when he went into Egypt to bring corn, so the tribe of Benjamin seemed to be under the covert of Judah ever after. And though, on occasion of Jeroboam's setting up the calves at Bethel and Dan, the Levites resorted to Judah out of all the tribes of Israel (2 Chronicles 11:13), yet they were also small, and not reckoned among the tribes. And though many of the ten tribes did also on that occasion, for the sake of the worship of God in the temple, leave their inheritances in their several tribes, and removed and settled in Judah, arid so were incorporated with them, as we have an account in the chapter just quoted, and 2 Chronicles 11:16. Yet the tribe of Judah was so much the prevailing part, that they were called by one name, they were called Judah. Therefore God

said to Solomon, 1 Kings 11:13, “I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake, which I have chosen,” and so 1 Kings 11:32, 1 Kings 11:36. So when the ten tribes were carried captive, it is said, there was none left but the tribe of Judah only, 2 Kings 17:18, “Therefore the Lord was very wroth with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.” Whence they were all called Jews, which is a word that comes from Judah. This was the tribe of which Christ was to come, and in this chiefly did God’s visible church consist, from Solomon’s time. And this was the people over whom the kings that were legal ancestors of Christ, and were of the house of David, reigned. This people was wonderfully preserved from destruction during this period. When they often seemed to be upon the brink of ruin, and just ready to be swallowed up. So it was in Rehoboam’s time, when Shishak king of Egypt came against Judah with such a vast force. Yet then God manifestly preserved them from being destroyed. Of this we read in the beginning of 2 Chronicles 12:1-16. So it was again in Abijah’s time, when Jeroboam set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, a mighty army indeed. We read of it, 2 Chronicles 13:3. Then God wrought deliverance to Judah, out of regard to the covenant of grace established with David, as is evident by 2 Chronicles 13:4-5 and the victory they obtained was because the Lord was on their side, as you may see, 2 Chronicles 13:12. So it was again in Asa’s time, when Zerah the Ethiopian came against him with a yet larger army of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots, 2 Chronicles 14:9. On this occasion Asa cried to the Lord, and trusted in him, being sensible that it was nothing with him to help those that had no power, 2 Chronicles 14:11, “And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with those that have no power.” And accordingly God gave them a glorious victory over this mighty host. So again it was in Jehoshaphat’s time, when the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, combined together against Judah with a mighty army, a force vastly superior to any that Jehoshaphat could raise. Jehoshaphat and his people were greatly afraid. Yet they set themselves to seek God on this occasion, and trusted in him. God told them by one of his prophets, that they need not fear them, nor should they have any occasion to fight in this battle. They should only stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. And according to his direction, they only stood still, and sang praises to God, and God made their enemies do the work themselves, and set them to killing one another. And the children of Judah had nothing to do, but to gather the spoil, which was more than they could carry away. We have the story in 2 Chronicles 20:1-37. So it was again in Ahaz’s time, when Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, conspired against Judah, and seemed to be sure of their purpose, of which we have spoken already. So it was again in Hezekiah’s time, when Sennacherib, that great king of Assyria, and head of the greatest monarchy that was then in the world, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, after he had conquered most of the neighboring countries, and sent Rabshakeh. The captain of his host, against Jerusalem, who came, and in a very proud and scornful manner insulted Hezekiah and his people, as being sure of victory. And the people were trembling for fear, like lambs before a lion. Then God sent Isaiah the prophet to comfort them, and assure them that they should not prevail. As a token of which he gave them this sign, viz. that the earth, for two years successively, should bring forth food of itself, from the roots of the old stalks, without their plowing or sowing. And then the third year they should sow and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, and live on the fruits of their labor, as they were wont to do before. See 2 Kings 19:29. This is mentioned as a type of what is promised

in 2 Kings 19:30-31, “And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape, out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.” The corn’s springing again after it had been cut off with the sickle, and bringing forth another crop from the roots, that seemed to be dead, said so once and again, represents the church’s reviving again, as it were out of its own ashes, and flourishing like a plant after it had seemingly been cut down past recovery. When the enemies of the church have done their utmost, and seem to have gained their point, and to have overthrown the church, so that the being of it is scarcely visible, but like a living root hid under ground. Yet there is a secret life in it that will cause it to flourish again, and to take root downward, and bear fruit upward. This was fulfilled now at this time. For the king of Assyria had already taken and carried captive the ten tribes. And Sennacherib had also taken all the fenced cities of Judah, and ranged the country round about, and Jerusalem only remained. And Rabshakeh had in his own imagination already swallowed that up, as he had also in the fearful apprehensions of the Jews themselves. But yet God wrought a wonderful deliverance. He sent an angel, that in one night smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand in the enemy’s camp.

XIX. In the reign of Uzziah, and the following reigns, God was pleased to raise up a set of eminent prophets, who should commit their prophecies to writing, and leave them for the use of his church in all ages. We before observed, how that God began a constant succession of prophets in Israel in Samuel’s time, and many of these prophets wrote by divine inspiration, and so added to the canon of Scripture before Uzziah’s time. But none of them are supposed to have written books of prophecies until now. Several of them wrote histories of the wonderful dispensations of God towards his church. This we have observed already of Samuel, who is supposed to have written Judges and Ruth, and part of the first of Samuel, if not the book of Joshua. And Nathan and Gad seem to have written the rest of the two books of Samuel. And Nathan, with Ahijah and Iddo, wrote the history of Solomon, which is probably that which we have in the first book of Kings. The history of Israel seems to have been further carried on by Iddo and Shemaiah, 2 Chronicles 12:15, “Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies?” And after that the history seems to have been further carried on by the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani, 2 Chronicles 20:34, “Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Jehu, the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel,” as we find him to be, 1 Kings 16:1; 1 Kings 16:7. And then it was further continued by the Prophet Isaiah, 2 Chronicles 26:22. “Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz write.” He probably did it as well in the second book of Kings, as in the book of his prophecy. And the history was carried on and finished by other prophets after him.

Thus the prophets, even from Samuel’s time, had from time to time been adding to the canon of Scripture by their historical writings. But now, in the days of Uzziah, did God first raise up a set of great prophets, not only to write histories, but to write books of their prophecies. The first of these is thought to be Hosea the son of Beeri, and therefore his prophecy, or the word of the Lord by him, is called the beginning of the word of the Lord, as Hosea 1:2, “The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea,” that is, the beginning, or the first part, of the written word of that kind, viz. that which is written in books of prophecy. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. There

were many other witnesses for God raised up about the same time, to commit their prophecies to writing, Isaiah, and Amos, and Jonah, and Micah, and Nahum, and probably some others. And so from that time forward God seemed to continue a succession of writing prophets. This was a great dispensation of Providence, and a great advance made in the affair of redemption, which appear, if we consider what was said before, that the main business of the prophets was to foreshadow Christ and his redemption. They were all forerunners of the great prophet. The main end why the spirit of prophecy was given them was that they might give testimony to Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer, that was to come. And therefore the testimony of Jesus, and the spirit of prophecy, are spoken of as the same thing, Revelation 19:10, “And I fell at his feet to worship him: and he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” And therefore we find, that the great and main thing that the most of the prophets in their written prophecies insist upon, is Christ and his redemption, and the glorious times of the gospel, which should be in the latter days, according to their manner of expression. And though many other things were spoken of in their prophecies, yet it seems to be only as introductory to their prophecy of these great things. Whatever they prophesy of, here their prophecies commonly terminate, as you may see by a careful perusal of their writings.

These prophets were set to writing their prophecies by the Spirit of Christ that was in them, chiefly for that end, to foreshadow and prepare the way for the coming of Christ, and the glory that should follow. And in what an exalted strain do they all speak of those things! Many other things they speak of in men’s usual language. But when they come upon this subject, what a joyful heavenly sublimity is there in the language they use about it! Some of them are very particular and full in their predictions of these things, and above all the Prophet Isaiah, who is therefore deservedly called the evangelical prophet. He seems to teach the glorious doctrines of the gospel almost as plainly as the apostles did, who preached after Christ was actually come. The Apostle Paul therefore takes notice, that the Prophet Esaias is very bold, Romans 10:20, i.e. as the meaning of the word, as used in the New Testament, is very plain, he speaks out very plainly and fully, so being “very bold” is used, 2 Corinthians 3:12, we use “great plainness of speech,” or “boldness,” as it is in the margin.

How plainly and fully does the Prophet Isaiah describe the manner and circumstances, the nature and end, of the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ, in the Isaiah 53:1-12. There is scarce a chapter in the New Testament itself which is more full on it! And how much, and in what a glorious strain, does the same prophet speak from time to time of the glorious benefits of Christ, the unspeakable blessings which shall redound to his church through his redemption! Jesus Christ, the person that this prophet spoke so much of, once appeared to Isaiah in the form of the human nature, the nature that he should afterwards take upon him. We have an account of it in the Isaiah 6:1-13 at the beginning, “I saw also the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple,” etc. This was Christ that Isaiah now saw, as we are expressly told in the New Testament. See John 12:39-41. And if we consider the abundant prophecies of this and the other prophets, what a great increase is there or the light of the gospel, which had been growing from the fall of man to this day! — How plentiful are the revelations and prophecies of Christ now, to what they were in the first period of the Old Testament, from Adam to Noah! — Or to what they were in the second, from Noah to Abraham! — Or to what they were before Moses, or in the time of Moses,

Joshua, and the Judges! This dispensation that we are now speaking of, was also a glorious advance of the work of redemption by the great additions that were made to the canon of Scripture. Great part of the Old Testament was written now, from the days of Uzziah to the captivity into Babylon. And, how excellent are those portions of it! What a precious treasure have those prophets committed to the church of God, tending greatly to confirm the gospel of Christ, and which has been of great comfort and benefit to God's church in all ages since, and doubtless will be to the end of the world.

Chapter 29

03.06a. Period 1 Part 6 Babylonian Captivity to Christ

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION PART VI

FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO THE COMING OF CHRIST

I COME now to the last period of the Old Testament, viz. that which begins with the Babylonian captivity, and extends to the coming of Christ, being the greatest part of six hundred years, to show how the work of redemption was carried on through this period. But before I enter upon particulars, I would observe in three things wherein this period is distinguished from the preceding periods of the times of the Old Testament.

1. Though we have no account of a great part of this period in the scripture history, yet the events of this period are more the subject of scripture prophecy, than any of the preceding periods. There are two ways wherein the Scriptures give account of the events by which the work of redemption is carried on. One is by history, and another is by prophecy. And in one or the other of these ways we have contained in the Scriptures an account how the work of redemption is carried on from the beginning to the end. Although the Scriptures do not contain a proper history of the whole, yet there is contained the whole chain of great events by which this affair has been carried on from the foundation, soon after the fall of man, to the finishing of it at the end of the world, either in history or prophecy. And it is to be observed, that where the Scripture is wanting in one of these ways, it is made up in the other. Where scripture history fails, there prophecy takes place, so that be account is still carried on, and the chain is not broken, until we come to the very last link of it in the consummation of all things. And accordingly it is observable of this period or space of time that we are upon, that though it is so much less the subject of scripture history, than most of the preceding periods, so that there is above four hundred years of it that the Scriptures give us no history of, yet the events of this period are more the subject of scripture prophecy, than the events of all the preceding periods put together. Most of those remarkable prophecies of the book of Daniel do refer to events that were accomplished in this period. So most of those prophecies in Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, against Babylon, and Tyrus, and against Egypt, and many other nations, were fulfilled in this period. So that the reason why the Scriptures give us no history of so great a part of this period, is not because the events of this period were not so important, or less worthy to be taken notice of, than the events of the foregoing periods. For I shall hereafter show how great and distinguishably remarkable the events of this period were. But there are several other reasons which may be given of it. One is, that it was the will of God that the spirit of prophecy should cease in this period (for reasons that may be given hereafter) so that there were no prophets to write the history of these times. And therefore God designing this, took care that the great events of this period should not be without mention in his Word, and so ordered it, that the prophecies of Scripture should be more full here, than in the preceding periods. It is observable, that that set of

writing prophets that God raised up in Israel, were raised up at the latter end of the foregoing period, and at the beginning of this, which it is likely was partly for that reason, that the time was now approaching, of which the spirit of prophecy having ceased. There was to be no scripture history, and therefore no other scripture account but what was given in prophecy. And another reason that may he given why there was so great a part of this period left without an historical account in Scripture, is that God in his providence took care, that there should be authentic and full accounts of the events of this period preserved in profane history. It is remarkable, and very worthy to be taken notice of, that with respect to the events of the five preceding periods, of which the Scriptures give the history, profane history gives us no account, or at least of but very few of them. There are many fabulous and uncertain accounts of things that happened before, but the beginning of the times of authentic profane history is judged to be but a little before Nebuchadnezzar's time, about an hundred years before. The learned men among the Greeks and Romans used to call the ages before that the fabulous age, but the times after that they called the historical age. And from about that time to the coming of Christ, we have undoubted accounts in profane history of the principal events, accounts that wonderfully agree with the many prophecies that we have in Scripture of those times.

Thus did the great God, that disposes all things, order it. He took care to give an historical account of things from the beginning of the world, through all those former ages which profane history does not reach, and ceased not until he came to those later ages in which profane history related things with some certainty. And concerning those times, he gives us abundant account in prophecy, that by comparing profane history with those prophecies, we might see the agreement.

2. This period being the last period of the Old Testament, and the next to the coming of Christ, seems to have been remarkably distinguished from all others in the great revolutions that were among the nations of the earth, to make way for the kingdom of Christ. The time now drawing nigh, wherein Christ, the great King and Savior of the world, was to come, great and mighty were the changes that were brought to pass in order to it. The way had been preparing for the coming of Christ from the fall of man, through all the foregoing periods. But now the time drawing nigh, things began to ripen apace for Christ's coming, and therefore divine Providence wrought wonderfully now. The greatest revolutions that any history whatsoever gives an account of, that ever had been from the flood, fell out in this period. Almost all the then known world, i.e. all the nations that were round about the land of Canaan, far and near, that were within the reach of their knowledge, were overturned again and again. All lands were in their turns subdued, captivated, and as it were emptied, and turned upside down, and that, most of them repeatedly, in this period, agreeable to that prophecy, Isaiah 24:1, "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty; he maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." This emptying, and turning upside down, began with God's visible church, in their captivity by the king of Babylon. And then the cup from them went round to all other nations, agreeable to what God revealed to the Prophet Jeremiah, Jeremiah 25:15-27. Here special respect seems to be had to the great revolutions that there were on the face of the earth in the times of the Babylonian empire. But after that there were three general overturnings of the world before Christ came, in the succession of the three great monarchies of the world that were after the Babylonian empire. The king of Babylon is represented in Scripture as overturning the world. But after that, the Babylonian empire was overthrown by Cyrus, who founded the Persian empire in the room of it, which was of much greater extent than

the Babylonian empire in its greatest glory. Thus the world was overturned the second time. And then, after that, the Persian empire was overthrown by Alexander, and the Grecian empire was set up upon the ruins of it, which was still of much greater extent than the Persian empire. And thus there was a general overturning of the world a third time. And then, after that, the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans, and the Roman empire was established, which vastly exceeded all the foregoing empires in power and extent of dominion. And so the world was overturned the fourth time.

These several monarchies, and the great revolutions of the world under them, are abundantly spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. They are represented in Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold, silver, brass, and iron, and Daniel's interpretation of it in the Daniel 2:1-49, and then in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, and the angel's interpretation of it in Daniel 7:1-28. And the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is more particularly represented in Daniel 8:1-27, in Daniel's vision of the ram and the he-goat, and again in Daniel 11:1-45. And besides these four general overturnings of the world, the world was kept in a constant tumult between whiles. And indeed the world was as it were in a continual convulsion through this whole period until Christ came. Before this period, the face of the earth was comparatively in quietness. Though there were many great wars among the nations, yet we read of no such mighty and universal convulsions and overturnings as there were in this period. The nations of the world, most of them, had long remained on their lees as it were, without being emptied from vessel to vessel, as is said of Moab, Jeremiah 48:11. Now these great overturnings were because the time of the great Messiah drew nigh. That they were to prepare the way for Christ's coming, is evident by Scripture, particularly by 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." The prophet, by repeating the word overturn three times, has respect to three overturnings, as in the Revelation, Revelation 8:13, the repetition of the word "woe" three times, signifies three distinct woes, as appears by what follows, Revelation 9:12, "One woe is past," and Revelation 11:14, "The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly."

It must be noted, that the Prophet Ezekiel prophesied in the time of the Babylonian captivity. And therefore there were three great and general overturnings of the world to come after this prophecy, before Christ came. The first by the Persians, the second by the Grecians, the third by the Romans. And then after that, Christ, whose right it was to take the diadem, and reign, should come. Here these great overturnings are evidently spoken of as preparatory to the coming and kingdom of Christ. But to understand the words aright, we must note the particular expression, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it," i.e. the diadem and crown of Israel, or the supreme temporal dominion over God's visible people. This God said should be no more, i.e. the crown should be taken off, and the diadem removed, as it is said in the foregoing verse (Ezekiel 21:26). The supreme power over Israel should be no more in the royal line of David, to which it properly belonged, but should be removed away, and given to others, and overturned from one to another. First the supreme power over Israel should be in the hands of the Persians, and then it should be overturned again. And then it should be in the hands of the Grecians. And then it should be overturned again, and come into the hands of the Romans, and should be no more in the line of David, until that very person should come, that was the son of David, whose proper right it was, and then God would give it to him. That those great shakings and revolutions of the nations of the

world, were all to prepare the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world, is further manifest by Haggai 2:6-7. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." And again, Haggai 2:21-23. It is evident by this, that these great revolutions and shakings of the nations, whereby the thrones of kingdoms and armies were overthrown, and everyone came down by the sword of his brother, were to prepare the way or the coming of him who is the desire of all nations. The great changes and troubles that have sometimes been in the visible church of Christ are, in Revelation 12:2, compared to the church's being in travail to bring forth Christ. So these great troubles and mighty revolutions that were in the world before Christ was born, were, as it were, the world's being in travail to bring forth the Son of God. The apostle, in Romans 8:22, represents the whole creation as groaning and travailing in pain together until now, to bring forth the liberty and manifestation of the children of God. So the world as it were travailed in pain, and was in continual convulsions, for several hundred years together, to bring forth the first born child, and the only begotten Son of God. And those mighty revolutions were as so many pangs and throes in order to it. The world being so long a time kept in a state of war and bloodshed, prepared the way for the coming of the Prince of Peace, as it showed the great need the world stood in of such a prince, to deliver the world from its miseries.

It pleased God to order it in his providence, that earthly power and dominion should be raised to its greatest height, and appear in its utmost glory, in those four great monarchies that succeeded one another, and that everyone should be greater and more glorious than the preceding, before he set up the kingdom of his Son. By this it appeared how much more glorious his spiritual kingdom was than the most glorious temporal kingdom. The strength and glory of Satan's kingdom in these four mighty monarchies, appeared in its greatest height. For those monarchies were the monarchies of the heathen world, and so the strength of them was the strength of Satan's kingdom. God suffered Satan's kingdom to rise to so great a height of power and magnificence before his Son came to overthrow it, to prepare the way for the more glorious triumph of his Son. Goliath must have on all his splendid armor when the stripling David comes against him with a sling and a stone, for the greater glory of David's victory. God suffered one of those great monarchies to subdue another, and erect itself on the other's ruins, appearing still in greater strength, and the last to be the strongest and mightiest of all, that so Christ, in overthrowing that, might as it were overthrow them all at once, as the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, is represented as destroying the whole image, the gold, the silver, the brass, the iron and the clay, so that all became as the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

These mighty empires were suffered thus to overthrow the world, and destroy one another. And though their power was so great, yet they could not uphold themselves, but fell one after another, and came to nothing, even the last of them, that was the strongest, and had swallowed up the earth. It pleased God thus to show in them the instability and vanity of all earthly power and greatness, which served as a foil to set forth the glory of the kingdom of his Son, which never shall be destroyed, as appears by Daniel 2:44, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." So greatly does this kingdom differ from all those kingdoms. They vanish away, and are left to other

people, but this shall not be left to other people, but shall stand forever. God suffered the devil to do his utmost, and to establish his interest, by setting up the greatest, strongest, and most glorious kingdoms in the world that he could, before the despised Jesus overthrew him and his empire. Christ came into the world to bring down the high things of Satan's kingdom, that the hand of the Lord might be on everyone that is proud and lofty, and every high tower, and every lofty mountain, as the prophet Isaiah says, Isaiah 2:12, etc. And therefore these things were suffered to rise very high, that Christ might appear so much the more glorious in being above them.

Thus wonderfully did the great and wise Governor of the world prepare the way for the erecting of the glorious kingdom of his beloved Son Jesus.

3. Another thing for which this last period or space of time before Christ was particularly remarkable, was the wonderful preservation of the church through all those overturnings. The preservation of the church was on some accounts more remarkable through this period, than through any of the foregoing. It was very wonderful that the church, which in this period was so weak, and in so low a state, and mostly subject to the dominion of heathen monarchies, should be preserved for five or six hundred years together, while the world was so often overturned, and the earth was rent in pieces, and made so often empty and waste, and the inhabitants of it came down so often everyone by the sword of his brother. I say it was wonderful that the church in its weak and low state, being but a little handful of men, should be preserved in all these great convulsions, especially considering that the land of Judea, the chief place of the church's residence, lay in the midst of them, as it were in the middle between the contending parties, and was very much the seat of war amongst them, and was often overrun and subdued, and sometimes in the hands of one people, and sometimes another, and very much the object of the envy and hatred of all heathen nations, and often almost ruined by them, often great multitudes of its inhabitants being slain, and the land in a great measure depopulated. And those who had them in their power often intended the utter destruction of the whole nation. Yet they were upheld. They were preserved in their captivity in Babylon, and they were upheld again under all the dangers they passed through, under the kings of Persia. And the much greater dangers they were liable to under the empire of the Greeks. And afterwards when the world was trodden down by the Romans. And their preservation through this period was also notoriously remarkable, in that we never read of the church's suffering persecution in any former period In any measure to such a degree as they did in this, under Antiochus Epiphanes, of which more afterwards. This wonderful preservation of the church through all these overturnings of the world, gives light and confirmation to what we read in the beginning of Psalms 46:1-11, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar, and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

Thus I have taken notice of some general things wherein this last period of the Old Testament times was distinguished. I come now to consider how the work of redemption was carried on in particulars.

And,

I. The first thing that here offers is the captivity of the Jews into Babylon. This was a great dispensation of Providence, and such as never was before. The children of Israel in the time of the

judges, had often been brought under their enemies. And many particular persons were carried captive at other times. But never had there been any such thing as destroying the whole land, the sanctuary, and the city of Jerusalem, and all the cities and villages of the land, and carrying the whole body of the people out of their own land into a country many hundred miles distant, and leaving the land of Canaan empty of God's visible people. The ark had once forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, and was carried captive into the land of the Philistines. But never had there been any such thing as the burning the sanctuary, and utterly destroying the ark, and carrying away all the sacred vessels and utensils, and breaking up all their stated worship in the land, and the land's lying waste and empty for so many years together. How lively are those things set forth in the Lamentations of Jeremiah! The work of redemption was promoted by this remarkable dispensation in these following ways.

1. It finally cured that nation of their itch after idolatry. The Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, Isaiah 2:18, speaks of the abolishing idolatry as one thing that should be done to this end, "and the idols he shall utterly abolish." When the time was drawing near, that God would abolish heathen idolatry, through the greater part of the known world, as he did by the preaching of the gospel after Christ came, it pleased him first to abolish heathenism among his own people. And he did it now by their captivity into Babylon, a presage of that abolishing of idols, that God was about to bring to pass by Christ through so great a part of the heathen world. This nation that was addicted to idolatry before for so many ages, and that nothing would cure them of, not all the reproofs, and warnings, and corrections, that they had, and all the judgments God inflicted on them for it, yet now were finally cured, so that however some might fall into this sin afterwards, as they did about the time of Antiochus' persecution, yet the nation, as a nation, never showed any hankering after this sin anymore. This was a remarkable and wonderful change in that people, and what directly promoted the work of redemption, as it was a great advancement of the interest of religion.

2. It was one thing that prepared the way for Christ's coming, and setting up the glorious dispensation of the gospel, as it took away many of those things wherein consisted the glory of the Jewish dispensation. In order to introduce the glorious dispensation of the gospel, the external glory of the Jewish church must be diminished, as we observed before. This the Babylonian captivity did many ways, it brought the people very low.

First, it removed the temporal diadem of the house of David away from them, i.e. the supreme and independent government of themselves. It took away the crown and diadem from the nation. The time now approaching when Christ, the great and everlasting King of his church, was to reign. It was time for the typical kings to withdraw. As God said by Ezekiel, Ezekiel 21:26, "He removed the crown and diadem, that it might be no more, until he should come, whose right it was." The Jews henceforward were always dependent on the governing power of other nations, until Christ came, for near six hundred years, excepting about ninety years, during which space they maintained a sort of independence, by continual wars under the dominion of the Maccabees and their posterity.

Again, by the captivity, the glory and magnificence of the temple was taken away, and the temple that was built afterwards, was nothing in comparison with it. Thus it was meet, that when the time drew nigh that the glorious anti-type of the temple should appear, the typical temple should have its glory withdrawn.

Again, another thing that they lost by the captivity, was the two tables of the testimony delivered to Moses, written with the finger of God, the two tables on which God with his own finger wrote the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. These seem to have been preserved in the ark until the captivity. These were in the ark when Solomon placed the ark in the temple, 1 Kings 8:9. There was nothing in the ark, save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb. And we have no reason to suppose any other, but that they remained there as long as that temple stood. But the Jews speak of these as finally lost at that time, though the same commandments were preserved in the book of the law. These tables also were withdrawn on the approach of their anti-type.

Again, another thing that was lost that the Jews had before, was the Urim and Thummim. This is evident by Ezra 2:63, “And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, until there should stand up a priest with Urim and Thummim.” And we have no account that this was ever restored, but the ancient writings of the Jews say the contrary. What this Urim and Thummim was, I shall not now inquire, but only observe, that it was something by which the high priest inquired of God, and received immediate answers from him, or by which God gave forth immediate oracles on particular occasions. This was now withdrawn, the time approaching when Christ, the anti-type of the Urim and Thummim, the great word and oracle or God, was to come.

Another thing that the ancient Jews say was wanting in the second temple, was the Shechinah, or cloud of glory over the mercy seat. This was promised to be in the tabernacle, Leviticus 16:2, “For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.” And we read elsewhere of the cloud of glory descending into the tabernacle, Exodus 40:35, and so we do likewise with respect to Solomon’s temple. But we have no account that this cloud of glory was in the second temple. And the ancient accounts of the Jews say, that there was no such thing in the second temple. This was needless in the second temple, considering that God had promised that he would fill this temple with glory another way, viz. by Christ’s coming into it, which was afterwards fulfilled. See Haggai 2:7, “I will shake all nations, and the desire or all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.”

Another thing, that the Jews, in their ancient writings mention as being now withdrawn, was the fire from heaven on the altar. When Moses built the tabernacle and altar in the wilderness, and the first sacrifices were offered on it, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering, as in Leviticus 9:24, and so again, when Solomon built the temple, and offered the first sacrifices, as you may see in 2 Chronicles 7:1. And this fire was never to go out, but with the greatest care to be kept alive, as God commanded, Leviticus 6:13, “The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out.” And there is no reason to suppose the fire in Solomon’s time ever went out until the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. But then it was extinguished, and never was restored. We have no account of its being given on the building of the second temple, as we have at the building of the tabernacle and first temple. But the Jews, after their return, were forced to make use of their common fire instead of it, according to the ancient tradition of the Jews. Thus the lights of the Old Testament go out on the approach of the glorious Sun of righteousness

3. The captivity into Babylon was the occasion of another thing which did afterwards much promote the setting up of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and that was the dispersion of the Jews through the greater part of the known world, before the coming of Christ. For the whole nation being carried away far out of their own land, and continuing in a state of captivity for so long a

time, they got them possessions, and built them houses, and settled themselves in the land of their captivity, agreeable to the direction that Jeremiah gave them, in the letter he wrote to them in the Jeremiah 29:1-32. And therefore, when Cyrus gave them liberty to return to the land where they had formerly dwelt, many of them never returned. They were not willing to leave their settlements and possessions there, to go into a desolate country, many hundred miles distant, which none but the old men among them had ever seen. And therefore they were but few, but a small number, that returned, as we see in the accounts we have in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Great numbers tarried behind, though they still retained the same religion with those that returned, so far as it could be practiced in a foreign land. Those messengers that we read of in Zechariah 7:1-14, that came to inquire of the priests and prophets in Jerusalem, Sherezer and Regemmelech, are supposed to be messengers sent from the Jews that remained still in Babylon.

Those Jews that remained still in that country were soon, by the great changes that happened in the world, dispersed thence into all the adjacent countries. And hence we find, that in Esther's time, which was after the return from the captivity, the Jews were a people that were dispersed throughout all parts of the vast Persian empire, that extended from India to Ethiopia, as you may see, Esther 3:8, "And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom," etc. And so they continued dispersed until Christ came, and until the apostles went forth to preach the gospel. But yet these dispersed Jews retained their religion in this dispersion. Their captivity, as I said before, thoroughly cured them of their idolatry. And it was their manner, for as many of them as could from time to time, to go up to the land of Judea to Jerusalem at their great feasts. Hence we read in the Acts 2:1-47, that at the time of the great feast of Pentecost, there were Jews abiding at Jerusalem out of every nation under heaven. These were Jews come up from all countries where they were dispersed, to worship at that feast. And hence we find, in the history of the Acts of the Apostles, that wherever the apostles went preaching through the world, they found Jews. They came to such a city, and to such a city, and went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Antiochus the Great, about two hundred years before Christ, on a certain occasion, transplanted two thousand families of Jews from the country about Babylon into Asia the Less. And so they and their posterity, many of them, settled in Pontus, Galatia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, and in Ephesus, and from thence settled in Athens, and Corinth, and Rome. Whence came those synagogues in those places that the Apostle Paul preached in.

Now, this dispersion of the Jews through the world before Christ came, did many ways prepare the way for his coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world.

One was, that this was a means of raising a general expectation of the Messiah through the world about the time that he actually came. For the Jews, wherever they were dispersed, carried the Holy Scriptures with them, and so the prophecies of the Messiah. And being conversant with the nations among whom they lived, they, by that means, became acquainted with these prophecies, and with the expectations of the Jews of their glorious Messiah. And by this means, the birth of such a glorious person in Judea about that time began to be the general expectation of the nations of the world, as appears by the writings of the learned men of the heathen that lived about that time, which are still extant. Particularly, Virgil, the famous poet that lived in Italy a little before Christ was born, has a poem about the expectation of a great prince that was to be born, and the

happy times of righteousness and peace that he was to introduce, some of it very much in the language of the prophet Isaiah.

Another way that this dispersed state of the Jews prepared the way for Christ was, that it showed the necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation, and introducing a new dispensation of the covenant of grace. It showed the necessity of abolishing the ceremonial law, and the old Jewish worship. For, by this means, the observance of that ceremonial law became impracticable even by the Jews themselves. For the ceremonial law was adapted to the state of a people dwelling together in the same land, where was the city that God had chosen, where was the temple, the only place where they might offer sacrifices, and where it was lawful for their priests and Levites to officiate, where they were to bring their first fruits, and where were their cities of refuge and the like. But the Jews, by this dispersion, lived, many of them, in other lands, more than a thousand miles distant, when Christ came, which made the observance of their laws of sacrifices, and the like, impracticable. And though their forefathers might be to blame in not going up to the land of Judea when they were permitted by Cyrus, yet the case was now, as to many of them at least, become impracticable, which showed the necessity of introducing a new dispensation, that should be fitted, not only to one particular land, but to the general circumstances and use of all nations of the world.

Again, another way that this dispersion of the Jews through the world prepared the way for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the world, was that it contributed to the making the facts concerning Jesus Christ publicly known through the world. For, as I observed before, the Jews that lived in other countries, used frequently to go up to Jerusalem at their three great feasts, which were from year to year. And so, by this means, they could not but become acquainted with the news of the wonderful things that Christ did in that land. We find that they were present at, and took great notice of, that great miracle of raising Lazarus, which excited the curiosity of those foreign Jews that came up to the feast of the Passover to see Jesus, as you may see in John 12:19-21. These Greeks were foreign Jews and proselytes, as is evident by their coming to worship at the feast of the Passover. The Jews that lived abroad among the Greeks, and spoke their language, were called Greeks, or Hellenists, so they are called Grecians, Acts 6:1. These Grecians here spoken of were not Gentile Christians, for this was before the calling of the Gentiles. By the same means, the Jews that went up from other countries became acquainted with Christ's crucifixion. Thus the disciples, going to Emmaus, say to Christ, when they did not know him, Luke 24:18, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which have come to pass there in these days?" plainly intimating, that the things concerning Jesus were so publicly known to all men, that it was wonderful to find any man unacquainted with them. And so afterwards they became acquainted with the news of his resurrection. And when they went home again into their own countries, they carried the news with them and so made these facts public through the world, as they had made the prophecies of them public before.

After this, those foreign Jews that came to Jerusalem, took great notice of the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the wonderful effects of it, and many of them were converted by it, viz. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and the strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians. And so they did not only carry back the news of the facts of Christianity, but Christianity itself, into their own countries with them, which contributed much to the spreading of it through the world.

Again, another way that the dispersion of the Jews contributed to the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the world was, that it opened a door for the introduction of the apostles in all places where they came to preach the gospel. For almost in all places where they came to preach the gospel, they found Jews and synagogues of the Jews, where the Holy Scriptures were wont to be read, and the true God worshipped, which was a great advantage to the apostles in their spreading the gospel through the world. For their way was, into whatever city they came, first to go into the synagogue of the Jews (they being people of the same nation), and there to preach the gospel unto them. And hereby their coming, and their new doctrine, was taken notice of by their Gentile neighbors, whose curiosity excited them to hear what they had to say, which became a fair occasion to the apostles to preach the gospel to them. It appears that it was thus, by the account we have of things in the Acts of the Apostles. And these Gentiles having been before, many of them, prepared in some measure, by the knowledge they had of the Jews' religion, and of their worship of one God, and of their prophecies, and expectation of a Messiah, which knowledge they derived from the Jews, who had long been their neighbors. This opened the door for the gospel to have access to them. And the work of the apostles with them was doubtless much easier than if they never had heard anything before of any expectation of such a person as the apostles preached, or anything about the worship of one only true God. So many ways did the Babylonian captivity greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming.

II. The next particular that I would take notice of is the addition made to the canon of Scripture in the time of the captivity, in those two remarkable portions of Scripture, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel. Christ appeared to each of these prophets in the form of that nature which he was afterwards to take upon him. The prophet Ezekiel gives an account of his thus appearing to him repeatedly, as Ezekiel 1:26, "And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it," and so Ezekiel 8:1-2. So Christ appeared to the prophet Daniel, Daniel 8:15-16, "There stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." There are several things that make it evident, that this was Christ, that I cannot now stand to mention particularly. So Christ appeared again as a man to this prophet, Daniel 10:5-6, "Then I lift up mine eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." Comparing this vision with that of the Apostle John in Revelation 1:1-20, makes it manifest that it was Christ. And the prophet Daniel, in the historical part of his book, gives an account of a very remarkable appearance of Christ in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We have the account of it in the Daniel 3:1-30. In Daniel 3:25, Christ is said to be like the Son of God. And it is manifest that he appeared in the form of man, "lo, I see four men loose, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Christ did not only here appear in the form of the human nature, but he appeared in a furnace, saving those persons who believed on him from that furnace, by which is represented to us, how Christ, by coming himself into the furnace of God's wrath, saves those that believe in him from that furnace, so that it has no power on them. And the wrath of God never reaches or touches them, so

much as to singe the hair of their head.

These two prophets, in many respects, were more particular concerning the coming of Christ, and his glorious gospel kingdom, than any of the prophets had been before. They both of them mention those three great overturnings of the world that should be before he came. Ezekiel is particular in several places concerning the coming of Christ. The prophet Daniel is more particular in foretelling the time of the coming of Christ than ever any prophet had been before, in the 9th chapter of his prophecy (Daniel 9:1-27), who foretold, that it should be seventy weeks, i.e. seventy weeks of years, or seventy times seven years, or four hundred and ninety years, from the decree to rebuild and restore the state of the Jews, until the Messiah should be crucified, which must be reckoned from the commission given to Ezra by Artaxerxes, that we have an account of in Ezra 7:1-28, whereby the very particular time of Christ's crucifixion was pointed out, which never had been before. The prophet Ezekiel is very particular in the mystical description of the gospel church, in his account of his vision of the temple and city, in the latter part of his prophecy. The Prophet Daniel points out the order of particular events that should come to pass relating to the Christian church after Christ was come, as the rise of Antichrist, and the continuance of his reign, and his fall, and the glory that should follow.

Thus does gospel light still increase, the nearer we come to the time of Christ's birth.

III. The next particular I would mention is, the destruction of Babylon, and the overthrow of the Chaldean empire by Cyrus. The destruction of Babylon was in that night in which Belshazzar the king, and the city in general, was drowned in a drunken festival, which they kept to their gods, when Daniel was called to read the handwriting on the wall, Daniel 5:30, and it was brought about in such a manner, as wonderfully to show the hand of God, and remarkably to fulfill his word by his prophets, which I cannot now stand particularly to relate. Now that great city, which had long been an enemy to the city of God, his Jerusalem, was destroyed, after it had stood ever since the first building of Babel, which was about seventeen hundred years. If the check that was put to the building this city at its beginning, whereby they were prevented from carrying of it to that extent and magnificence that they intended, I say, if this promoted the work of redemption, as I have before shown it did, much more did this destruction of it.

It was a remarkable instance of God's vengeance on the enemies of his redeemed church. For God brought this destruction on Babylon for the injuries they did to God's children, as is often set forth in the prophets. It also promoted the work of redemption, as thereby God's people, that were held captive by them, were set at liberty to return to their own land to rebuild Jerusalem. And therefore Cyrus, who did it, is called God's shepherd therein, Isaiah 44:1-28, latter end, and Isaiah 45:1. And these are over and above those ways wherein the setting up and overthrowing the four monarchies of the world did promote the work of redemption, which have been before observed.

IV. What next followed this was, the return of the Jews to their own land, and rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. Cyrus, as soon as he had destroyed the Babylonian empire, and had erected the Persian empire on its ruins, made a decree in favor of the Jews, that they might return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple. This return of the Jews out of the Babylonian captivity is, next to the redemption out of Egypt, the most remarkable of all the Old Testament redemptions, and most insisted on in Scripture, as a type of the great redemption of Jesus Christ. It was under the hand of one of the legal ancestors of Christ, viz. Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, whose

Babylonian name was Sheshbazzar. He was the governor of the Jews, and their leader in their first return out of captivity. And together with Joshua the son of Jozedek the high priest, had the chief hand in rebuilding the temple. This redemption was brought about by the hand of Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest, as the redemption out of Egypt was brought about by the hand of Moses and Aaron. The return out of the captivity was a remarkable dispensation of Providence. It was remarkable, that the heart of a heathen prince, as Cyrus was, should be so inclined to favor such a design as he did, not only in giving the people liberty to return, and rebuild the city and temple, but in giving charge that they should be helped with silver and gold, and with goods, and with beasts, as we read in Ezra 1:4. And afterwards God wonderfully inclined the heart of Darius to further the building of the house of God with his own tribute money, and by commanding their bitter enemies, the Samaritans, who had been striving to hinder them, to help them without fail, by furnishing them with all that they needed in order to it, and to supply them day by day, making a decree, that whosoever failed of it, timber should be pulled down out of his house, and he hanged thereon, and his house made a dunghill, as we have an account in the Ezra 6:1-22. And after this God inclined the heart of Artaxerxes, another king of Persia, to promote the work of preserving the state of the Jews, by his ample commission to Ezra, which we have an account of in Ezra 7:1-28, helping them abundantly with silver and gold of his own bounty, and offering more, as should be needful, out of the King's treasure house, and commanding his treasurers beyond the river Euphrates to give more, as should be needed, unto an hundred talents of silver, and an hundred measures of wheat, an hundred baths of wine, and an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much; and giving leave to establish magistrates in the land, and freeing the priests of toll, tribute, and custom, and other things, which render this decree and commission by Artaxerxes the most full and ample in the Jews' favor of any that, at any time, had been given for the restoring of Jerusalem. And therefore, in Daniel's prophecy, this is called the decree for restoring and building Jerusalem. And hence the seventy weeks are dated. And then, after this, another favorable commission was granted by the king of Persia to Nehemiah, which we have an account of in Nehemiah 2:1-20.

It was remarkable, that the hearts of heathen princes should be so inclined. It was the effect of his power, who hath the hearts of kings in his hands, and turneth them whithersoever he will. And it was a remarkable instance of his favor to his people.

Another remarkable circumstance of this restitution of the state of the Jews to their own land was, that it was accomplished against so much opposition of their bitter and indefatigable enemies the Samaritans, who, for a long time together, with all the malice and craft they could exercise, opposed the Jews in this affair, and sought their destruction, one while by Bishlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, Rehum, and Shimshai, as in Ezra 4:1-24, and then by Tatnai, Shetharboznai, and their companions, as in Ezra 5:1-17, and afterwards by Sanballat and Tobiah, as we read in the book of Nehemiah.

We have showed before how the settlement of the people in this land in Joshua's time promoted the work of redemption. On the same accounts does their restitution belong to the same work. The resettlement of the Jews in the land of Canaan belongs to this work, as it was a necessary means of preserving the Jewish church and dispensation in being, until Christ should come. If it had not been for this restoration of the Jewish church, and temple, and worship, the people had remained without any temple, and land of their own, that should be as it were their headquarters, a place of worship, habitation, and resort. The whole constitution, which God had done so much to establish,

would have been in danger of utterly failing long before that six hundred had been out, which was from about the time of the captivity until Christ. And so all that preparation which God had been making for the coming of Christ, from the time of Abraham, would have been in vain. Now that very temple was built that God would fill with glory by Christ's coming into it, as the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah told the Jews, to encourage them in building it.

V. The next particular I would observe, is the addition made to the canon of the Scriptures soon after the captivity by the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who were prophets sent to encourage the people in their work of rebuilding the city and temple. And the main argument they make use of to that end is the approach or the time of the coming of Christ. Haggai foretold that Christ should be of Zerubbabel's legal posterity, last chapter last verse (Haggai 2:23). This seems to be the last and most particular revelation of the descent of Christ, until the angel Gabriel was sent to reveal it to his mother Mary. The next thing I would take notice of, was the pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied the ministry of Ezra the priest after the captivity. — That there was such a pouring out of the Spirit of God that accompanied Ezra's ministry, is manifest by many things in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Presently after Ezra came up from Babylon, with the ample commission which Artaxerxes gave him, whence Daniel's seventy weeks began, he set himself to reform the vices and corruptions be found among the Jews. And his great success in it we have an account of in Ezra 10:1-44. So that there appeared a very general and great mourning of the congregation of Israel for their sins, which was accompanied with a solemn covenant that the people entered into with God. And this was followed with a great and general reformation, as we have there an account. And the people about the same time, with great zeal, and earnestness, and reverence, gathered themselves together to hear the Word of God read by Ezra, and gave diligent attention, while Ezra and the other priests preached to them, by reading and expounding the law, and were greatly affected in the hearing of it. They wept when they heard the words of the law, and set themselves to observe the law, and kept the feast of tabernacles, as the Scripture observes, after such a manner as it had not been kept since the days of Joshua the son of Nun, as we have an account in Nehemiah 8:1-18. And after this, having separated themselves from all strangers, they solemnly observed a fast, by hearing the Word of God, confessing their sins, and renewing their covenant with God, and manifested their sincerity in that transaction, by actually reforming many abuses in religion and morals, as we learn from the 9th and following chapters of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 9:1-38).

It is observable, that it has been God's manner in every remarkable new establishment of the state of his visible church, to give a remarkable outpouring of his Spirit. So it was on the first establishment of the church of the Jews at their first coming into Canaan under Joshua, as has been observed, And so it was now in this second settlement of the church in the same land in the time of Ezra. And so it was on the first establishment of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, God wisely and graciously laying the foundation of those establishments in a work of his Holy Spirit, for the lasting benefit of the state of his church, thenceforward continued in those establishments. And this pouring out of the Spirit of God, was a final cure of that nation of that particular sin which just before they especially run into, viz. intermarrying with the Gentiles. For however inclined to it they were before, they ever after showed an aversion to it.

VII. Ezra added to the canon of the Scriptures. — He wrote the book of Ezra. And he is supposed to have written the two books of Chronicles, at least to have compiled them, if he was not the

author of the materials, or all the parts of these writings. That these books were written, or compiled and completed, after the captivity, the things contained in the books themselves make manifest. For the genealogies contained therein, are brought down below the captivity, as 1 Chronicles 3:17, etc. We have there an account of the posterity of Jehoiachin for several successive generations. And there is mention in these books of this captivity into Babylon, as of a thing past, and of things that were done on the return of the Jews after the captivity, as you may see in 1 Chronicles 9:1-44. The chapter is mostly filled up with an account of things that came to pass after the captivity into Babylon, as you may see by comparing it with what is said in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. And that Ezra was the person that compiled these books, is probable by this, because they conclude with words that we know are the words of Ezra's history. The two last verses are Ezra's words in the history he gives in the two first verses of the book of Ezra.

VIII. Ezra is supposed to have collected all the books of which the Holy Scriptures did then consist, and disposed them in their proper order. Ezra is often spoken of as a noted and eminent scribe of the law of God, and the canon of Scripture in his time was manifestly under his special care. And the Jews, from the first accounts we have from them, have always held, that the canon of Scripture, so much of it as was then extant, was collected, and orderly disposed and settled by Ezra. And that from him they have delivered it down in the order in which he disposed it, until Christ's time, when the Christian church received it from them, and have delivered it down to our times. And the truth of this is allowed as undoubted by divines in general.

IX. The work of redemption was carried on and promoted in this period, by greatly multiplying the copies of the law, and appointing the constant public reading of them in all the cities of Israel in their synagogues. It is evident, that before the captivity, there were but few copies of the law. There was the original, laid up beside the ark, and the kings were required to write out a copy of the law for their use, and the law was required to be read to the whole congregation of Israel once every seventh year. And we have no account of any other stated public reading of the law before the captivity but this. And it is manifest by several things that might be mentioned, that copies of the law were exceeding rare before the captivity. But after the captivity, the constant reading of the law was set up in every synagogue throughout the land. First, they began with reading the law, and then they proceeded to establish the constant reading of the other books of the Old Testament. — And lessons were read out of the Old Testament, as made up of both the law and the other parts of the Scripture then extant, in all the synagogues which were set up in every city, and everywhere, wherever the Jews in any considerable number dwelt, as our meeting houses are. Thus we find it was in Christ's and the apostles' time, Acts 15:21, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." This custom is universally supposed, both by Jews and Christians, to be begun by Ezra. There were doubtless public assemblies before the captivity into Babylon. They used to assemble at the temple at their great feasts, and were directed, when they were at a loss about anything in the law, to go to the priest for instruction. And they used also to resort to the prophets' houses. And we read of synagogues in the land before, Psalms 74:8. But it is not supposed that they had copies of the law for constant public reading and expounding through the land before, as afterwards. This was one great means of their being preserved from idolatry.

X. The next thing I would mention, is God's remarkably preserving the church and nation of the Jews, when they were in imminent danger of being universally destroyed by Haman. We have the

story in the book of Esther, with which you are acquainted. The series of provisions was very wonderful in preventing this destruction. Esther was doubtless born for this end to be the instrument of this remarkable preservation.

XI. After this the canon of Scripture was further added to in the books of Nehemiah and Esther, the one by Nehemiah himself, and whether the other was written by Nehemiah or Mordecai, or Malachi, is not of importance for us to know, so long as it is one of those books that were always admitted and received as a part of their canon by the Jews, and was among those books that the Jews called their Scriptures in Christ's time, and as such was approved by him. For Christ does often in his speeches to the Jews, manifestly approve and confirm those books, which amongst them went by the name of the Scriptures, as might be easily shown, if there were time for it.

XII. After this the canon of the Old Testament was completed and sealed by Malachi. The manner of his concluding his prophecy seems to imply, that they were to expect no more prophecies, and no more written revelations from God, until Christ should come. For in the last chapter he prophesies of Christ's coming, Malachi 4:2-3, "But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be as ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Then we read in Malachi 4:4, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments," i.e. Remember and improve what you have. Keep close to that written rule you have, as expecting no more additions to it, until the night of the Old Testament is over, and the Sun of Righteousness shall at length arise.

03.06b. Period 1 Part 6 (Cont'd)

XIII. Soon after this, the spirit of prophecy ceased among that people until the time of the New Testament. Thus the Old Testament light, the stars of the long night, began apace to hide their heads, the time of the Sun of Righteousness now drawing nigh. We before observed, how the kings of the house of David ceased before the true King and Head of the church came, and how the cloud of glory withdrew, before Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, appeared, and so as to several other things. And now at last the spirit of prophecy ceased. The time of the great Prophet of God was now so nigh, it was time for the typical prophets to be silent, and shut their mouths.

We have now gone through with the time that we have any historical account of in the writings of the Old Testament, and the last thing that was mentioned, by which the work of redemption was promoted, was the ceasing of the spirit of prophecy.

I now proceed to show how the work of redemption was carried on through the remaining times that were before Christ, in which we have not that thread of scripture history to guide us that we have had hitherto, but have these three things to guide us, viz. the prophecies of the Old Testament, human histories of those times, and some occasional mention made, and some evidence given, of some things which happened in those times, in the New Testament. Therefore,

XIV. The next particular that I shall mention under this period, is the destruction of the Persian empire, and setting up of the Grecian empire by Alexander. This came to pass about sixty or seventy years after the times wherein the Prophet Malachi is supposed to have prophesied, and about three hundred and thirty years before Christ. This was the third overturning of the world that came to pass in this period, and was greater and more remarkable than either of the foregoing. It was very remarkable on account of the suddenness of that conquest of the world which Alexander made, and the greatness of the empire which he set up, which much exceeded all the foregoing in its extent. This event is much spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel. This empire is represented by the third kingdom of brass in Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as in Daniel 2:1-49, and in Daniel's vision of the four beasts, is represented by the third beast that was like a leopard, that had on his back four wings of a fowl, to represent the swiftness of its conquest, Daniel 7:1-28, and is more particularly represented by the he-goat in the Daniel 8:1-27, that came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground, to represent how swiftly Alexander overran the world. The angel himself does expressly interpret this he-goat to signify the king of Grecia, Daniel 8:21. The rough goat is the king of Grecia. And the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king, i.e. Alexander himself.

After Alexander had conquered the world, he soon died. And his dominion did not descend to his posterity, but four of his principal captains divided his empire between them, as it there follows. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power, so you may see in Daniel 11:1-45. The angel, after foretelling of the Persian empire, then proceeds to foretell of Alexander, Daniel 11:3, "And a mighty king shall stand

up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." And then he foretells, in Daniel 11:4, of the dividing of his kingdom between his four captains, "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those." Two of these four captains, whose kingdoms were next to Judea, the one had Egypt and the neighboring countries on the south of Judea, and the other had Syria, and the neighboring countries north of Judea. And these two are those that are called the kings of the north and of the south in Daniel 11:1-45.

Now, this setting up of the Grecian empire did greatly prepare the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world. Besides those ways common to the other overturnings of the world in this period, that have been already mentioned, there is one peculiar to this revolution which I would take notice of, which did remarkably promote the work of redemption, and that was, that it made the Greek language common in the world. To have one common language understood and used through the greater part of the world, was a thing that did greatly prepare the way for the setting up of Christ's kingdom. This gave advantage for spreading the gospel from one nation to another, and so through all nations, with vastly greater ease, than if every nation had a distinct language, and did not understand each other. For though some of the first preachers of the gospel had the gift of languages, so that they could preach in any language. Yet all had not this particular gift. And they that had, could not exercise it when they would, but only at special seasons, when the Spirit of God was pleased to inspire them in this way. And the church in different parts of the world, as the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Corinth, and others, which were in countries distant one from another, could not have had that communication one with another, which we have an account of in the book of Acts, if they had had no common language. So it was before the Grecian empire was set up. But after this, many in all these countries well understood the same language, viz. the Greek language, which wonderfully opened the door for mutual communication between those churches, so far separated one from another. And again, the making the Greek language common through so great a part of the world, did wonderfully make way for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, because it was the language in which the New Testament was to be originally written. The apostles propagated the gospel through many scores of nations, and if they could not have understood the Bible any otherwise than as it was translated into so many languages, it would have rendered the spreading of the gospel vastly more difficult. But by the Greek language being made common to all, they all understood the New Testament of Jesus Christ in the language in which the apostles and evangelists originally wrote it. So that as soon as ever it was written by its original penmen, it immediately lay open to the world in a language that was commonly understood everywhere, as there was no language that was so commonly understood in the world in Christ's and the apostles' times as the Greek, the cause of which was the setting up of the Grecian empire in the world.

XV. The next thing I shall take notice of is, the translating of the Scriptures of the Old Testament into a language that was commonly understood by the Gentiles. The translation that I here speak of is that into the Greek language, that is commonly called the Septuagint, or the translation of the Seventy. This is supposed to have been made about fifty or sixty years after Alexander's conquering the world. This is the first translation that ever was made of the Scriptures that we have any credible account of. The canon of the Old Testament had been completed by the prophet

Malachi but about an hundred and twenty years before in its original. And hitherto the Scriptures had remained locked up from all other nations but the Jews, in the Hebrew tongue, which was understood by no other nation. But now it was translated into the Greek language, which, as we observed before, was a language that was commonly understood by the nations of the world. This translation of the Old Testament is still extant, and is commonly in the hands of the learned men in these days, and is made great use of by them. The Jews have many fables about the occasion and manner of this translation. But the truth of the case is supposed to be this, that multitudes of the Jews living in other parts of the world besides Judea. And being born and bred among the Greeks, the Greek became their common language. And they did not understand the original Hebrew. And therefore they procured the Scriptures to be translated for their use into the Greek language. And so henceforward the Jews, in all countries, except Judea, were wont in their synagogues to make use of this translation instead of the Hebrew. This translation of the Scriptures into a language commonly understood through the world, prepared the way for Christ's coming, and setting up his kingdom in the world, and afterwards did greatly promote it. For as the apostles went preaching through the world, they made great use of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and especially of the prophecies concerning Christ that were contained in them. And by means of this translation, and by the Jews being scattered everywhere, they had the Scriptures at hand in a language that was understood by the Gentiles. And they did principally make use of this translation in their preaching and writings wherever they went, as is evident by this, that in all the innumerable quotations that are made out of the Old Testament in their writings in the New Testament, they are almost everywhere in the very words of the Septuagint. The sense is the same as it is in the original Hebrew. But very often the words are different, as all that are acquainted with their Bibles know. When the apostles in their epistles, and the evangelists in their histories, cite passages out of the Old Testament, it is very often in different words from what we have in the Old Testament, as all know. But yet these citations are almost universally in the very words of the Septuagint version. For that may be seen by comparing them together, they being both written in the same language. This makes it evident, that the apostles, in their preaching and writings, commonly made use of this translation. So this very translation was that which was principally used in Christian churches through most nations of the world for several hundred years after Christ.

XVI. The next thing is the wonderful preservation of the church when it was imminently threatened and persecuted under the Grecian empire. The first time they were threatened was by Alexander himself. When he was besieging the city of Tyre, sending to the Jews for assistance and supplies for his army, and they refusing, out of a conscientious regard to their oath to the king of Persia, he being a man of a very furious spirit, agreeable to the Scripture representation of the rough he-goat, marched against them, with a design to cut them off. But the priests going out to meet him in their priestly garments, when he met them, God wonderfully turned his heart to spare them, and favor them, much as he did the heart of Esau when he met Jacob.

After this, one of the kings of Egypt, a successor of one of Alexander's four captains, entertained a design of destroying the nation of the Jews, but was remarkably and wonderfully prevented by a stronger interposition of Heaven for their preservation. But the most wonderful preservation of them all in this period was under the cruel persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, and successor of another of Alexander's four captains. The Jews were at that time subject to the power

of Antiochus. And he being enraged against them, long strove to his utmost utterly to destroy them, and root them out. At least all of them that would not forsake their religion and worship his idols. And he did indeed in a great measure waste the country, and depopulate the city of Jerusalem, and profaned the temple, by setting up his idols in some parts of it, and persecuted the people with insatiable cruelty, so that we have no account of any persecution like his before. Many of the particular circumstances of this persecution would he very affecting, if I had time to insist on them. This cruel persecution began about an hundred and seventy years before Christ. It is much spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel, as you may see, Daniel 8:9-25; Daniel 11:31-38. These persecutions are also spoken of in the New Testament, as, Hebrews 11:36-38.

Antiochus intended not only to extirpate the Jewish religion, but, as far as in him lay, the very nation, and particularly labored to the utmost to destroy all copies of the law. And considering how weak they were, in comparison with a king of such vast dominion, the providence of God appears very wonderful in defeating his design. Many times the Jews seemed to be on the very brink of ruin, and just ready to be wholly swallowed up. Their enemies often thought themselves sure of obtaining their purpose. They once came against the people with a mighty army, and with a design of killing all, except the women and children, and of selling these for slaves. And they were so confident of obtaining their purpose, and others of purchasing, that above a thousand merchants came with the army, with money in their hands, to buy the slaves that should be sold. But God wonderfully stirred up and assisted one Judas, and others his successors, that were called the Maccabees, who, with a small handful in comparison, vanquished their enemies time after time, and delivered their nation, which was foretold by Daniel 11:32. Speaking of Antiochus' persecution, he says, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God, shall be strong, and do exploits."

God afterwards brought this Antiochus to a fearful, miserable end, by a loathsome disease, under dreadful torments of body, and horrors of mind, which was foretold, Daniel 11:45, in these words, "Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him."

After his death, there were attempts still to destroy the church of God, but God baffled them all.

XVII. The next thing to be taken notice of is the destruction of the Grecian empire, and setting up of the Roman empire. This was the fourth overturning of the world that was in this period. And though it was brought to pass more gradually than the setting up of the Grecian empire, yet it far exceeded that, and was much the greatest and largest temporal monarchy that ever was in the world, so that the Roman empire was commonly called all the world, as it is in Luke 2:1, "And there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed," i.e. all the Roman empire. This empire is spoken of as much the strongest and greatest of any of the four, Daniel 2:40, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." So also, Daniel 7:7; Daniel 7:19; Daniel 7:23. The time that the Romans first conquered and brought under the land of Judea, was between sixty and seventy years before Christ was born. And soon after this, the Roman empire was established in its greatest extent, and the world continued subject to this empire henceforward until Christ came, and many hundred years afterwards. The nations of the world being united in one monarchy when Christ came, and when the apostles went forth to preach the gospel, did greatly prepare the way for the spreading of the gospel, and the

setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world. For the world being thus subject to one government, it opened a communication from nation to nation, and so opportunity was given for the more swiftly propagating the gospel through the world. Thus we find it to be now. As if anything prevails in the English nation, the communication is quick from one part of the nation to another, throughout all parts that are subject to the English government, much easier and quicker than to other nations, which are not subject to the English government, and have little to do with them. There are innumerable difficulties in traveling through different nations, that are under different independent governments, which there are not in traveling through different parts of the same realm, or different dominions of the same prince. So the world being under one government, the government of the Romans, in Christ's and the apostles' times, facilitated the apostles' traveling, and the gospel's spreading through the world.

XVIII. About the same time learning and philosophy were risen to their greatest height in the heathen world. The time of learning's flourishing in the heathen world was principally in this period. Almost all the famous philosophers that we have an account of among the heathen, were after the captivity into Babylon. Almost all the wise men of Greece and Rome flourished in this time. These philosophers, many of them, were indeed men of great temporal wisdom, and that which they in general chiefly professed to make their business, was to inquire wherein man's chief happiness lay, and the way in which men might obtain happiness. They seemed earnestly to busy themselves in this inquiry, and wrote multitudes of books about it, many of which are still extant. And they were exceedingly divided in their opinions about it. There have been reckoned up several hundreds of different opinions that they had concerning it. Thus they wearied themselves in vain, wandered in the dark, not having the glorious gospel to guide them. God was pleased to suffer men to do the utmost that they could with human wisdom, and to try the extent of their own understandings to find out the way to happiness, before the true light came to enlighten the world, before he sent the great Prophet to lead men in the right way to happiness. God suffered these great philosophers to try what they could do for six hundred years together, and then it proved, by the events of so long a time, that all they could do was in vain, the world not becoming wiser, better, or happier under their instructions, but growing more and more foolish, wicked, and miserable. He suffered their wisdom and philosophy to come to the greatest height before Christ came, that it might be seen how far reason and philosophy could go in their highest ascent, that the necessity of a divine teacher might appear before Christ came. And God was pleased to make foolish the wisdom of this world, to show men the folly of their best wisdom, by the doctrines of his glorious gospel which were above the reach of all their philosophy. See 1 Corinthians 1:19-21. And after God had showed the vanity of human learning, when set up in the room of the gospel, God was pleased to make it subservient to the purposes of Christ's kingdom, as an handmaid to divine revelation. And so the prevailing of learning in the world before Christ came, made way for his coming both these ways, viz. as thereby the vanity of human wisdom was shown, and the necessity of the gospel appeared, and also as hereby an handmaid was prepared to the gospel. For so it was made use of in the Apostle Paul, who was famed for his much learning, as you may see, Acts 26:24, and was skilled not only in the learning of the Jews, but also of the philosophers, and improved it to the purposes of the gospel. As you may see he did in disputing with the philosophers at Athens, Acts 17:22, etc. He by his learning knew how to accommodate himself in his discourses to learned men, as appears by this discourse of his. And he knew well how to improve what he had read in their writings, and he here cites their own poets. And now Dionysius,

that was a philosopher, was converted by him, and, as ecclesiastical history gives us an account, made a great instrument of promoting the gospel. And there were many others in that and the following ages, who were eminently useful by their human learning in promoting the interests of Christ's kingdom.

XIX. Just before Christ was born, the Roman empire was raised to its greatest height, and also settled in peace. About four and twenty years before Christ was born, Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor, began to rule as emperor of the world. Until then the Roman empire had of a long time been a commonwealth under the government of the senate. But then it became an absolute monarchy. This Augustus Caesar, as he was the first, so he was the greatest of all the Roman emperors. He reigned in the greatest glory. Thus the power of the heathen world, which was Satan's visible kingdom, was raised to its greatest height, after it had been rising higher and higher, and strengthening itself more and more from the days of Solomon to this day, which was about a thousand years. Now it appeared at a greater height than ever it appeared from the first beginning of Satan's heathenish kingdom, which was probably about the time of the building of Babel. Now the heathen world was in its greatest glory for strength, wealth, and learning.

God did two things to prepare the way for Christ's coming, wherein he took a contrary method from that which human wisdom would have taken. He brought his own visible people very low, and made them weak. But the heathen, that were his enemies, he exalted to the greatest height, for the more glorious triumph of the cross of Christ. With a small number in their greatest weakness, he conquered his enemies in their greatest glory. Thus Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross.

Augustus Caesar had been for many years establishing the state of the Roman empire, subduing his enemies in one part and another, until the very year that Christ was born. When all his enemies being subdued, his dominion over the world seemed to be settled in its greatest glory. All was established in peace, in token whereof the Romans shut the temple of Janus, which was an established symbol among them of there being universal peace throughout the Roman empire. And this universal peace, which was begun that year that Christ was born, lasted twelve years, until the year that Christ disputed with doctors in the temple.

Thus the world, after it had been, as it were, in a continual convulsion for so many hundred years together, like the four winds striving together on the tumultuous raging ocean, whence arose those four great monarchies, being now established in the greatest height of the fourth and last monarchy, and settled in quietness. Now all things are ready for the birth of Christ. This remarkable universal peace after so many ages of tumult and war, was a fit prelude for the ushering of the glorious Prince of Peace into the world.

Thus I have gone through the first grand period of the whole space between the fall of man and the end of the world, viz. that from the fall to the time of the incarnation of Christ, and have shown the truth of the first proposition, viz. That from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, God was doing those things that were preparatory to Christ's coming, and were forerunners of it.

03.07. Period 1: Improvement

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD I FROM THE FALL TO THE INCARNATION

IMPROVEMENT

BEFORE I proceed to the next proposition, I would make some few remarks, by way of improvement, upon what has been said under this.

I. From what has been said, we may strongly argue, that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Son of God, and the Savior of the world, and so that the Christian religion is the true religion, seeing that Christ is the very person so evidently pointed at, in all the great dispensations of divine providence from the very fall of man, and was so undoubtedly in so many instances foretold from age to age, and shadowed forth in a vast variety of types and figures. If we seriously consider the course of things from the beginning, and observe the motions of all the great wheels of providence from one age to another, we shall discern that they all tend hither. They are all as so many lines, whose course, if it be observed and accurately followed, it will be found that everyone centers here. It is so very plain in many things, that it would argue stupidity to deny it. This therefore is undeniable, that this person is a divine person sent from God, that came into the world with his commission and authority, to do his work and to declare his mind. The great Governor of the world, in all his great works before and since the flood, to Jews and Gentiles, down to the time of Christ's birth, has declared it. It cannot be any vain imagination, but a plain and evident truth, that that person that was born at Bethlehem, and dwelt at Nazareth, and at Capernaum, and was crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, must be the great Messiah, or anointed of God. And blessed are all they that believe in and confess him, and miserable are all that deny him. This shows the unreasonableness of the Deists, who deny revealed religion, and of the Jews, who deny that this Jesus is the Messiah foretold and promised to their fathers.

Here it may be some persons may be ready to object, and say that it may be some subtle, cunning men contrived this history, and these prophecies, so that they should all point to Jesus Christ on purpose to confirm it, that he is the Messiah. To such it may be replied, How could such a thing be contrived by cunning men to point to Jesus Christ long before he ever was born? — How could they know that ever any such person would be born. — And how could their craft and subtlety help them to foresee and point at an event that was to come to pass many ages afterwards? For no fact can be more evident, than that the Jews had those writings long before Christ was born, as they have them still in great veneration, wherever they are, in all their dispersions through the world. And they would never have received such a contrivance from Christians, to point to and confirm Jesus to be the Messiah, whom they always denied to be the Messiah. And much less would they have been made to believe that they always had had those books in their hands, when they were first made and imposed upon them.

II. What has been said, affords a strong argument for the divine authority of the books of the Old Testament, from that admirable harmony there is in them, whereby they all point to the same thing. For we may see by what has been said, how all the parts of the Old Testament, though written by so many different penmen, and in ages distant one from another, do all harmonize one with another. All agree in one, and all center in the same thing, and that a future thing, an event which it was impossible any one of them should know but by divine revelation, even the future coming of Christ. This is most evident and manifest in them, as appears by what has been said.

Now, if the Old Testament was not inspired by God, what account can be given of such an agreement? For if these books were only human writings, written without any divine direction, then none of these penmen knew that there would come such a person as Jesus Christ into the world. His coming was only a mere figment of their own brain. And if so, how happened it, that this figment of theirs came to pass? How came a vain imagination of theirs, which they foretold without any manner of ground for their prediction, to be so exactly fulfilled? And especially, how did they come all to agree in it, all pointing exactly to the same thing, though many of them lived so many hundred years distant one from another? This admirable consent and agreement in a future event, is therefore a clear and certain evidence of the divine authority of those writings.

III. Hence we may learn what a weak and ignorant objection it is that some make against some parts of the Old Testament's being the Word of God, that they consist so much of histories of the wars and civil transactions of the kings and people of the nation of the Jews. Some say, We find here among the books of a particular nation, histories which they kept of the state of their nation, from one age to another, histories of their kings and rulers, histories of their wars with the neighboring nations, and histories of the changes that happened from time to time in their state and government. And so we find that other nations used to keep histories of their public affairs, as well as they. And why then should we think that these histories which the Jews kept are the Word of God, more than those of other people? But what has been said, shows the folly and vanity of such an objection. For hereby it appears, that the case of these histories is very different from that of all other histories. This history alone gives us an account of the first original of all things. And this history alone deduces things down in a wonderful series from that original, giving an idea of the grand scheme of divine providence, as tending to its great end. And together with the doctrines and prophecies contained in it, the same book gives a view of the whole series of the great events of divine providence, from the first original to the last end and consummation of all things, giving an excellent and glorious account of the wise and holy designs of the Governor of the world in all. No common history has such penmen as this history, which was all written by men who came with evident signs and testimonies of their being prophets of the most high God, immediately inspired. And the histories that were written, as we have seen from what has been said under this proposition, do all contain those great events of providence, by which it appears how God has been carrying on the glorious divine work of redemption from age to age. Though they are histories, yet they are no less full of divine instruction, and those things that show forth Christ, and his glorious gospel, than other parts of the Holy Scriptures which are not historical To object against a book's being divine merely because it is historical, is a poor objection, just as if that could not be the Word of God which gives an account of what is past, or as though it were not reasonable to suppose that God, in a revelation he should give mankind, would give us any relation of the dispensations of his own providence. If it be so, it must be because his works are

not worthy to be related. It must be because the scheme of his government, and series of his dispensations towards his church, and towards the world that he has made, whereby he has ordered and disposed it from age to age, is not worthy that any record should be kept of it. The objection that is made, that it is a common thing for nations and kingdoms to write histories and keep records of their wars, and the revolutions that come to pass in their territories, is so far from being a weighty objection against the historical part of Scripture, as though it were not the Word of God, that it is a strong argument in favor of it. For if reason and the light of nature teaches all civilized nations to keep records of the events of their human government, and the series of their administrations, and to publish histories for the information of others. How much more may we expect that God would give the world a record of the dispensations of his divine government, which doubtless is infinitely more worthy of an history for our information? If wise kings have taken care that there should be good histories written of the nations over which they have reigned, shall we think it incredible,that Jesus Christ should take care that his church, which is his nation, his peculiar people, should have in their hands a certain infallible history of their nation, and of his government of them?

If it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, how woefully should we have been left in the dark about many things which the church of God needs to know! How ignorant should we have been of God's dealings towards mankind, and towards his church, from the beginning! And we would have been wholly in the dark about the creation of the world, the fall of man, the first rise and continued progress of the dispensations of grace towards fallen mankind! and we should have known nothing how God at first set up a church in the world, and how it was preserved, after what manner he governed it from the beginning, how the light of the gospel first began to dawn in the world, how it increased, and how things were preparing for the coming of Christ.

If we are Christians, we belong to that building of God that has been the subject of our discourse from this text. But if it had not been for the history of the Old Testament, we should never have known what was the first occasion of God's going about this building, and how the foundation of it was laid at first, and how it has gone on from the beginning. The times of the history of the Old Testament are mostly times that no other history reaches up to. And therefore, if God had not taken care to give and preserve an account of these things for us, we should have been wholly without them.

Those that object against the authority of the Old Testament history of the nation of the Jews, may as well make an objection against Moses' account of the creation that it is historical. For in the other, we have a history of a work no less important, viz. the work of redemption. Yea, this is a far greater and more glorious work, as we observed before, that if it be inquired which of the two works, the work of creation, or the work of providence, is greatest, it must be answered, the work of providence. But the work of redemption is the greatest of the works of providence. And let those who make this objection consider what part of the Old Testament history can be spared without making a great breach in that thread or series of events by which this glorious work had been carried on. This leads me to observe,

IV. That from what has been said, we may see much of the wisdom of God in the composition of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, i.e. in the parts of which it consists. By what has been said, we may see that God has wisely given us such revelations in the Old Testament as we needed.

Let us briefly take a view of the several parts of it, and of the need there was of them

Thus it was necessary that we should have some account of the creation of the world, and of our first parents, and their primitive state, and of the fall, and a brief account of the old world, and of the degeneracy of it, and of the universal deluge, and some account of the origin of nations after this destruction of mankind.

It seems necessary that there should be some account of the succession of the church of God from the beginning. And seeing God suffered all the world to degenerate, and only took one nation to be his people, to preserve the true worship and religion until the Savior of the world should come, that in them the world might gradually be prepared for that great light, and those wonderful things that he was to be the author of, and that they might be a typical nation, and that in them God might shadow forth and teach, as under a veil, all future glorious things of the gospel. It was therefore necessary that we should have some account of this thing, how it was first done by the calling of Abraham, and by their being bond-slaves in Egypt, and how they were brought to Canaan. It was necessary that we should have some account of the revelation which God made of himself to that people, in giving their law, and in the appointment of their typical worship, and those things wherein the gospel is veiled, and of the forming of that people, both as to their civil and ecclesiastical state.

It seems exceeding necessary that we should have some account of their being actually brought to Canaan, the country that was their promised land, and where they always dwelt. It seems very necessary that we should have a history of the successions of the church of Israel, and of those provisions of God towards them, which were most considerable and fullest of gospel mystery. It seems necessary that we should have some account of the highest promised external glory of that nation under David and Solomon, and that we should have a very particular account of David, whose history is so full of the gospel, and so necessary in order to introduce the gospel into the world, and in whom began the race of their kings, and that we should have some account of the building of the temple, which was also full of gospel mystery. And it is a matter of great consequence, that we should have some account of Israel's dividing from Judah, and of the ten tribes' captivity and utter rejection, and a brief account why, and therefore a brief history of them until that time. It is necessary that we should have an account of the succession of the kings of Judah, and of the church, until their captivity into Babylon, and that we should have some account of their return from their captivity, and re-settlement in their own land, and of the origin of the last state that the church was in before Christ came. A little consideration will convince everyone, that all these things were necessary, and that none of them could be spared, and in the general, that it was necessary that we should have a history of God's church until such times as are within the reach of human histories. And it was of vast importance that we should have an inspired history of those times of the Jewish church, wherein there was kept up a more extraordinary intercourse between God and them, and while he used to dwell among them as it were visibly, revealing himself by the Shechina, by Urim and Thummim, and by prophecy, and so more immediately to order their affairs. And it was necessary that we should have some account of the great dispensations of God in prophecy, which were to be after the finishing of inspired history. And so it was exceeding suitable and needful that there should be a number of prophets raised who should foretell the coming of the Son of God, and the nature and glory of his kingdom, to be as so many harbingers to make way for him, and that their prophecies should remain in the church.

It was also a matter of great consequence that the church should have a book of divine songs given by inspiration from God, wherein there should be a lively representation of the true spirit of devotion, of faith, hope, and divine love, joy, resignation, humility, obedience, repentance, etc., and also that we should have from God such books of moral instructions as we have in Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus, relating to the affairs and state of mankind, and the concerns of human life, containing rules of true wisdom and prudence for our conduct in all circumstances, and that we should have particularly a song representing the great love between Christ and his spouse the church, particularly adapted to the disposition and holy affections of a true Christian soul towards Christ, and representing his grace and marvelous love to, and delight in, his people, as we have in Solomon's Song. And especially that we should have a book to teach us how to conduct ourselves under affliction, seeing the church of God here is in a militant state, and God's people do through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven. And the church is for so long a time under trouble, and meets with such exceedingly fiery trials, and extreme sufferings, before her time of peace and rest in the latter ages of the world shall come. Therefore God has given us a book most proper in these circumstances, even the book of Job, written upon occasion of the afflictions of a particular saint, and was probably at first given to the church in Egypt under her afflictions there, and is made use of by the Apostle to comfort Christians under persecutions, James 5:11, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." God was also pleased, in this book of Job, to give some view of the ancient divinity before the giving of the law.

Thus, from this brief review, I think it appears, that every part of the Scriptures of the Old Testament is very useful and necessary, and no part of it can be spared, without loss to the church. And therefore, as I said, the wisdom of God is conspicuous in ordering that the Scriptures of the Old Testament should consist of those very books of which they do consist.

Before I dismiss this particular, I would add, that it is very observable that the history of the Old Testament is large and particular where the great affair of redemption required it, as where there was most done towards this work, and most to typify Christ, and to prepare the way for him. Thus it is very large and particular in the history of Abraham and the other patriarchs. But very short in the account we have of the time which the children of Israel spent in Egypt. So again it is large in the account of the redemption out of Egypt, and the first settling of the affairs of the Jewish church and nation in Moses and Joshua's time, but much shorter in the account of the times of the judges. So again, it is large and particular in the account of David's and Solomon's times, and then very short in the history of the ensuing reigns. Thus the accounts are large or short, just as there is more or less of the affair of redemption to be seen in them.

V. From what has been said, we may see that Christ and his redemption are the great subjects of the whole Bible. Concerning the New Testament, the matter is plain. And by what has been said on this subject hitherto, it appears to be so also with respect to the Old Testament. Christ and his redemption is the great subject of the prophecies of the Old Testament, as has been shown. It has also been shown, that he is the great subject of the songs of the Old Testament. And the moral rules and precepts are all given in subordination to him. And Christ and his redemption are also the great subject of the history of the Old Testament from the beginning all along. And even the history of the creation is brought in as an introduction to the history of redemption that immediately follows it. The whole book, both Old Testament and New, is filled up with the gospel. Only with this

difference, that the Old Testament contains the gospel under a veil, but the New contains it unveiled, so that we may see the glory of the Lord with open face.

VI. By what has been said, we may see the usefulness and excellency of the Old Testament. Some are ready to look on the Old Testament as being, as it were, out of date, and as if we in these days of the gospel have but little to do with it, which is a very great mistake, arising from want of observing the nature and design of the Old Testament, which, if it were observed, would appear full of the gospel of Christ, and would in an excellent manner illustrate and confirm the glorious doctrines and promises of the New Testament. Those parts of the Old Testament which are commonly looked upon as containing the least divine instruction, are as it were mines and treasures of gospel knowledge. And the reason why they are thought to contain so little is, because persons do but superficially read them. The treasures which are hid underneath are not observed. They only look on the top of the ground, and so suddenly pass a judgment that there is nothing there. But they never dig into the mine. If they did, they would find it richly stored with silver and gold, and would be abundantly requited for their pains.

What has been said, may show us what a precious treasure God has committed into our hands, in that he has given us the Bible. How little do most persons consider how much they enjoy, in that they have the possession of that holy book the Bible, which they have in their hands, and may converse with it as they please. What an excellent book is this, and how far exceeding all human writings, that reveals God to us, and gives us a view of the grand design and glorious scheme of providence from the beginning of the world, either in history or prophecy, that reveals the great Redeemer and his glorious redemption, and the various steps by which God accomplishes it from the first foundation to the top stone! Shall we prize a history which gives us a clear account of some great earthly prince, or mighty warrior, as of Alexander the Great, or Julius Caesar, or the Duke of Marlborough? And, shall we not prize the history that God gives us of the glorious kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ, the Prince and Savior, and of the wars and other great transactions of that King of kings, and Lord of armies, the Lord mighty in battle, the history of the things which he has wrought for the redemption of his chosen people?

VII. What has been said, may make us sensible how much most persons are to blame for their inattentive, unobservant way of reading the Scriptures. — How much do the Scriptures contain, if it were but observed? The Bible is the most comprehensive book in the world. But, what will all this signify to us, if we read it without observing what is the drift of the Holy Ghost in it? The Psalmist, Psalms 119:18, begs of God, “That he would enlighten his eyes, that he might behold wondrous things out of his law.” The Scriptures are full of wondrous things. Those histories which are commonly read as if they were only histories of the private concerns of such and such particular persons, such as the histories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and the history of Ruth, and the histories of particular lawgivers and princes, as the history of Joshua and the Judges, and David, and the Israelite princes, are accounts of vastly greater things, things of greater importance, and more extensive involvement, than they that read them are commonly aware of. The histories of Scripture are commonly read as if they were stories written only to entertain men’s fancies, and to while away their leisure hours, when the infinitely great things contained or pointed at in them are passed over and never taken notice of. Whatever treasures the Scriptures contain, we shall be never the better for them if we do not observe them. He that has a Bible, and does not observe what is contained in it, is like a man who has a box full of silver and gold, and does not

know it, does not observe that it is anything more than a vessel filled with common stones. As long as it is thus with him, he will be never the better for his treasure. For he that knows not that he has a treasure, will never make use of what he has, and so might as well be with out it. He who has a plenty of the choicest food stored up in his house, and does not know it, will never taste what he has, and will be as likely to starve as if his house were empty.

VIII. What has been said may show us how great a person Jesus Christ is, and how great an errand he came into the world upon, seeing there was so much done to prepare the way for his coming. God had been doing nothing else but prepare the way for his coming, and doing the work which he had to do in the world, through all ages of the world from the very beginning. If we had notice of a certain stranger's being about to come into a country, and should observe that a great preparation was made for his coming, that many months were taken up in it, and great things were done, many great alterations were made in the state of the whole country, and that many hands were employed, and persons of great note were engaged in making preparation for the coming of this person, and the whole country was overturned, and all the affairs and concerns of the country were ordered so as to be subservient to the design of entertaining that person when he should come. It would be natural for us to think with ourselves, why, surely, this person is some extraordinary person indeed, and it is some very great business that he is coming upon.

How great a person then must he be, for whose coming into the world the great God of heaven and earth, and Governor of all things, spent four thousand years in preparing the way, going about it soon after the world was created, and from age to age doing great things, bringing mighty events to pass, accomplishing wonders without number, often overturning the world in order to it, and causing everything in the state of mankind, and all revolutions and changes in the habitable world from generation to generation to be subservient to this great design? Surely this must be some great and extraordinary person indeed, and a great work indeed it must needs be that he is coming about.

We read, Matthew 21:8-10, that when Christ was coming into Jerusalem, and the multitudes ran before him, and cut down branches of palm trees, and strewed them in the way, and others spread their garments in the way, and cried, "Hosannah to the son of David," that the whole city was moved, saying, Who is this? They wondered who that extraordinary person should be, that there should be such an ado made on the occasion of his coming into the city, and to prepare the way before him. But if we consider what has been said on this subject, what great things were done in all ages to prepare the way for Christ's coming into the world, and how the world was often overturned to make way for it, much more may we cry out, Who is this? What great person is this? and say, as in Psalms 24:8; Psalms 24:10. "Who is this king of glory," that God should show such respect, and put such vast honor upon him? Surely this person is honorable indeed in God's eyes, and greatly beloved of him, and surely it is a great errand upon which he is sent into the world.

03.08. Period 2 Time of Christ's Humiliation

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD II THE TIME OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION

HAVING shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the first period, from the fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, I come now to the second period, viz. the time of Christ's humiliation, or the space from the incarnation of Christ to his resurrection. And this is the most remarkable article of time that ever was or ever will be. Though it was but between thirty and forty years, yet more was done in it than had been done from the beginning of the world to that time. We have observed, that all that had been done from the fall to the incarnation of Christ, was only preparatory for what was done now. And it may also be observed, that all that was done before the beginning of time, in the eternal counsels of God, and that eternal transaction there was between the persons of the Trinity, chiefly respected this period. We therefore now proceed to consider the second proposition, viz. That during the time of Christ's humiliation, from his incarnation to his resurrection, the purchase of redemption was made.

Though there were many things done in the affair of redemption from the fall of man to this time, though millions of sacrifices had been offered up, yet nothing was done to purchase redemption before Christ's incarnation. No part of the purchase was made, no part of the price was offered until now. But as soon as Christ was incarnate, then the purchase began immediately without any delay. And the whole time of Christ's humiliation, from the morning that Christ began to be incarnate, until the morning that he rose from the dead, was taken up in this purchase. And then the purchase was entirely and completely finished. As nothing was done before Christ's incarnation, so nothing was done after his resurrection, to purchase redemption for men. Nor will there ever be anything more done to all eternity. But that very moment that the human nature of Christ ceased to remain under the power of death, the utmost farthing was paid of the price of the salvation of every one of the elect. But for the more orderly and regular consideration of the great things done by our Redeemer to purchase redemption for us, 1. I would speak of Christ's becoming incarnate to qualify himself for this purchase — and, 2. I would speak of the purchase itself.

PART I

OF CHRIST'S BECOMING INCARNATE TO QUALIFY HIMSELF FOR THE PURCHASE OF REDEMPTION

FIRST, I would consider Christ's coming into the world, or his taking upon him our nature to put himself in a capacity to purchase redemption for us. — Christ became incarnate, or which is the same thing, became man, to put himself in a capacity for working out our redemption. For though Christ, as God, was infinitely sufficient for the work, yet to his being in an immediate capacity for it,

it was needful that he should not only be God, but man. If Christ had remained only in the divine nature, he would not have been in a capacity to have purchased our salvation, not from any imperfection of the divine nature, but by reason of its absolute and infinite perfection. For Christ, merely as God, was not capable either of that obedience or suffering that was needful. The divine nature is not capable of suffering, for it is infinitely above all suffering. Neither is it capable of obedience to that law that was given to man. It is as impossible that one who is only God, should obey the law that was given to man, as it is that he should suffer man's punishment. And it was necessary not only that Christ should take upon him a created nature, but that he should take upon him our nature. It would not have sufficed for us for Christ to have become an angel, and to have obeyed and suffered in the angelic nature. But it was necessary that he should become a man, and that upon three accounts.

I. It was needful to answer the law, that that nature should obey the law, to which the law was given. Man's law could not be answered, but by being obeyed by man. God insisted upon it, that the law which he had given to man should be honored and submitted to, and fulfilled by the nature of man, otherwise the law could not be answered for men. The words that were spoken, Thou shalt not eat thereof, Thou shalt, or Thou shalt not do thus or thus, were spoken to the race of mankind, to the human nature, and therefore the human nature must fulfill them.

2. It was needful to answer the law that the nature that sinned should die. These words, "Thou shalt surely die," respect the human nature. The same nature to which the command was given, was the nature to which the threatening was directed.

3. God saw meet, that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin, should also be the stage of his redemption. We read often of his coming into the world to save sinners, and of God's sending him into the world for this purpose. It was needful that he should come into this sinful, miserable, undone world, to restore and save it. In order to man's recovery, it was needful that he should come down to man, to the world that was man's proper habitation, and that he should tabernacle with us, John 1:14, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Concerning the incarnation of Christ, I would observe these following things.

I. The incarnation itself, in which especially two things are to be considered, viz.

1. His conception, which was in the womb of one of the race of mankind, whereby he became truly the Son of Man, as he was often called. He was one of the posterity of Adam, and a child of Abraham, and a son of David, according to God's promise. But his conception was not in the way of ordinary generation, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. Christ was formed in the womb of the Virgin, of the substance of her body, by the power of the Spirit of God. So that he was the immediate son of the woman, but not the immediate son of any male whatsoever, and so was the seed of the woman, and the son of a virgin, one that had never known man.

2. His birth. — Though the conception of Christ was supernatural, yet after he was conceived, and so the incarnation of Christ begun, his human nature was gradually perfected in the womb of the virgin, in a way of natural progress, and so his birth was in the way of nature. But his conception being supernatural, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he was both conceived and born without sin.

II. The second thing I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the fullness of the time in which it was accomplished. It was after things had been preparing for it from the very first fall of mankind, and when all things were ready. It came to pass at a time, which in infinite wisdom was the most fit and proper, Galatians 4:4, “But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”

It was now the most proper time on every account. Any time before the flood would not have been so fit a time. For then the mischief and ruin that the fall brought on mankind, was not so fully seen. The curse did not so fully come on the earth before the flood, as it did afterwards. For though the ground was cursed in a great measure before, yet it pleased God that the curse should once, before the restoration by Christ, be executed in an universal destruction, as it were, of the very form of the earth, that the dire effects of the fall might once in such a way be seen before the recovery by Christ. Though mankind were mortal before the flood, yet their lives were the greater part of a thousand years in length, a kind of immortality in comparison with what the life of man is now. It pleased God, that that curse, “Dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return,” should have its full accomplishment, and be executed in its greatest degree on mankind, before the Redeemer came to purchase never ending life for man.

It would not have been so fit a time for Christ to come, after the flood, before Moses’ time. For until then mankind were not so universally apostatized from the true God. They were not fallen universally into heathenish darkness. And so the need of Christ, the light of the world, was not so evident. And the woeful consequence of the fall with respect to man’s mortality, was not so fully manifest until then. For man’s life was not so shortened as to be reduced to the present standard until about Moses’ time.

It was most fit that the time of the Messiah’s coming should not be until many ages after Moses’ time, until all nations, but the children of Israel, had lain long in heathenish darkness, that the remediableness or their disease might by long experience be seen, and so the absolute necessity of the heavenly physician, before he came.

Another reason why Christ did not come soon after the flood probably was that the earth might be full of people, that Christ might have the more extensive kingdom, and that the effects of his light, and power, and grace, might be glorified, and that his victory over Satan might be attended with the more glory in the multitude of his conquests. It was also needful that the coming of Christ should be many ages after Moses, that the church might be prepared which was formed by Moses for his coming, by the Messiah’s being long prefigured, and by his being many ways foretold, and by his being long expected. It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonian captivity, because Satan’s kingdom was not then come to the height. The heathen world before that consisted of lesser kingdoms. But God saw meet that the Messiah should come in the time of one of the four great monarchies of the world. Nor was it proper that he should come in the time of the Babylonian monarchy. For it was God’s will, that several general monarchies should follow one another, and that the coming of the Messiah should be in the time of the last, which appeared above them all. The Persian monarchy, by overcoming the Babylonian, appeared above it. And so the Grecian, by overcoming the Persian, appeared above that, and for the same reason, the Roman above the Grecian. Now it was the will of God, that his Son should make his appearance in the world in the time of this greatest and strongest monarchy, which was Satan’s visible kingdom

in the world, that by overcoming this, he might visibly overcome Satan's kingdom in its greatest strength and glory, and so obtain the more complete triumph over Satan himself.

It was not proper that Christ should come before the Babylonian captivity. For, before that we have not histories of the state of the heathen world, to give us an idea of the need of a Savior. And besides, before that, learning did not much flourish, and so there had not been an opportunity to show the insufficiency of human learning and wisdom to reform and save mankind. Again, before that, the Jews were not dispersed over the world, as they were afterwards. And so things were not prepared in this respect for the coming of Christ. The necessity of abolishing the Jewish dispensation was not then so apparent as it was afterwards, by reason of the dispersion of the Jews. Neither was the way prepared for the propagation of the gospel, as it was afterwards, by the same dispersion. Many other things might be mentioned, by which it would appear, that no other time before that very time in which Christ did come, would have been proper for his appearing in the world to purchase the redemption of men.

III. The next thing that I would observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, is the greatness of this event. Christ's incarnation was a greater and more wonderful thing than ever had come to pass. And there has been but one that has ever come to pass which was greater, and that was the death of Christ, which was afterwards. But Christ's incarnation was a greater thing than had ever come to pass before. The creation of the world was a very great thing, but not so great a thing as the incarnation of Christ. It was a great thing for God to make the creature, but not so great as for God, as for the Creator himself, to become a creature. We have spoken of many great things that were accomplished from one age to another, in the ages between the fall of man and the incarnation of Christ. But God's becoming man was a greater thing than they all. When Christ was born, the greatest person was born that ever was, or ever will be born.

IV. What I would next observe concerning the incarnation of Christ, are the remarkable circumstances of it, such as his being born of a poor virgin, that was a pious holy person, but poor, as appeared by her offering at her purification, Luke 2:24, "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons." Which refers to Leviticus 5:7, "And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons." And this poor virgin was espoused to an husband who was a poor man. Though they were both of the royal family of David, the most honorable family, and Joseph was the rightful heir to the crown. Yet the family was reduced to a very low state, which is represented by the tabernacle of David's being fallen or broken down, Amos 9:11, "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old."

He was born in the town of Bethlehem, as was foretold. And there was a very remarkable providence of God to bring about the fulfillment of this prophecy, the taxing of all the world by Augustus Caesar, as in Luke 2:1-52. He was born in a very low condition, even in a stable, and laid in a manger.

V. I would observe the concomitants of this great event, or the remarkable events with which it was attended. — And,

I. The first thing I would take notice of that attended the incarnation of Christ, was the return of the Spirit, which indeed began a little before the incarnation of Christ; but yet was given on occasion of that, as it was to reveal either his birth, or the birth of his forerunner, John the Baptist. I have before observed how the spirit of prophecy ceased not long after the book of Malachi was written. From about the same time visions and immediate revelations ceased also. But now, on this occasion, they are granted anew, and the Spirit in these operations returns again. The first instance of its restoration that we have any account of is in the vision of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, which we read of in Luke 1:1-80. The next is in the vision which the Virgin Mary had, of which we read also in the same chapter. The third is in the vision which Joseph had, of which we read in Matthew 1:20-24. In the next place, the Spirit was given to Elizabeth, Luke 1:41. Next, it was given to Mary, as appears by her song, Luke 1:46, etc. Then to Zacharias again, Luke 1:64. Then it was sent to the shepherds, of which we have an account in Luke 2:9. Then it was given to Simeon, Luke 2:25. Then to Anna, verse 36. Then to the wise men in the east. Then to Joseph again, directing him to flee into Egypt, and after that directing his return.

2. The next concomitant of Christ's incarnation that I would observe is, the great notice that was taken of it in heaven, and on earth. How it was noticed by the glorious inhabitants of the heavenly world, appears by their joyful songs on this occasion, heard by the shepherds in the night. This was the greatest event of Providence that ever the angels had beheld. We read of their singing praises when they saw the formation of this lower world, Job 38:7, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." And as they sang praises then, so they do now, on this much greater occasion, of the birth of the Son of God, who is the Creator of the world. The glorious angels had all along expected this event. They had taken great notice of the prophecies and promises of these things all along. For we are told, that the angels desire to look into the affairs of redemption, 1 Peter 1:12. They had all along been the ministers of Christ in this affair of redemption, in all the several steps of it down from the very fall of man. So we read, that they were employed in God's dealings with Abraham, and in his dealings with Jacob, and in his dealings with the Israelites from time to time. And doubtless they had long joyfully expected the coming of Christ. But now they see it accomplished, and therefore greatly rejoice, and sing praises on this occasion.

Notice was taken of it by some among the Jews, as particularly by Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary before the birth of Christ, not to say by John the Baptist before he was born, when he leaped in his mother's womb as it were for joy, at the voice of the salutation of Mary. But Elizabeth and Mary do most joyfully praise God together, when they meet with Christ and his forerunner in their wombs, and the Holy Spirit in their souls. And afterwards what joyful notice is taken of this event by the shepherds, and by those holy persons Zacharias, and Simeon, and Anna! How do they praise God on this occasion! Thus the church of God in heaven, and the church on earth, do as it were unite in their joy and praise on this occasion.

Notice was taken of it by the Gentiles, which appears in the wise men of the east. Great part of the universe does as it were take a joyful notice of the incarnation of Christ. Heaven takes notice of it, and the inhabitants sing for joy. This lower world, the world of mankind, does also take notice of it in both parts of it, Jews and Gentiles. It pleased God to put honor on his Son, by wonderfully stirring up some of the wisest of the Gentiles to come a long journey to see and worship the Son of God at his birth, being led by a miraculous star, signifying the birth of that glorious person, who is

the bright and morning star, going before, and leading them to the very place where the young child was. Some think they were instructed by the prophecy of Balaam, who dwelt in the eastern parts, and foretold Christ's coming as a star that should rise out of Jacob. Or they might be instructed by that general expectation there was of the Messiah's coming about that time, before spoken of, from the notice they had of it by the prophecies the Jews had of him in their dispersions in all parts of the world at that time.

3. The next concomitant of the birth of Christ was his circumcision. But this may more properly be spoken of under another head, and so I will not insist upon it now.

4. The next concomitant was his first coming into the second temple, which was his being brought thither when an infant, on occasion of the purification of the blessed virgin. We read, Haggai 2:7, "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house (or temple) with glory." And in Malachi 3:1, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant." And now was the first instance of the fulfillment of these prophecies.

5. The last concomitant I shall mention is the scepter's departing from Judah in the death of Herod the Great. The scepter had never totally departed from Judah until now. Judah's scepter was greatly diminished in the revolt of the ten tribes in Jeroboam's time, and the scepter departed from Israel or Ephraim at the time of the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser. But yet the scepter remained in the tribe of Judah under the kings of the house of David. And when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the scepter of Judah ceased for a little while, until the return from the captivity under Cyrus. And then, though they were not an independent government, as they had been before, but owed fealty to the kings of Persia. Yet their governor was of themselves, who had the power of life and death, and they were governed by their own laws, and so Judah had a lawgiver from between his feet during the Persian and Grecian monarchies. Towards the latter part of the Grecian monarchy, the people were governed by kings of their own, of the race of the Maccabees, for the greater part of an hundred years, and after that they were subdued by the Romans. But yet the Romans suffered them to be governed by their own laws, and to have a king of their own, Herod the Great, who reigned about forty years, and governed with proper kingly authority ,only paying homage to the Romans. But presently after Christ was born he died, as we have an account, Matthew 2:19, and Archelaus succeeded him, but was soon put down by the Roman Emperor, and then the scepter departed from Judah. There were no more temporal kings of Judah after that, neither had that people their governors from the midst of themselves after that, but were ruled by a Roman governor sent among them. And they ceased anymore to have the power of life and death among themselves. Hence the Jews say to Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death," John 18:31. Thus the scepter departed from Judah when Shiloh came.

03.09. Period 2 Part 2 The Purchase Itself

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD II THE TIME OF CHRIST'S HUMILIATION

PART II OF THE PURCHASE ITSELF

HAVING thus considered Christ's coming into the world, and his taking on him our nature, to put himself in a capacity for the purchase of redemption, I come now, secondly, to speak of the purchase itself. — And in speaking of this, I would, 1. Show what is intended by the purchase of redemption.

2 Observe some things in general concerning those things by which this purchase was made.

3. I would orderly consider those things which Christ did and suffered, by which that purchase was made.

SECTION I

What is intended by Christ's purchasing redemption.

I WOULD show what is here intended by Christ's purchasing redemption. And there are two things that are intended by it, viz. his satisfaction, and his merit. All is done by the price that Christ lays down. But the price that Christ laid down does two things. It pays our debt, and so it satisfies. By its intrinsic value, and by the agreement between the Father and the Son, it procures a title for us to happiness, and so it merits. The satisfaction of Christ is to free us from misery, and the merit of Christ is to purchase happiness for us. The word purchase, as it is used with respect to the purchase of Christ, is taken either more strictly or more largely. It is oftentimes used more strictly, to signify only the merit of Christ. And sometimes more largely, to signify both his satisfaction and merit. Indeed most of the words which are used in this affair have various significations. Thus sometimes divines use merit in this affair for the whole price that Christ offered, both satisfactory, and also positively meritorious. And so the word satisfaction is sometimes used, not only for his propitiation, but also for his meritorious obedience. For in some sense, not only suffering the penalty, but positively obeying, is needful to satisfy the law. The reason of this various use of these terms seems to be, that satisfaction and merit do not differ so much really as relatively. They both consist in paying a valuable price, a price of infinite value. But only that price, as it respects a debt to be paid, is called satisfaction. And as it respects a positive good to be obtained, is called merit. The difference between paying a debt, and making a positive purchase is more relative than it is essential. He who lays down a price to pay a debt, does in some sense make a purchase. He purchases liberty from the obligation. And he who lays down a price to purchase a good, does as it were make satisfaction. He satisfies the conditional demands of him to whom he pays it. This may suffice concerning what is meant by the purchase of Christ.

SECTION II

General Observations concerning those things by which this purchase was made

I NOW proceed to some general observations concerning those things by which this purchase was made. — And here,

I. I would observe, that whatever in Christ had the nature of satisfaction it was by virtue of the suffering or humiliation that was in it. But whatever had the nature of merit, it was by virtue of the obedience or righteousness there was in it. The satisfaction of Christ consists in his answering the demands of the law on man, which were consequent on the breach of the law. These were answered by suffering the penalty of the law. The merit of Christ consists in what he did to answer the demands of the law, which were prior to man's breach of the law, or to fulfill what the law demanded before man sinned, which was obedience. The satisfaction or propitiation of Christ consists either in his suffering evil, or his being subject to abasement. For Christ did not only make satisfaction by proper suffering, but by whatever had the nature of humiliation, and abasement of circumstances. Thus Christ made satisfaction for sin, by continuing under the power of death, while he lay buried in the grave, though neither his body nor soul properly endured any suffering after he was dead. Whatever Christ was subject to that was the judicial fruit of sin, had the nature of satisfaction for sin. But not only proper suffering, but all abasement and depression of the state and circumstances of mankind below its primitive honor and dignity, such as his body's remaining under death, and body and soul remaining separate, and other things that might be mentioned, are the judicial fruits of sin. And all that Christ did in his state of humiliation, that had the nature of obedience or moral virtue or goodness in it, in one respect or another had the nature of merit in it, and was part of the price with which he purchased happiness for the elect.

2. I would observe, that both Christ's satisfaction for sin, and also his meriting happiness by his righteousness, were carried on through the whole time of his humiliation. Christ's satisfaction for sin was not only by his last sufferings, though it was principally by them. But all his sufferings, and all the humiliation that he was subject to from the first moment of his incarnation to his resurrection, were propitiatory or satisfactory. Christ's satisfaction was chiefly by his death, because his sufferings and humiliation in that were greatest. But all his other sufferings, and all his other humiliation, all along had the nature of satisfaction. So had the mean circumstances in which he was born. His being born in such a low condition, was to make satisfaction for sin. His being born of a poor virgin, in a stable, and his being laid in a manger, his taking the human nature upon him in its low state, and under those infirmities brought upon it by the fall, his being born in the form of sinful flesh, had the nature of satisfaction. And so all his sufferings in his infancy and childhood, and all that labor, and contempt, and reproach, and temptation, and difficulty of any kind, or that he suffered through the whole course of his life, was of a propitiatory and satisfactory nature. And so his purchase of happiness by his righteousness was also carried on through the whole time of his humiliation until his resurrection, not only in that obedience he performed through the course of his life, but also in the obedience he performed in laying down his life.

3. It was by the same things that Christ both satisfied God's justice, and also purchased eternal happiness. This satisfaction and purchase of Christ were not only both carried on through the whole time of Christ's humiliation, but they were both carried on by the same things. He did not make satisfaction by some things that he did, and then work out a righteousness by other different

things. But in the same acts by which he wrought out righteousness, he also made satisfaction, but only taken in a different relation. One and the same act of Christ, considered with respect to the obedience there was in it, was part of his righteousness, and purchased heaven, but considered with respect to the self-denial, and difficulty, and humiliation, with which he performed it, had the nature of satisfaction for sin, and procured our pardon. Thus his going about doing good, preaching the gospel, and teaching his disciples, was a part of his righteousness, and purchase of heaven, as it was done in obedience to the Father. And the same was a part of his satisfaction, as he did it with great labor, trouble, and weariness, and under great temptations, exposing himself hereby to reproach and contempt. So his laying down his life had the nature of satisfaction to God's offended justice, considered as his bearing our punishment in our stead: but considered as an act of obedience to God, who had given him this command, that he should lay down his life for sinners, it was a part of his righteousness, and purchase of heaven, and as much the principal part of his righteousness as it was the principal part of his satisfaction. And so to instance in his circumcision, what he suffered in that, had the nature of satisfaction. The blood that was shed in his circumcision was propitiatory blood. But as it was a conformity to the law of Moses, it was part of his meritorious righteousness. Though it was not properly the act of his human nature, he being an infant. Yet it being what the human nature was the subject of, and being the act of that person, it was accepted as an act of his obedience, as our Mediator. And so even his being born in such a low condition, had the nature of satisfaction, by reason of the humiliation that was in it, and also of righteousness, as it was the act of his person in obedience to the Father, and what the human nature was the subject of, and what the will of the human nature did acquiesce in, though there was no act of the will of the human nature prior to it.

These things may suffice to have observed in the general concerning the purchase Christ made of redemption.

SECTION III

The obedience and sufferings by which Christ purchased redemption particularly considered.

I NOW proceed to speak more particularly of those things which Christ did, and was the subject of, during the time of his humiliation, whereby this purchase was made. — And the nature of the purchase of Christ, as it has been explained, leads us to consider these things under a two-fold view, viz.

1. With respect to his righteousness, which appeared in them.

2 With respect to the sufferings and humiliation that he was subject to in them in our stead.

§ I. I will consider the things that passed during the time of Christ's humiliation, with respect to the obedience and righteousness that he exercised in them. And this is subject to a threefold distribution. I shall therefore consider his obedience, 1. With respect to the laws which he obeyed.

2. With respect to the different stages of his life in which he performed it.

3. With respect to the virtues he exercised in his obedience.

I. The first distribution of the acts of Christ's righteousness is with respect to the laws which Christ obeyed in that righteousness which he performed. But here it must be observed in general, that all

the precepts which Christ obeyed may be reduced to one law, and that is that which the apostle calls the law of works, Romans 3:27. Every command that Christ obeyed may be reduced to that great and everlasting law of God that is contained in the covenant of works, that eternal rule of right which God had established between himself and mankind. Christ came into the world to fulfill and answer the covenant of works, that is, the covenant that is to stand forever as a rule of judgment. And that is the covenant that we had broken, and that was the covenant that must be fulfilled. This law of works indeed includes all the laws of God which ever have been given to mankind. For it is a general rule of the law of works, and indeed of the law of nature, that God is to be obeyed, and that he must be submitted to in whatever positive precept he is pleased to give us. It is a rule of the law of works, that men should obey their earthly parents. And it is certainly as much a rule of the same law, that we should obey our heavenly Father. And so the law of works requires obedience to all positive commands of God. It required Adam's obedience to that positive command, not to eat of the forbidden fruit. And it required obedience of the Jews to all the positive commands of their institution When God commanded Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh, the law of works required him to obey. And so it required Christ's obedience to all the positive commands which God gave him.

But, more particularly, the commands of God which Christ obeyed, were of three kinds. They were either such as he was subject to merely as man, or such as he was subject to as he was a Jew, or such as he was subject to purely as Mediator.

1. He obeyed those commands which he was subject to merely as man. And they were the commands of the moral law, which was the same with that which was given at Mount Sinai, written in two tables of stone, which are obligatory on mankind of all nations and all ages of the world.

2. He obeyed all those laws he was subject to as he was a Jew. Thus he was subject to the ceremonial law, and was conformed to it. He was conformed to it in his being circumcised the eighth day. And he strictly obeyed it in going up to Jerusalem to the temple three times a year. At least after he was come to the age of twelve years, which seems to have been the age when the males began to go up to the temple. And so Christ constantly attended the service of the temple, and of the synagogues. To this head of his obedience to the law that he was subject to as a Jew, may be reduced his submission to John's baptism. For it was a special command to the Jews, to go forth to John the Baptist, and be baptized of him. And therefore Christ being a Jew, was subject to this command. And therefore, when he came to be baptized of John, and John objected, that he had more need to come to him to be baptized of him, he gives this reason for it, that it was needful that he should do it, that he might fulfill all righteousness. See Matthew 3:13-15.

3. Another law that Christ was subject to was the mediatorial law, which contained those commands of God to which he was subject, not merely as man, nor yet as a Jew, but which related purely to his mediatorial office. Such were the commands which the Father gave him, to teach such doctrines, to preach the gospel, to work such miracles, to call such disciples, to appoint such ordinances, and finally to lay down his life. For he did all these things in obedience to commands he had received of the Father, as he often tells us. And these commands he was not subject to merely as man, for they did not belong to other men. Nor yet was he subject to them as a Jew. For they were no part of the Mosaic law; but they were commands that he had received of the Father, that purely respected the work he was to do in the world in his mediatorial office. And it

is to be observed, that Christ's righteousness, by which he merited heaven for himself, and all who believe in him, consists principally in his obedience to this mediatorial law. For in fulfilling this law consisted his chief work and business in the world. The history of the evangelists is chiefly taken up in giving an account of his obedience to this law. And this part of his obedience was that which was attended with the greatest difficulty of all. And therefore his obedience in it was most meritorious. What Christ had to do in the world by virtue of his being Mediator, was infinitely more difficult than what he had to do merely as a man, or as a Jew. To his obedience to this mediatorial law belongs his going through his last sufferings, beginning with his agony in the garden, and ending with his resurrection. As the obedience of the first Adam, wherein his righteousness would have consisted, if he had stood, would have mainly consisted, not in his obedience to the moral law, to which he was subject merely as man, but in his obedience to that special law that he was subject to as moral head and surety of mankind, even the command of abstaining from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So the obedience of the second Adam, wherein his righteousness consists, lies mainly, not in his obedience to the law that he was subject to merely as man, but to that special law which he was subject to in his office as Mediator and surety for man.

Before I proceed to the next distribution of Christ's righteousness, I would observe three things concerning Christ's obedience to these laws.

(1.) He performed that obedience to them which was in every respect perfect. It was universal as to the kinds of laws that he was subject to. He obeyed each of these three laws. And it was universal with respect to every individual precept contained in these laws, and it was perfect as to each command. It was perfect as to positive transgressions avoided. For he never transgressed in one instance. He was guilty of no sin of commission. And it was perfect with respect to the work commanded. He perfected the whole work that each command required, and never was guilty of any sin of omission. And it was perfect with respect to the principle from which he obeyed. His heart was perfect. His principles were wholly right. There was no corruption in his heart. And it was perfect with respect to the ends he acted for. For he never had any by ends, but aimed perfectly at such ends as the law of God required. And it was perfect with respect to the manner of performance. Every circumstance of each act was perfectly conformed to the command. And it was perfect with respect to the degree of the performance. He acted wholly up to the rule. And it was perfect with respect to the constancy of obedience. He did not only perfectly obey sometimes, but constantly without any interruption. And it was perfect with respect to perseverance. He held out in perfect obedience to the very end, through all the changes he passed through, and all the trials that were before him. The meritoriousness of Christ's obedience, depends on the perfection of it. If it had failed in any instance of perfection, it could not have been meritorious. For imperfect obedience is not accepted as any obedience at all in the sight of the law of works, which was that law that Christ was subject to. For that is not accepted as an obedience to a law that does not answer that law.

(2.) The next thing I would observe of Christ's obedience is, that it was performed through the greatest trials and temptations that ever any obedience was. His obedience was attended with the greatest difficulties, and most extreme abasement and sufferings that ever any obedience was, which was another thing that rendered it more meritorious and thank worthy. To obey another when his commands are easy, is not so worthy, as it is to obey when it cannot be done without great difficulty.

(3.) He performed this obedience with infinite respect to God, and the honor of his law. The obedience he performed was with infinitely greater love to God, and regard to his authority, than the angels perform their obedience with. The angels perform their obedience with that love which is perfect, with sinless perfection. But Christ did not do so, but he performed his obedience with much greater love than the angels do theirs, even infinite love. For though the human nature of Christ was not capable of love absolutely infinite, yet Christ's obedience that was performed in that human nature, is not to be looked upon as merely the obedience of the human nature, but the obedience of his person, as God-man. And there was infinite love of the person of Christ manifest in that obedience. And this, together with the infinite dignity of the person that obeyed, rendered his obedience infinitely meritorious.

II. The second distribution of the acts of Christ's obedience, is with respect to the different parts of his life, wherein they were performed. And in this respect they may be divided into those which were performed in private life, and those which were performed in his public ministry.

First. Those acts he performed during his private life. He was perfectly obedient in his childhood. He infinitely differed from other children, who as soon as they begin to act, begin to sin and rebel. He was subject to his earthly parents, though he was Lord of all, Luke 2:51. He was found about his Father's business at twelve years of age in the temple, Luke 2:42. He then began that work that he had to do in fulfillment of the mediatorial law, which the Father had given him. He continued his private life for about thirty years, dwelling at Nazareth in the house of his reputed father Joseph, where he served God in a private capacity, and in following a mechanical trade, the business of a carpenter.

Second. Those acts which he performed during his public ministry, which began when he was about thirty years of age, and continued for the three last years and an half of his life. Most of the history of the evangelists is taken up in giving an account of what passed during these three years and an half. So is all the history of the Evangelist Matthew, excepting the first two chapters. So is the whole of the history of the Evangelist Mark. It begins and ends with it. And so also is all the gospel of John, and all the gospel of Luke, excepting the two first chapters, excepting also what we find in the evangelists concerning the ministry of John the Baptist. Christ's first appearing in his public is what is often called his coming in Scripture. Thus John speaks of Christ's coming as what is yet to be, though he had been born long before.

Concerning the public ministry of Christ, I would observe the following things. 1. The forerunner of it. 2. The manner of his first entering upon it. 3. The works in which he was employed during the course of it, and, 4. The manner of his finishing it.

1. The forerunner of Christ's coming in his public ministry was John the Baptist. He came preaching repentance for the remission of sins, to make way for Christ's coming, agreeable to the prophecies of him, Isaiah 40:3-5, and Matthew 4:5-6. It is supposed that John the Baptist began his ministry about three years and an half before Christ, so that John's ministry and Christ's put together, made seven years, which was the last of Daniel's weeks. And this time is intended in Daniel 9:27, "He will confirm the covenant with many for one week." Christ came in the midst of this week, viz. in the beginning of the last half of it, or the last three years and an half, as Daniel foretold, as in the verse just now quoted, "and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

John Baptist's ministry consisted principally in preaching the law, to awaken men and convince them of sin, to prepare men for the coming of Christ, to comfort them, as the law is to prepare the heart for the entertainment of the gospel. A very remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God attended John's ministry. And the effect of it was that Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were awakened, convinced, went out to him, and submitted to his baptism, confessing their sins. John is spoken of as the greatest of all the prophets who came before Christ, Matthew 11:11, "Among those that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist," i.e. he had the most honorable office. He was as the morning star, which is the harbinger of the approaching day, and forerunner of the rising sun. The other prophets were stars that were to give light in the night. But we have heard how those stars went out on the approach of the gospel day. But now the coming of Christ being very nigh, the morning star comes before him, the brightest of all the stars, as John the Baptist was the greatest of all the prophets. And when Christ came in his public ministry, the light of that morning star decreased too. As we see, when the sun rises, it diminishes the light of the morning star. So John the Baptist says of himself, John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease." And soon after Christ began his public ministry, John the Baptist was put to death. As the morning star is visible a little while after the sun is risen, yet soon goes out.

2. The next thing to be taken notice of is Christ's entrance on his public ministry, which was by baptism, followed with the temptation in the wilderness. His baptism was as it were his solemn inauguration, by which he entered on his ministry, and was attended with his being anointed with the Holy Ghost, in a solemn and visible manner, the Holy Ghost descending upon him in a visible shape like a dove, attended with a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matthew 3:16-17.

After this he was led by the devil into the wilderness. Satan made a violent onset upon him at his first entrance on his work. And now he had a remarkable trial of his obedience, but he got the victory. He who had such success with the first Adam, had none with the second.

3. I would take notice of the work in which Christ was employed during his ministry. And here are three things chiefly to be taken notice of, viz. his preaching, his working miracles, and his calling and appointing disciples and ministers of his kingdom.

(1.) His preaching the gospel. Great part of the work of his public ministry consisted in this. And much of that obedience by which he purchased salvation for us, was in his speaking those things which the Father commanded him. He more clearly and abundantly revealed the mind and will of God, than ever it had been revealed before. He came from the bosom of the Father, and perfectly knew his mind, and was in the best capacity to reveal it. As the sun, as soon as it is risen, begins to shine. So Christ, as soon as he came into his public ministry, began to enlighten the world with his doctrine. As the law was given at Mount Sinai, so Christ delivered his evangelical doctrine, full of blessings, and not curses, to a multitude on a mountain, as we have an account in Matthew, Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34 and Matthew 7:1-29. When he preached, he did not teach as the scribes, but he taught as one having authority, so that his hearers were astonished at his doctrine. He did not reveal the mind and will of God in the style which the prophets used to preach, as not speaking their own words, but the words of another, and used to speak in such a style as this, "Thus saith the Lord," but Christ, in such a style as this, "I say unto you," thus or thus, "Verily,

verily, I say unto you." He delivered his doctrines, not only as the doctrines of God the Father, but as his own doctrines. He gave forth his commands, not as the prophets were wont to do, as God's commands, but as his own commands. He spoke in such a style as this, "This is my commandment," John 15:12. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," John 15:14.

(2.) Another thing that Christ was employed in during the course of his ministry, was working miracles. Concerning which we may observe several things. Their multitude. Besides particular instances, we often have an account of multitudes coming at once with diseases, and his healing them.

They were works of mercy. In them were displayed not only his infinite power and greatness, but his infinite mercy and goodness. He went about doing good, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and the proper use of their limbs to the lame and halt, feeding the hungry, cleansing the leprous, and raising the dead.

They were almost all of them such as had been spoken of as the peculiar works of God, in the Old Testament. So with respect to stilling the sea, Psalms 107:29, "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." So as to walking on the sea in a storm, Job 9:8, "Which alone treadeth upon the waves of the sea." So as to casting out devils, Psalms 74:14, "Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces." So as to feeding a multitude in a wilderness, Deuteronomy 8:16, "Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna." So as to telling man's thoughts, Amos 4:13, "Lo, he that declareth unto man what is his thought — the Lord, the God of hosts is his name." So as to raising the dead, Psalms 68:20, "Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." So as to opening the eyes of the blind, Psalms 146:8, "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." So as to healing the sick, Psalms 103:3, "Who healeth all thy diseases." So as to lifting up those who are bowed together, Psalms 146:8, "The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down."

They were in general such works as were images of the great work which he came to work on man's heart, representing that inward, spiritual cleansing, healing, renovation, and resurrection, which all his redeemed are the subjects of.

He wrought them in such a manner as to show, that he did them by his own power, and not by the power of another, as the other prophets did. They were wont to work all their miracles in the name of the Lord, but Christ wrought in his own name. Moses was forbidden to enter into Canaan, because he seemed by his speech to assume the honor of working only one miracle to himself. Nor did Christ work miracles as the apostles did, who wrought them all in the name of Christ, but he wrought them in his own name, and by his own authority and will. Thus, saith he, "I will, be thou clean," Matthew 8:3. And in the same strain he put the question, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Matthew 9:28.

(3.) Another thing that Christ did in the course of his ministry, was to call his disciples. He called many disciples. There were many that he employed as ministers. He sent seventy disciples at one time in this work: But there were twelve that he set apart as apostles, who were the grand ministers of his kingdom, and as it were the twelve foundations of his church. See Revelation 21:14. These were the main instruments of setting up his kingdom in the world, and therefore shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

4. I would observe how he finished his ministry. — And this was,

(1.) In giving his dying counsels to his disciples, and all that should be his disciples, which we have recorded particularly in John's gospel (John 14:1-31; John 15:1-27; John 16:1-33).

(2.) In instituting a solemn memorial of his death. This he did in instituting the sacrament of the Lord's supper, wherein we have a representation of his body broken, and of his blood shed.

(3.) In offering up himself, as God's high priest, a sacrifice to God, which he did in his last sufferings. This act he did as God's minister, as God's anointed priest. And it was the greatest act of his public ministry, the greatest act of his obedience, by which he purchased heaven for believers. The priests of old used to do many other things as God's ministers. But then were they in the highest execution of their office when they were actually offering sacrifice on the altar. So the greatest thing that Christ did in the execution of his priestly office, and the greatest thing that he ever did, and the greatest thing that ever was done, was the offering up himself a sacrifice to God. Herein he was the anti-type of all that had been done by all the priests, and in all their sacrifices and offerings, from the beginning of the world.

III. The third distribution of the acts by which Christ purchased redemption, regards the virtues that Christ exercised and manifested in them. And here I would observe that Christ, in doing the work that he had to do here in the world for our redemption, exercised every possible virtue and grace. Indeed there are some particular virtues that sinful man may have, that were not in Christ, not from any want or defect of virtue, but because his virtue was perfect and without defect. Such is the virtue of repentance, and brokenness of heart for sin, and mortification, and denying of lust. Those virtues were not in Christ, because he had no sin of his own to repent of, nor any lust to deny. But all virtues which do not presuppose sin, were in him, and that in a higher degree than ever they were in any other man, or any mere creature. Every virtue in him was perfect. Virtue itself was greater in him than in any other. And it was under greater advantages to shine in him than in any other. Strict virtue shines most when most tried. But never any virtue had such trials as Christ's had. The virtue that Christ exercised in the work he did, may be divided into three sorts, viz. the virtues which more immediately respect God, those which immediately respect himself, and those which immediately respect men.

1. Those virtues which more immediately respect God, appeared in Christ in the work that he did for our redemption. There appeared in him an holy fear and reverence towards God the Father. Christ had a greater trial of his virtue in this respect than any other had, from the honorableness of his person. This was the temptation of the angels that fell, to cast off their worship of God, and reverence of his majesty, that they were beings of such exalted dignity and worthiness themselves. But Christ was infinitely more worthy and honorable than they. For he was the eternal Son of God, and his person was equal to the person of God the Father. And yet, as he had taken on him the office of Mediator, and the nature of man, he was full of reverence towards God. He had ordered him in the most reverential manner time after time. So he manifested a wonderful love towards God. The angels give great testimonies of their love towards God, in their constancy and agility in doing the will of God. And many saints have given great testimonies of their love, who from love to God, have endured great labors and sufferings. But none ever gave such testimonies of love to God as Christ has given. None ever performed such a labor of love as he, and suffered so much from love to God. So he manifested the most wonderful submission to the will of God. Never was anyone's submission so tried as his was. So he manifested the most wonderful spirit of

obedience that ever was manifested.

2. In this work he most wonderfully manifested those virtues which more immediately respected himself, as particularly humility, patience, and contempt of the world. Christ, though he was the most excellent and honorable of all men, yet was the most humble. Yea, he was the most humble of all creatures. No angel or man ever equaled him in humility, though he was the highest of all creatures in dignity and honorableness. Christ would have been under the greatest temptations to pride, if it had been possible for anything to be a temptation to him. The temptation of the angels that fell was the dignity of their nature, and the honorableness of their circumstances. But Christ was infinitely more honorable than they. The human nature of Christ was so honored as to be in the same person with the eternal Son of God, who was equal with God. And yet that human nature was not at afflicted up with pride. Nor was the man Christ Jesus at all lifted up with pride with all those wonderful works which he wrought, of healing the sick, curing the blind, lame, and maimed, and raising the dead. And though he knew that God had appointed him to be the king over heaven and earth, angels and men, as he says, Matthew 11:27, “All things are delivered unto me of my Father.” Though he knew he was such an infinitely honorable person, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and though he knew he was the heir of God the Father’s kingdom, yet such was his humility, that he did not disdain to be abased and depressed down into lower and viler circumstances and sufferings than ever any other elect creature was, so that he became least of all, and lowest of all. The proper trial and evidence of humility, is stooping or complying with those acts or circumstances, when called to it, which are very low, and contain great abasement. But none ever stooped so low as Christ, if we consider either the infinite height that he stooped from, or the great depth to which he stooped. Such was his humility, that though he knew his infinite worthiness of honor, and of being honored ten thousand times as much as the highest prince on earth, or angel in heaven. Yet he did not think it too much when called to it, to be bound as a cursed malefactor, and to become the laughingstock and spitting-stock of the vilest of men, and to be crowned with thorns, and to have a mock robe put upon him, and to be crucified like a slave and malefactor, and as one of the meanest and worst of vagabonds and miscreants, and an accursed enemy of God and men, who was not fit to live on the earth. And this not for himself, but for some of the meanest and vilest of creatures, some of those accursed wretches that crucified him. Was not this a wonderful manifestation of humility, when he cheerfully and most freely submitted to this abasement?

And, how did his patience shine forth under all the terrible sufferings which he endured, when he was dumb, and opened not his mouth, but went as a lamb to the slaughter, and was like a patient lamb under all the sufferings he endured from first to last!

And, what contempt of the glory of this world was there, when he rather chose this contempt, and meanness, and suffering, than to wear a temporal crown, and be invested with the external glories of an earthly prince, as the multitude often solicited him!

3. Christ, in the work which he wrought out, in a wonderful manner exercised those virtues which more immediately respect other men. And these may be summed up under two heads, viz. meekness, and love.

Christ’s meekness was his humble calmness of spirit under the provocations that he met with. None ever met with so great provocations as he did. The greatness of provocation lies in two

things, viz. in the degree of opposition by which the provocation is given. And secondly, in the degree of the unreasonableness of that opposition, or in its being very causeless, and without reason, and the great degree of obligation to the contrary. Now, if we consider both these things, no man ever met with such provocations as Christ did, when he was upon earth. If we consider how much he was hated, what abuses he suffered from the vilest of men, how great his sufferings from men were, and how spiteful and how contemptuous they were, in offering him these abuses. And also consider how causeless and unreasonable these abuses were, how undeserving he was of them, and how much deserving of the contrary, viz. of love, and honor, and good treatment at their hands. I say, if we consider these things, no man ever met with a thousandth part of the provocation that Christ met with from men. And yet how meek was he under all! How composed and quiet his spirit! How far from being in a ruffle and tumult! When he was reviled, he reviled not again. And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. No appearance was there of a revengeful spirit. On the contrary, what a spirit of forgiveness did he exhibit! So that he fervently and effectually prayed for their forgiveness, when they were in the highest act of provocation that ever they perpetrated, viz. nailing him to the cross, Luke 23:34, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And never did there appear such an instance of love to men. Christ’s love to men that he showed when on earth, and especially in going through his last sufferings, and offering up his life and soul under those sufferings, which was his greatest act of love, was far beyond all parallel. There have been very remarkable manifestations of love in some of the saints, as in the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John, and others. But the love to men that Christ showed when on earth, as much exceeded the love of all other men, as the ocean exceeds a small stream. And it is to be observed, that all the virtues which appeared in Christ shone brightest in the close of his life, under the trials he met with then. Eminent virtue always shows brightest in the fire. Pure gold shows its purity chiefly in the furnace. It was chiefly under those trials which Christ underwent in the close of his life, that his love to God, his honor of God’s majesty, and his regard to the honor of his law, and his spirit of obedience, and his humility, and contempt of the world, and his patience, and his meekness, and his spirit of forgiveness towards men, appeared. Indeed everything that Christ did to work out redemption for us appears mainly in the close of his life. Here mainly is his satisfaction for sin, and here chiefly is his merit of eternal life for sinners, and here chiefly appears the brightness of his example, which he hath set us to follow.

Thus we have taken a brief view of the things whereby the purchase of redemption was made with respect to his righteousness that appeared in theme. — I proceed now,

§ II. To take a view of them with respect to the satisfaction that he thereby made for sin, or the sufferings and humiliation that he was the subject of in them on our account. And here,

I. He was subject to uncommon humiliation and sufferings in his infancy. He was born to that end that he might die. And therefore he did as it were begin to die as soon as he was born. His mother suffered in an uncommon manner in hearing him. When her travail came upon her, it is said, “there was no room in the inn,” Luke 2:7. She was forced to betake herself to a stable. And therefore Christ was born in the place of the bringing forth of beasts. Thus he suffered in his birth, as though he had been meaner and viler than a man, and not possessed of the dignity of the human nature, but had been of the rank of the brute creatures. And we may conclude, that his mother’s circumstances in other respects were proportionally strait and difficult, and that she was destitute of the conveniences necessary for so young an infant which others were wont to have. For want of

which the newborn babe without doubt suffered much. And besides, he was persecuted in his infancy. They began to seek his life as soon as he was born. Herod, the chief man of the land, was so engaged to kill him, that in order to it, he killed all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under. And Christ suffered banishment in his infancy, was driven out of his native country into Egypt. And without doubt suffered much by being carried so long a journey, when he was so young, into a strange country.

II. Christ was subject to great humiliation in his private life at Nazareth. He there led a servile obscure life, In a mean laborious occupation. For he is called not only the carpenter's son, but the carpenter, Mark 6:3, " Is not this the carpenter, the brother of James, and Joses, and Juda, and Simon?" He, by hard labor, earned his bread before he ate it, and so suffered that curse which God pronounced on Adam, Genesis 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Let us consider how great a degree of humiliation the glorious Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth, was subject to in this, that for about thirty years he should live a private obscure life among laboring men, and all this while be overlooked, and not taken notice of in the world, as more than other common laborers. Christ's humiliation in some respects was greater in private life than in the time of his public ministry. There were many manifestations of his glory in the word he preached, and the great miracles he wrought. But the first thirty years of his life he spent among mean ordinary men, as it were in silence, without those manifestations of his glory, or anything to make him to be taken notice of more than any ordinary mechanic, but only the spotless purity and eminent holiness of his life, and that was in a great measure hid in obscurity, so that he was little taken notice of until after his baptism.

III. Christ was the subject of great humiliation and suffering during his public life, from his baptism until the night wherein he was betrayed. As particularly,

1. He suffered great poverty, so that he had not "where to lay his head," Matthew 8:20, and commonly used to lodge abroad in the open air, for want of a shelter to betake himself to, as you will see is manifest, if you compare the following places together, which I shall but name to you, even Matthew 8:20, and John 18:1-2, and Luke 21:37, and Luke 22:39. So that what was spoken of Christ in Song of Solomon 5:2, "My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night," was literally fulfilled. And through his poverty he doubtless was often pinched with hunger, and thirst, and cold. We read Matthew 4:2, that he was an hungered. And so again in Matthew 21:18. His mother and natural relations were poor, and not able to help him. And he was maintained by the charity of some of his disciples while he lived. So we read in Luke 8:1-56 at the beginning, of certain women that followed him, and ministered to him of their substance. He was so poor, that he was not able to pay the tribute that was demanded of him, without the miraculous coming of a fish to bring him the money out of the sea in his mouth. See Matthew 17:27. And when he ate at his last Passover, it was not at his own charge, but at the charge of another, as appears by Luke 22:7, etc. And from his poverty he had no grave of his own to be buried in. It was the manner of the Jews, unless they were very poor, and were not able, to prepare themselves a sepulcher while they lived. But Christ had no land of his own, though he was possessor of heaven and earth. And therefore was buried by Joseph of Arimathea's charity, and in his tomb, which he had prepared for himself.

2. He suffered great hatred and reproach. He was despised and rejected of men. He was by most esteemed a poor insignificant person, one of little account, slighted for his low parentage, and his mean city Nazareth. He was reproached as a glutton and drunkard, a friend of publicans and sinners, was called a deceiver of the people, sometimes was called a madman, and a Samaritan, and one possessed with a devil, John 7:20; John 8:48; John 10:20. He was called a blasphemer, and was accounted by many a wizard, or one that wrought miracles by the black art, and by communication with Beelzebub. They excommunicated him, and agreed to excommunicate any man that should own him, as John 9:22. They wished him dead, and were continually seeking to murder him, sometimes by force, and sometimes by craft. They often took up stones to stone him, and once led him to the brow of a hill, intending to throw him down the precipice, to dash him in pieces against the rocks.

He was thus hated and reproached by his own visible people, John 1:11, “He came to his own, and his own received him not.” And he was principally despised and hated by those who were in chief repute, and were their greatest men. And the hatred wherewith he was hated was general. Into whatever part of the land he went, he met with hatred and contempt. He met with these in Capernaum, and when he went to Jericho, when he went to Jerusalem, which was the holy city, when he went to the temple to worship, and also in Nazareth, his own city, and among his own relations, and his old neighbors.

3. He suffered the buffetings of Satan in an uncommon manner. We read of one time in particular, when he had a long conflict with the devil, when he was in the wilderness forty days, With nothing but wild beasts and devils, and was so exposed to the devil’s power, that he was bodily carried about by him from place to place, while he was otherwise in a very suffering state. And so much for the humiliation and suffering of Christ’s public life, from his baptism to the night wherein he was betrayed.

IV. I come now to his last humiliation and sufferings, from the evening of the night wherein he was betrayed to his resurrection. And here was his greatest humiliation and suffering, by which principally he made satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men. First, his life was sold by one of his own disciples for thirty pieces of silver, which was the price of the life of a servant, as you may see in Exodus 21:32. Then he was in that dreadful agony in the garden. There came such a dismal gloom upon his soul, that he began to be sorrowful and very heavy, and said, his “soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and was sore amazed.” So violent was the agony of his soul, as to force the blood through the pores of his skin, so that while his soul was overwhelmed with amazing sorrow, his body was all clotted with blood. The disciples, who used to be as his friends and family, at this time, above all, appeared cold towards him, and unconcerned for him, at the same time that his Father’s face was hid from him. Judas, to whom Christ had been so very merciful, and treated as one of his family, or familiar friends, comes and betrays him in the most deceitful, treacherous manner. The officers and soldiers apprehend and bind him. His disciples forsake him, and flee. His own best friends do not stand by him to comfort him, in this time of his distress. He is led away as a malefactor to appear before the priests and scribes, his venomous, mortal enemies, that they might sit as his judges, who sat up all night, to have the pleasure of insulting him, now they had got him into their hands. But because they aimed at nothing short of his life, they set themselves to find some color to put him to death, and seek for witnesses against him. When none appeared, they set some to bear false witness. And when their

witness did not agree together, then they go to examining him, to catch something out of his own mouth. They hoped he would say, that he was the Son of God. and then they thought they should have enough. But because they see they are not like to obtain it without it, they then go to force him to say it, by adjuring him in the name of God, to say whether he was or not. And when he confessed that he was, then they supposed they had enough. And then it was a time of rejoicing with them, which they show, by falling upon Christ, and spitting in his face, and blindfolding him, and striking him in the face with the palms of their hands, and then bidding him prophesy who it was that struck him, thus ridiculing him for pretending to be a prophet. And the very servants have a hand in the sport, Mark 14:65, “And the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.”

During the sufferings of that night, Peter, one of the chief of his own disciples, instead of standing by him to comfort him, appears ashamed to own him, and denies and renounces him with oaths and curses. And after the chief priests and elders had finished the night in so shamefully abusing him, when the morning was come, which was the morning of the most wonderful day that ever was, they led him away to Pilate, to be condemned to death by him, because they had not the power of life and death in their own hands. He is brought before Pilate’s judgment seat, and there the priests and elders accuse him as a traitor. And when Pilate, upon examining into the matter, declared he found no fault in him, the Jews were but the more fierce and violent to have him condemned. Upon which Pilate, after clearing him, very unjustly brings him upon a second trial, and then not finding anything against him, acquits him again. Pilate treats him as a poor worthless fellow, but is ashamed on so little pretense to condemn him as a traitor. And then he was sent to Herod to be tried by him, and was brought before Herod’s judgment seat. And his enemies followed, and virulently accused him before Herod. Herod does not condemn him as a traitor, of one that would set up for a king, but looks upon him as Pilate did, as a poor worthless creature, not worthy to be taken notice of, and does but make a mere laugh of the Jews’ accusing him as a dangerous person to Caesar, as one that was in danger of setting up to be a king against him, and therefore, in derision, dresses him up in a mock robe, and makes sport of him, and sends him back through the streets of Jerusalem to Pilate, with the mock robe on.

Then the Jews prefer Barabbas before him, and are instant and violent with loud voices to Pilate, to crucify him. So Pilate, after he had cleared him twice, and Herod once, very unrighteously brings him on trial the third time, to try if he could not find something against him sufficient to crucify him. Christ was stripped and scoured. Thus he gave his back to the smiter. After that, though Pilate still declared that he found no fault in him. Yet so unjust was he, that for fear of the Jews he delivered Christ to be crucified. But before they execute the sentence, his spiteful and cruel enemies take the pleasure of another spell of mocking him. They get round him, and make a set business of it. They stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe, and a reed in his hand, and a crown of thorns on his head. Both Jews and Roman soldiers were united in the transaction. They bow the knee before him, and in derision cry, “Hail, king of the Jews!” They spit upon him also, and take the reed out of his hand, and smite him on the head. After this, they led him away to crucify him, and made him carry his own cross, until he sunk under it, his strength being spent. And then they laid it on one Simon a Cyrenian. At length, being come to Mount Calvary, they execute the sentence which Pilate had so unrighteously pronounced. They nail him to his cross by his hands and feet, then raise it erect, and fix one end in the ground, he being still suspended on it by the nails which pierced his hands and feet. And now Christ’s sufferings are come to the extremity.

Now the cup, which he so earnestly prayed that it might pass from him, is come, and he must, he does drink it. In those days crucifixion was the most tormenting kind of death by which any were wont to be executed. There was no death wherein the person expired so much of mere torment. And hence the Roman word, which signifies torment, is taken from this kind of death. — And besides what our Lord endured in this excruciating death in his body, he endured vastly more in his soul. Now was that travail of his soul, of which we read in the prophet. Now it pleased God to bruise him, and to put him to grief. Now he poured out his soul unto death, as in Isaiah 53:1-12. And if the mere forethought of this cup made him sweat blood, how much more dreadful and excruciating must the drinking of it have been! Many martyrs have endured much in their bodies, while their souls have been joyful, and have sung for joy, whereby they have been supported under the sufferings of their outward man, and have triumphed over them. But this was not the case with Christ. He had no such support. But his sufferings were chiefly those of the mind, though the other were extremely great. In his crucifixion Christ did not sweat blood, as he had before, because his blood had vent otherwise, and not because his agony was now not so great. But though he did not sweat blood, yet such was the suffering of his soul, that probably it rent his vitals, as seems probable by this, that when his side was pierced, there came forth blood and water. And so here was a kind of literal fulfillment of that in Psalms 22:14, “I am poured out like water: — my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels.”

Now, under all these sufferings, the Jews still mock him, and wagging their heads say, “Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.” And even the chief priests, scribes, and elders, joined in the cry, saying, “He saved others, himself he cannot save.” And probably the devil at the same time tormented him to the utmost of his power, and hence it is said, Luke 22:53, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

Under these sufferings, Christ having cried out once and again with a loud voice, at last he said, “It is finished,” (John 19:30) “and bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.” And thus was finished the greatest and most wonderful thing that ever was done. Now the angels beheld the most wonderful sight that ever they saw. Now was accomplished the main thing that had been pointed at by the various institutions of the ceremonial law, and by all the typical dispensations, and by all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world.

Christ being thus brought under the power of death, continued under it until the morning of next day but one, and then was finished that great work, the purchase of our redemption, for which such great preparation had been made from the beginning of the world. Then was finished all that was required in order to satisfy the threatenings of the law, and all that was necessary in order to satisfy divine justice. Then the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, even the whole debt was paid. Then was finished the whole of the purchase of eternal life. And now there is no need of anything more to be done towards a purchase of salvation for sinners, nor has ever anything been done since, nor will anything more be done forever and ever.

03.10. Period 3 Christ's Resurrection to the End

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD III FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TO THE END OF THE WORLD

IN discoursing on this subject, we have already shown how the work of redemption was carried on through the first two of the three periods into which we divided the whole space of time from the fall to the end of the world. And we are now come to the third and last period, beginning with Christ's resurrection, and reaching to the end of the world, and would now show how this work was also carried on through this period, from this proposition, that the space of time from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, is all taken up in bringing about the great effect or success of Christ's purchase. Not but that there were great effects and glorious success of Christ's purchase or redemption before, even from the beginning of the generations of men. But all that success of Christ's redemption which was before, was only preparatory, and was by way of anticipation, as some few fruits are gathered before the harvest. There was no more success before Christ came than God saw needful to prepare the way for his coming. The proper time of the success or effect of Christ's purchase of redemption is after the purchase has been made, as the proper time for the world to enjoy the light of the sun is the daytime, after the sun is risen, though we may have some small matter of it reflected from the moon and planets before. And even the success of Christ's redemption while he himself was on earth, was very small in comparison of what it was after the conclusion of his humiliation. But Christ having finished that greatest and most difficult of all works, the work of the purchase of redemption, now is come the time for obtaining the end of it, the glorious effect of it. This is the next work he goes about. Having gone through the whole course of his sufferings and humiliation, there is an end to all things of that nature. He is never to suffer anymore. But now is the time for him to obtain the joy that was set before him. Having made his soul an offering for sin, now is the time for him to see his seed, and to have a portion divided to him with the great, and to divide the spoil with the strong.

One design of Christ in what he did in his humiliation, was to lay a foundation for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom. And now is come the time to effect it, as Christ, a little before his crucifixion, said, John 12:31, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Another design was, to gather together in one all things in Christ. Now is come the time for this also, John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me," which is agreeable to Jacob's prophecy of Christ, that when "Shiloh should come, to him should the gathering of the people be," Genesis 49:10. Another design is the salvation of the elect. Now when his sufferings are finished, and his humiliation is perfected, the time is come for that also, Hebrews 5:8-9, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Another design was, to accomplish by these things great glory to the persons of the Trinity. Now also is come the time for that, John 17:1, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

Another design was the glory of the saints. Now is the time also for this, John 17:2, “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.” And all the dispensations of God’s providence henceforward, even to the final consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and fulfill his end in what he did and suffered upon earth, and to fulfill the joy that was set before him.

INTRODUCTION

BEFORE I enter on the consideration of any particular things accomplished in this period, I would briefly observe some things in general concerning it, and particularly how the times of this period are represented in Scripture.

I. The times of this period, for the most part, are those which in the Old Testament are called the latter days. We often, in the prophets of the Old Testament, read of such and such things that should come to pass in the latter days, and sometimes in the last days. Now these expressions of the prophets are most commonly to be understood of the times of the period that we are now upon. They are called the latter days, and the last days, because this is the last period of the series of God’s provisions on earth, the last period of that great work of providence, the work of redemption, which is as it were the sum of God’s works of providence, the time wherein the church is under the last dispensation of the covenant of grace that ever it will be under on earth.

II. The whole time of this period is sometimes in Scripture called the end of the world, as, 1 Corinthians 10:11, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” And the apostle, Hebrews 9:26, in this expression of the end of the world, means the whole of the gospel day, from the birth of Christ to the finishing of the day of judgment, “but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” This space of time may well be called the end of the world. For this whole time is taken up in bringing things to their great end and issue, to that great issue that God had been preparing the way for, in all the great dispensations of providence, from the first fall of man to this time. Before, things were in a kind of preparatory state, but now they are in a finishing state. It is the winding up of things which is all this while accomplishing. An end is now brought to the former carnal state of things, which by degrees vanishes, and a spiritual state begins to be established, and to be established more and more. First, an end is brought to the former state of the church, which may be called its worldly state, the state wherein it was subject to carnal ordinances, and the rudiments of the world. And then an end is brought to the Jewish state, in the destruction of their city and country. And then, after that, an end is brought to the old heathen empire in Constantine’s time, which is another and further degree of the winding up and finishing of the world. And the next step is the finishing of Satan’s visible kingdom in the world, upon the fall of Antichrist, and the calling of the Jews. And last will come the destruction of the outward frame of the world itself, at the conclusion of the day of judgment. But the world is all this while as it were a finishing, though it comes to an end by several steps and degrees. Heaven and earth began to shake, in order to a dissolution, according to the prophecy of Haggai, before Christ came, that so only those things that cannot be shaken may remain, i.e. that those things that are come to an end may come to an end, and that only those things may remain which are to remain to all eternity.

So, in the first place, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish worship came to an end, to make way for the establishment of that spiritual worship, the worship of the heart, which is to endure to all eternity, John 4:21, “Jesus saith unto the woman, Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.” John 4:23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” This is one instance of the temporary world’s coming to an end, and the eternal world’s beginning. And then, after that, the outward temple, and the outward city Jerusalem, came to an end, to give place to the setting up of the spiritual temple and the spiritual city, which are to last to eternity, which is another instance of removing those things which are ready to vanish away, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. And then, after that, the old heathen empire comes to an end, to make way for the empire of Christ, which shall last to all eternity, which is another step of bringing the temporal world to an end, and of the beginning of the world to come, which is an eternal world. And after that, upon the fall of Antichrist, an end is put to Satan’s visible kingdom on earth, to establish Christ’s kingdom, which is an eternal kingdom, as the prophet Daniel says, Daniel 7:27, “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him,” which is another instance of the ending of the temporary world, and the beginning of the eternal one. And then, lastly, the very frame of this corruptible world shall come to an end, to make way for the church to dwell in another dwelling place, which shall last to eternity, which is the last instance of the same thing.

Because the world is thus coming to an end by various steps and degrees, the apostle perhaps uses this expression, that the ends of the world are come on us, not the end but the ends, of the plural number, as though the world has several endings one after another. The gospel dispensation is the last state of things in the world. And this state is a finishing state. It is all spent in finishing things off which before had been preparing, or abolishing things which before had stood. It is all spent as it were in summing things up, and bringing them to their issues, and their proper fulfillment. Now all the old types are fulfilled, and all the prophecies of all the prophets from the beginning of the world shall be accomplished in this period.

III. That state of things which is attained in the events of this period is called a new heaven and a new earth, Isaiah 65:17-18, “For behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.” And Isaiah 66:22, “For as the new heavens and the new earth which I make, shall remain before me, so shall your seed and your name remain.” See also Isaiah 51:16. As the former state of things, or the old world, by one step after another, is through this period coming to an end, so the new state of things, or the new world, which is a spiritual world, is beginning and setting up. The heaven and earth which are corruptible, are shaking, that the new heavens and new earth, which cannot be shaken, may be established and remain. In consequence of each of these finishings of the old state of things, there is a new beginning of a new and eternal state of things. So was that which accompanied the destruction of Jerusalem, which was an establishing of the spiritual Jerusalem, instead of the literal. So with respect to the destruction of the old heathen empire, and all the other endings of the old state of things, until at length the very outward frame of the old world itself shall come to an

end. And the church shall dwell in a world new to it, or to a great part of it, even heaven, which will be a new habitation. And then shall the utmost be accomplished that is meant by the new heavens and the new earth. See Revelation 21:1. The end of God's creating the world was to prepare a kingdom for his Son (for he is appointed heir of the world), and that he might have the possession of it, and a kingdom in it, which should remain to all eternity. So that, so far forth as the kingdom of Christ is set up in the world, so far is the world brought to its end, and the eternal state of things set up. So far are all the great changes and revolutions of the ages of the world brought to their everlasting issue, and all things come to their ultimate period. So far are the waters of the long channel of divine providence, which has so many branches, and so many windings and turnings, emptied out into their proper ocean, which they have been seeking from the beginning and head of their course, and so are come to their rest. So far as Christ's kingdom is established in the world, so far are things wound up and settled in their everlasting state, and a period put to the course of things in this changeable world. So far are the first heavens and the first earth come to an end, and the new heavens and the new earth, the everlasting heavens and earth, established in their room. This leads me to observe,

IV. That the state of things which is attained by the events of this period, is what is so often called the kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God. We very often read in the New Testament of the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist preached, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and so did Christ, and his disciples after him, referring to something that the Jews in those days expected, and very much talked of, which they called by that name. They seem to have taken their expectation and the name chiefly from that prophecy of Daniel in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel 2:44, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," together with that in Daniel 7:13-14.

Now this kingdom of heaven is that evangelical state of things in his church, and in the world, wherein consists the success of Christ's redemption in this period. There had been often great kingdoms set up before, which were earthly kingdoms, as the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman monarchies. But Christ came to set up the last kingdom, which is not an earthly kingdom, but an heavenly, and so is the kingdom of heaven, John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world." This is the kingdom of which Christ speaks, Luke 22:29, "My Father hath appointed to me a kingdom." This kingdom began soon after Christ's resurrection, and was accomplished in various steps from that time to the end of the world. Sometimes by the kingdom or heaven, is meant that spiritual state of the church which began soon after Christ's resurrection. Sometimes that more perfect state of the church which shall obtain after the downfall of Antichrist. And sometimes that glorious and blessed state to which the church shall be received at the day of judgment, 1 Corinthians 15:50, the apostle, speaking of the resurrection, says, "This I say, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Under this head I would observe several things particularly, for the clearer understanding of What the Scripture says concerning this period.

1. The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is chiefly accomplished by four successive great events, each of which is in Scripture called Christ's coming in his kingdom. The whole success of Christ's redemption is comprehended in one word, viz. his setting up his kingdom. This is chiefly done by four great successive dispensations of providence. And everyone of them is represented in

Scripture as Christ's coming in his kingdom. The first is Christ's appearing in those wonderful dispensations of providence in the apostles' days, in setting up his kingdom, and destroying the enemies of his kingdom, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. This is called Christ's coming in his kingdom, Matthew 16:28, "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." And so it is represented in Matthew 24:1-51. The second is that which was accomplished in Constantine's time, in the destruction of the heathen Roman empire. This is represented as Christ's coming, and is compared to his coming to judgment, in Revelation 6:1-17 at the latter end. The third is that which is to he accomplished at the destruction of Antichrist. This also is represented as Christ's coming in his kingdom in Daniel 7:1-28, and in other places, as I may possibly show hereafter, when I come to speak of it. The fourth and last is his coming to the last judgment, which is the event principally signified in Scripture by Christ's coming in his kingdom.

2. I would observe, that each of the three former of these is a lively image or type of the fourth and last, viz. Christ's coming to the final judgment, as the principal dispensations of providence before Christ's first coming, were types of that first coming. — As Christ's last coming to judgment is accompanied with a resurrection of the dead, so is each of the three foregoing with a spiritual resurrection. That coming of Christ which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was preceded by a glorious spiritual resurrection of souls in the calling of the Gentiles, and bringing home such multitudes of souls to Christ by the preaching of the gospel. So Christ's coming in Constantine's time, was accompanied with a glorious spiritual resurrection of the greater part of the known world, in a restoration of it to a visible church state, from a state of heathenism. So Christ's coming at the destruction of Antichrist, will be attended with a spiritual resurrection of the church after it had been long as it were dead, in the times of Antichrist. This is called the first resurrection in Revelation 20:1-15.

Again, as Christ in the last judgment will gloriously manifest himself, coming in the glory of his Father, so in each of the three foregoing events, Christ gloriously manifested himself in sending judgments upon his enemies, and in showing grace and favor to his church. And as the last coming of Christ will be attended with a literal gathering together of the elect from the four winds of heaven, so were each of the preceding attended with a spiritual gathering in of the elect. As this gathering together of the elect will be effected by God's angels, with a great sound of a trumpet, as in Matthew 24:31, so were each of the preceding spiritual ingatherings effected by the trumpet of the gospel, sounded by the ministers of Christ. As there shall precede the last appearance of Christ, a time of great degeneracy and wickedness, so this has been, or will be, the case with each of the other appearances. Before each of them is a time of great opposition to the church. Before the first, by the Jews, in their persecutions that we read of in the New Testament, before the second, viz. in Constantine's time, by the heathen, in several successive persecutions raised by the Roman emperors against the Christians, before the third, by Antichrist, and before the last, by Gog and Magog, as described in the Revelation. By each of these comings of Christ, God works a glorious deliverance for his church. Each of them is accompanied with a glorious advancement of the state of the church. The first, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, was attended with bringing the church into the glorious state of the gospel, a glorious state of the church very much prophesied of old, whereby the church was advanced into far more glorious circumstances than it was in before under the Jewish dispensation. The second, which was in Constantine's time, was

accompanied with an advancement of the church into a state of liberty from persecution, and the countenance of civil authority, and triumph over their heathen persecutors. The third, which shall be at the downfall of Antichrist, will be accompanied with an advancement of the church into that state of the glorious prevalence of truth, liberty, peace, and joy, that we so often read of in the prophetic parts of Scripture. The last will be attended with the advancement of the church to consummate glory in both soul and body in heaven.

Each of these comings of Christ is accompanied with a terrible destruction of the wicked, and the enemies of the church, the first, with the destruction of the persecuting Jews, which was amazingly terrible, the second, with dreadful judgments on the heathen persecutors of the church, of which more hereafter, the third, with the awful destruction of Antichrist, the most cruel and bitter enemy that ever the church had, the fourth, with divine wrath and vengeance on all the ungodly.

Further, there is in each of these comings of Christ an ending of the old heavens and the old earth, and a beginning of new heavens and a new earth, or an end of a temporal state of things, and a beginning of an eternal state.

3. I would observe, that each of those four great dispensations which are represented as Christ's coming in kingdom, are but so many steps and degrees of the accomplishment of one event. They are not the setting up of so many distinct kingdoms of Christ. They are all of them only several degrees of the accomplishment of that one event prophesied of, Daniel 7:13-14, "And I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This is what the Jews expected, and called "the coming of the kingdom of heaven," and what John the Baptist and Christ had respect to, when they said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This great event is gradually accomplished, or is accomplished by several steps. Those four great events which have been mentioned, were several steps towards the accomplishment of this grand event. When Christ came with the preaching of the apostles, to set up his kingdom in the world, which dispensation ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, then it was accomplished in a glorious degree. When the heathen empire was destroyed in Constantine's time, it was fulfilled in a further degree. When Antichrist shall be destroyed, it will be accomplished in a yet higher degree. But when the end of the world is come, then will it be accomplished in its most perfect degree of all. Then it will be finally and completely accomplished. And because these four great events are but images one of another, and the three former but types of the last, and since they are all only several steps of the accomplishment of the same thing, hence we find them all from time to time prophesied of under one, as they are in the prophecies of Daniel, and as they are in Matthew 24:1-51, where some things seem more applicable to one of them, and others to another.

4. I would observe, that as there are several steps of the accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, so in each one of them the event is accomplished in a further degree than in the foregoing. That in the time of Constantine was a greater and further accomplishment of the kingdom of Christ, than that which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. That which shall be at the fall of Antichrist, will be a further accomplishment of the same thing, than that which took place in the time of Constantine, and so on with regard to each. So that the kingdom of Christ is gradually prevailing

and growing by these several great steps of its fulfillment, from the time of Christ's resurrection, to the end of the world.

5. And lastly, it may be observed, that the great provisions of God between these four great events, are to make way for the kingdom and glory of Christ in the great event following. Those dispensations of providence which were towards the church of God and the world, before the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, seem all to have been to make way for the glory of Christ, and the happiness of the church in that event. And so the great provisions of God which are after that, until the destruction of Antichrist, and the beginning of the glorious times of the church which follow, seem all to be to prepare the way for the greater glory of Christ and his church in that event. And the provisions of God which shall be after that to the end of the world, seem to be for the greater manifestation of Christ's glory at the end of the world, and in the consummation of all things.

Thus I thought it needful to observe those things in general concerning this last period of the series of God's providence, before I take notice of the particular provisions by which the work of redemption is carried on through this period, in their order. And before I do that, I will also briefly answer to an inquiry, viz. Why the setting up of Christ's kingdom after his humiliation, should be so gradual, by so many steps that are so long in accomplishing, since God could easily have finished it at once.

Though it would be presumption in us to pretend to declare all the ends of God in this, yet doubtless much of the wisdom of God may be seen in it by us, and particularly in these two things.

1. In this way the glory of God's wisdom, in the manner of doing this, is more visible to the observation of creatures. If it had been done at once, in an instant, or in a very short time, there would not have been such opportunities for creatures to perceive and observe the particular steps of divine wisdom, as when the work is gradually accomplished, and one effect of his wisdom is held forth to observation after another. It is wisely determined of God, to accomplish his great design by a wonderful and long series of events, that the glory of his wisdom may be displayed in the whole series, and that the glory of his perfections may be seen, appearing, as it were, by parts, and in particular successive manifestations. For if all that glory which appears in all these events had been manifested at once, it would have been too much for us, and more than we at once could take notice of. It would have dazzled our eyes, and overpowered our sight.

2. Satan is more gloriously triumphed over. — God could easily, by an act of almighty power, at once have crushed Satan. But by giving him time to use his utmost subtlety to hinder the success of what Christ had done and suffered, he is not defeated merely by surprise, but has large opportunity to ply his utmost power and subtlety again and again, to strengthen his own interest all that he can by the work of many ages. Thus God destroys and confounds him, and sets up Christ's kingdom time after time, in spite of all his subtle machinations and great works, and by every step advances it still higher and higher, until at length it is fully set up, and Satan perfectly and eternally vanquished in the end of all things.

I now proceed to take notice of the particular events whereby, from the end of Christ's humiliation to the end of the world, the success of Christ's purchase has been or shall be accomplished.

1. I would take notice of those things whereby Christ was put into an immediate capacity for accomplishing the end of his purchase.

2. I would show how he obtained or accomplished that success.

PART I

OF THOSE THINGS WHEREBY CHRIST WAS PUT INTO AN IMMEDIATE CAPACITY FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE ENDS OF HIS PURCHASE

I WOULD take notice, first, of those things by which Christ was put into a capacity for accomplishing the end of his purchase. And they are two things, viz. his resurrection, and his ascension. As we observed before, the incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to Christ's being in a near capacity for the purchase of redemption. So the resurrection and ascension of Christ were requisite, in order to his accomplishing the success of his purchase.

I. His resurrection. It was necessary, in order to Christ's obtaining the end and effect of his purchase of redemption, that he should rise from the dead. For God the Father had committed the whole affair of redemption, not only the purchasing of it, but the bestowing of the blessings purchased, to his Son, that he should not only purchase it as priest, but actually bring it about as king, and that he should do this as God-man. For God the Father would have nothing to do with fallen man, in a way of mercy, but by a mediator. But in order that Christ might carry on the work of redemption, and accomplish the success of his own purchase as God-man, it was necessary that he should be alive, and so that he should rise from the dead. Therefore Christ, after he had finished this purchase by death, and by continuing for a time under the power of death, rises from the dead, to fulfill the end of his purchase, and himself to bring about that for which he died: for this matter God the Father had committed unto him, that he might, as Lord of all, manage all to his own purposes: Romans 14:9, "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living."

Indeed Christ's resurrection, and so his ascension, was part of the success of what Christ did and suffered in his humiliation. For though Christ did not properly purchase redemption for himself, yet he purchased eternal life and glory for himself, by what he did and suffered. And this eternal life and glory was given him as a reward of what he did and suffered, Php 2:8-9, "He humbled himself; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." And it may be looked upon as part of the success of Christ's purchase, if it be considered, that Christ did not rise as a private person, but as the head of the elect church, so that they did, as it were, all rise with him. Christ was justified in his resurrection, i.e. God acquitted and discharged him hereby, as having done and suffered enough for the sins of all the elect, Romans 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." And God put him in possession of eternal life, as the head of the church, as a sure earnest that they should follow. For when Christ rose from the dead, that was the beginning of eternal life in him. His life before his death was a mortal life, a temporal life. but his life after his resurrection was an eternal life, Romans 6:9, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen." — But he was put in possession of this eternal life, as the head of the body, and took possession of it, not only to enjoy himself, but to bestow on all who believe in him, so that the

whole church, as it were, rises in him. And now he who lately suffered so much, after this is to suffer no more forever, but to enter into eternal glory God the Father neither expects nor desires any more suffering. This resurrection of Christ is the most joyful event that ever came to pass, because hereby Christ rested from the great and difficult work of purchasing redemption and received God's testimony, that it was finished. The death of Christ was the greatest and most wonderful event that ever came to pass, but that has a great deal in it that is sorrowful. But by the resurrection of Christ, that sorrow is turned into joy. The head of the whole church, in that great event, enters on the possession of eternal life. And the whole church is, as it were "begotten again to a lively hope." 1 Peter 1:3. Weeping had continued for a night, but now joy cometh in the morning, the most joyful morning that ever was. This is the day of the reigning of the head of the church, and all the church reigns with him. This is spoken of as a day which was worthy to be commemorated with the greatest joy of all days, Psalms 118:24, "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." And therefore this above all other days is appointed for the day of the church's spiritual rejoicing to the end of the world, to be weekly sanctified, as their day of holy rest and joy, that the church therein may rest and rejoice with her head. And as Genesis 3:1-24 is the most sorrowful chapter in the Bible. So those chapters in the evangelists that give an account of the resurrection of Christ, may be looked upon as the most joyful chapter of all the Bible. For those chapters give an account of the finishing of the purchase of redemption, and the beginning of the glory of the head of the church, as the greatest seal and earnest of the eternal glory of all the rest.

It is further to be observed, that the day of the gospel most properly begins with the resurrection of Christ. Until Christ rose from the dead, the Old Testament dispensation remained. But now it ceases, all being fulfilled that was shadowed forth in the typical ordinances of that dispensation. So that here most properly is the end of the Old Testament night, and Christ rising from the grave with joy and glory, was as the joyful bridegroom of the church, as a glorious conqueror to subdue their enemies under their feet, or was like the sun rising as it were from under the earth, after a long night of darkness, and coming forth as a bridegroom, prepared as a strong man to run his race, appearing in joyful light to enlighten the world. Now that joyful and excellent dispensation begins, that glorious dispensation, of which the prophets prophesied so much. Now the gospel sun is risen in glory, "and with healing in his wings," that those who fear God's name, may "go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

II. Christ's ascension into heaven. In this I would include his sitting at the right hand of God. For Christ's ascension, and sitting at the right hand of God, can scarcely be looked upon as two distinct things. For Christ's ascension was nothing else, but ascending to God's right hand. It was his coming to sit down at his Father's right hand in glory. This was another thing whereby Christ was put into a capacity for the accomplishing the effect of his purchase, as one that comes to be a deliverer of a people as their king, in order to it, and that he may be under the best capacity for it, is first installed in his throne. We are told, that Christ was exalted for this end, that he might accomplish the success of his redemption, Acts 5:31, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, for to give repentance unto Israel, and the remission of sins."

Christ's ascension into heaven was, as it were, his solemn enthronement, whereby the Father did set him upon the throne, and invest him with the glory of his kingdom which he had purchased for himself, that he might thereby obtain the success of his redemption in conquering all his enemies,

Psalms 110:1, “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Christ entered into heaven, in order to obtain the success of his purchase, as the high priest of old, after he had offered sacrifice, entered into the holy of holies with the blood of the sacrifice, in order to obtain the success of the sacrifice which he had offered. See Hebrews 9:12. He entered into heaven, there to make intercession for his people, to plead the sacrifice which he had made in order to the success of it, Hebrews 7:25. And as he ascended into heaven, God the Father did in a visible manner set him on the throne as king of the universe. He then put the angels all under him, and subjected heaven and earth under him, that he might govern them for the good of the people for whom he had died, Ephesians 1:20-22. And as Christ rose from the dead, so he ascended into heaven as the head of the body and forerunner of all the church. And, so they, as it were, ascend with him, as well as rise with him. So that we are both raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, Ephesians 2:6. The day of Christ’s ascension into heaven was doubtless a joyful, glorious day in heaven. And as heaven received Christ, God-man, as its king, so doubtless it received a great accession of glory and happiness, far beyond what it had before. So that the times in both parts of the church, both that part which is in heaven and also that which is on earth, are become more glorious since Christ’s humiliation than before. So much for those things whereby Christ was put into the best capacity for obtaining the success of redemption.

03.11a. Period 3 Part 2 How Christ Succeeded

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD III FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TO THE END OF THE WORLD

PART II HOW CHRIST ACCOMPLISHED THIS SUCCESS

I NOW proceed to show how he accomplished this success. And here I would observe, that this success consists in two things, viz. either in Grace, or in Glory. That success which consists in the former, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages of the church wherein the church is continued under the outward means of Grace. That success which consists in the latter of these, viz. Glory, has its chief accomplishment at the day of judgment.

SECTION I

How this success is accomplished by God's grace here.

I WOULD first consider the former kind of success, consisting in God's grace here, which mainly appears in the works of God during the time that the Christian church continues under the means of grace, which is from Christ's resurrection to his appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment, which includes the three former of those great events of providence before mentioned, which are called Christ's coming in his kingdom. In speaking of this success, I would, 1. Mention those things by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection, and, 2. Consider the success itself.

§ I. The means of this success. I would consider those dispensations of providence, by which the means of this success were established after Christ's resurrection.

I. The abolishing of the Jewish dispensation. This indeed was gradually done, but it began from the time of Christ's resurrection, in which the abolition of it is founded. This was the first thing done towards bringing the former state of the world to an end. This is to be looked upon as the great means of the success of Christ's redemption. For the Jewish dispensation was not fitted for more than one nation. It was not fitted for the practice of the world in general, or for a church of God dwelling in all parts of the world. Nor would it have been in any wise practicable by them. It would have been impossible for men living in all parts of the world to go to Jerusalem three times a year, as was prescribed in that constitution. When therefore God had a design of enlarging his church, as he did after Christ's resurrection, it was necessary that this dispensation should be abolished. If it had been continued, it would have been a great block and hindrance to the enlargement of the church. And besides, their ceremonial law, by reason of its burdensomeness, and the great peculiarity of some of its rites, was as it were a wall of partition, and was the ground of enmity between the Jews and Gentiles, and would have kept the Gentiles from complying with the true religion. This wall therefore was broken down to make way for the more extensive success of the

gospel, as Ephesians 2:14-15.

II. The next thing in order of time seems to be the appointment of the Christian Sabbath. For though this was gradually established in the Christian church, yet those things by which the revelation of God's mind and will was made, began on the day of Christ's resurrection, by his appearing then to his disciples, John 20:19 and was afterwards confirmed by his appearing from time to time on that day rather than any other, John 20:26 and by his sending down the Holy Spirit so remarkably on that day, Acts 2:1 and afterwards in directing that public assemblies and the public worship of Christians should be on that day, which may be concluded from Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, and Revelation 1:10. And so the day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead, that joyful day, is appointed to be the day of the church's holy rejoicing to the end or the world, and the day of their stated public worship. And this is a very great and principal means of the success which the gospel has had in the world.

III. The next thing was Christ's appointment of the gospel ministry, and commissioning and sending forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations. Of these things we have an account in Matthew 28:19-20, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and or the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you away, even unto the end of the world." — There were three things done by this one instruction and commission of Christ to his apostles, viz.

1. The appointment of the office of the gospel ministry. For this commission which Christ gives to his apostles, in the most essential parts of it, belongs to all ministers. And the apostles, by virtue of it, were ministers or elders of the church.

2. Here is something peculiar in this commission of the apostles, viz. to go forth from one nation to another, preaching the gospel in all the world. The apostles had something above what belonged to their ordinary character as ministers. They had an extraordinary power of teaching and ruling, which extended to all the churches. And not only all the churches which then were, but all that should be to the end of the world by their ministry. And so the apostles were, as it were, in subordination to Christ, made foundations of the Christian church. See Ephesians 2:20, and Revelation 21:14.

3. Here is an appointment of Christian baptism. This ordinance indeed had a beginning before. John the Baptist and Christ both baptized. But now especially by this institution is it established as an ordinance to be upheld in the Christian church to the end of the world. The ordinance of the Lord's supper had been established before, just before Christ's crucifixion.

IV. The next thing to be observed, is the enduing the apostles, and others, with extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, of prophecy, etc. The Spirit of God was poured out in great abundance in this respect, so that not only ministers, but a very great part of the Christians through the world were endued with them, both old and young, not only officers, and more honorable persons, but the meaner sort of people, servants and handmaids, were commonly endued with them, agreeable to Joel's prophecy, Joel 2:28-29, of which prophecy the Apostle Peter takes notice, that it is accomplished in this dispensation, Acts 2:11.

How wonderful a dispensation was this! Under the Old Testament, but few had such honors put upon them by God. Moses wished that all the Lord's people were prophets, Numbers 11:29, whereas Joshua thought it much that Eldad and Medad prophesied. But now we find the wish of Moses fulfilled. And this continued in a very considerable degree to the end of the apostolic age, or the first hundred years after the birth of Christ, which is therefore called the age of miracles. This was a great means of the success of the gospel in that age, and of establishing the Christian church in all parts of the world, and not only in that age, but in all ages to the end of the world. For Christianity being by this means established through so great a part of the known world by miracles, it was after that more easily continued by tradition. And then, by means of these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostles, and others, were enabled to write the New Testament, to be an infallible rule of faith and manners to the church to the end of the world. And furthermore, these miracles stand recorded in those writings as a standing proof and evidence of the truth of the Christian religion to all ages.

V. The next thing I would observe is the revealing those glorious doctrines of the gospel fully and plainly, which had under the Old Testament been obscurely revealed. The doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, his ascension and glory, and the way of salvation, under the Old Testament, were in a great measure hid under the veil of types and shadows and more obscure revelations, as Moses put a veil on his face to hide the shining of it. But now the veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom. And Christ, the anti-type of Moses, shines. The shining of his face is without a veil, 2 Corinthians 3:12-13; 2 Corinthians 3:18. Now these glorious mysteries are plainly revealed, which were in a great measure kept secret from the foundation of the world, Ephesians 3:3-5; Romans 16:25, "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest," and, Colossians 1:26, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

Thus the Sun of Righteousness, after it is risen from under the earth, begins to shine forth clearly, and not only by a dim reflection as it did before. Christ, before his death, revealed many things more clearly than ever they had been revealed in the Old Testament. But the great mysteries of Christ's redemption, and reconciliation by his death, and justification by his righteousness, were not so plainly revealed before Christ's resurrection. Christ gave this reason for it, that he would not put new wine into old bottles. And it was gradually done after Christ's resurrection. In all likelihood, Christ much more clearly instructed them personally after his resurrection, and before his ascension, as we read that he continued with them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom, Acts 1:3 and that "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures," Luke 24:45. But the clear revelation of these things was principally after the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, agreeable to Christ's promise, John 16:12-13, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth." This clear revelation of the mysteries of the gospel, as they are delivered, We have chiefly through the hands of the Apostle Paul, by whose writings a child may come to know more of the doctrines of the gospel, in many respects, than the greatest prophets knew under the darkness of the Old Testament.

Thus we see how the light of the gospel, which began to dawn immediately after the fall, and gradually grew and increased through all the ages of the Old Testament, as we observed as we went along, is now come to the light of perfect day, and the brightness of the sun shining forth in

his unveiled glory.

VI. The next thing that I would observe, is the appointment of the office of deacons in the Christian church, which we have an account of in Acts 6:1-15, to take care for the outward supply of the members of Christ's church, and the exercise of that great Christian virtue of charity.

VII. The calling, and qualifying, and sending the Apostle Paul. This was begun in his conversion as he was going to Damascus, and was one of the greatest means of the success of Christ's redemption that followed. For this success was more by the labors, preaching, and writings of this Apostle, than all the other apostles put together. For, as he says, 1 Corinthians 15:10 he "laboured more abundantly than they all," so his success was more abundant than that of them all. As he was the apostle of the Gentiles, so it was mainly by his ministry that the Gentiles were called, and the gospel spread through the world. And our nation, and the other nations of Europe, have the gospel among them chiefly through his means. And he was more employed by the Holy Ghost in revealing the glorious doctrines of tile gospel by his writings, for the use of the church in all ages, than all the other apostles taken together.

VIII. The next thing I would observe, is the institution of ecclesiastical councils, for deciding controversies, and ordering the affairs of the church of Christ, of which we have an account in Acts 15:1-41.

IX. The last thing I shall mention under this head, is the committing the New Testament to writing. This was all written after the resurrection of Christ. And all written either by the apostles, or by the evangelists, who were companions of the apostles. All the New Testament was written by the apostles themselves, excepting what was written by Mark and Luke, viz. the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. He that wrote the gospel of Mark, is supposed to be he whose mother was Mary, in whose house they were praying for Peter, when he, brought out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door, of which we read, Acts 12:12, "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying." He was the companion of the apostles Barnabas and Saul, Acts 15:37, "And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark." He was Barnabas' sister's son, and seems sometimes to have been a companion of the Apostle Paul, Colossians 4:10, "Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; touching whom ye received commandment: if he come unto you, receive him." The apostles seem to have made great account of him, as appears by those places, and also by Acts 12:25, "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark," and Acts 13:5, "And when they were at Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they had also John to their minister," and, 2 Timothy 4:11, "Only Luke is with me: take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry." This Luke, who wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, was a great companion of the Apostle Paul. He is spoken of as being with him in the last mentioned place, and speaks of himself as accompanying him in his travels in the history of the Acts. And therefore he speaks in the first person plural, when speaking of Paul's travels, saying, We went to such and such a place; We set sail; We launched from such a place; and landed at such a place. He was greatly beloved by the Apostle Paul. He is that beloved physician spoken of, Colossians 4:14. The apostle ranks Mark and Luke among his fellow laborers, Philemon 1:24,

“Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers.” The rest of the books were all written by the apostles themselves. The books of the New Testament are either historical, or doctrinal, or prophetic. The historical books are the writings of the four evangelists, giving us the history of Christ, and his purchase of redemption, and his resurrection and ascension, and the Acts of the Apostles, giving an account of the great things by which the Christian church was first established and propagated. The doctrinal books are the epistles. These, most of them, we have from the great Apostle Paul. And we have one prophetic book, which takes place after the end of the history of the whole Bible, and gives an account of the great events which were to come to pass by which the work of redemption was to be carried on to the end of the world.

All these books are supposed to have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, excepting those which were written by the Apostle John, who lived the longest of all the apostles, and wrote what he wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, as is supposed. And to this beloved disciple it was that Christ revealed those wonderful things which were to come to pass in his church to the end of time. And he was the person that put the finishing hand to the canon of the Scriptures, and sealed the whole of it. So that now the canon of Scripture, that great and standing written rule, which was begun about Moses’ time, is completed and settled, and a curse denounced against him that adds anything to it, or diminishes anything from it. And so all things are established and completed which relate to the appointed means of grace. All the stated means of grace were finished in the apostolic age, or before the death of the Apostle John, and are to remain unaltered to the day of judgment.

Thus far we have considered those things by which the means of grace were given and established the Christian church.

§ II. The means of success. The other thing proposed relating to the success of Christ’s redemption during the church’s continuance under means of grace, was to show how this success was carried on, which is what I would now proceed to do. And here it is worthy to be remembered, that the Christian church, during its continuance under the means of grace, is in two very different states.

1. In a suffering, afflicted, persecuted state, as, for the most part it is, from the resurrection of Christ until the fall of Antichrist.

2. In a state of peace and prosperity, which is the state that the church, for the most part, is to be in after the fall of Antichrist.

First, I would show how the success of Christ’s redemption is carried on during the continuance of the church’s suffering state, from the resurrection of Christ to the fall of Antichrist. This space of time, for the most part, is a state of the church’s sufferings, and is so represented in Scripture. Indeed God is pleased, out of love and pity to his elect, to grant many intermissions of the church’s sufferings during this time, whereby the days of tribulation are as it were shortened. But from Christ’s resurrection until the fall of Antichrist, is the appointed day of Zion’s troubles. During this space of time, for the most part, some part or other of the church is under persecution. And great part of the time, the whole church, or at least the generality of God’s people, have been persecuted. For the first three hundred years after Christ, the church was for the most part in a state of great affliction, the object of reproach and persecution, first by the Jews, and then by the

heathen. After this, from the beginning of Constantine's time, the church had rest and prosperity for a little while, which is represented in Revelation 7:1-17 at the beginning, by the angel's holding the four winds for a little while. But presently after, the church again suffered persecution from the Arians. And after that, Antichrist rose, and the church was driven away into the wilderness, and was kept down in obscurity, and contempt, and suffering, for a long time, under Antichrist, before the reformation by Luther and others. And since the Reformation, the church's persecutions have been beyond all that ever were before. And though some parts of God's church sometimes have had rest, yet to this day, for the most part, the true church is very much kept under by its enemies, and some parts of it under grievous persecution. And so we may expect it will continue until the fall of Antichrist. And then will come the appointed day of the church's prosperity on earth, the set time in which God will favor Zion, the time when the saints shall not be kept under by wicked men, as it has been hitherto, but wherein they shall be uppermost, and shall reign on earth, as it is said, Revelation 5:10, "And the kingdom shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," Daniel 7:27. This suffering state of the church is in Scripture represented as a state of the church's travail, John 16:20-21, and Revelation 12:1-2. What the church is in travail striving to bring forth during this time, is that glory and prosperity of the church which shall be after the fall of Antichrist, and then shall she bring forth her child. This is a long time of the church's trouble and affliction, and is so spoken of in Scripture, though it be spoken of as being but for a little season, in comparison of the eternal prosperity of the church. Hence the church, under the long continuance of this affliction, cries out, as in Revelation 6:10, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And we are told, that "white robes were given unto every one of them. And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." So, Daniel 12:6, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

It is to be observed, that during the time of these sufferings of the church, the main instrument of their sufferings has been the Roman government. Her afflictions have almost all along been from Rome. That is therefore in the New Testament called Babylon, because, as of old the troubles of the city Jerusalem were mainly from that adverse city Babylon, so the troubles of the Christian church, the spiritual Jerusalem, during the long time of its tribulation, is mainly from Rome. Before the time of Constantine, the troubles of the Christian church were from heathen Rome. Since that time, its troubles have been mainly from Antichristian Rome. And as of old, the captivity of the Jews ceased on the destruction of Babylon, so the time of the trouble of the Christian church will cease with the destruction of the church of Rome, that spiritual Babylon. In showing how the success of Christ's redemption is carried on, during this time of the church's tribulation, I would,

1. Show how it was carried on until the destruction of Jerusalem, with which ended the first great dispensation of Providence which is called Christ's coming in his kingdom.

2. How it was carried on from thence to the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, which is the second dispensation called Christ's coming.

3. How it was carried on from thence to the destruction of Antichrist, when will be accomplished the third great event called Christ's coming, and with which the days of the church's tribulation and travail end.

I. I would show how the success of Christ's purchase of redemption was carried on from Christ's resurrection to the destruction of Jerusalem. In speaking of this, I would, 1. Take notice of the success itself, and, 2. The opposition made against it by the enemies of it, and, 3. The terrible judgments of God on those enemies.

1. I would observe the success itself soon after Christ had finished the purchase of redemption, and was gone into heaven, and entered into the holy of holies with his own blood, there began a glorious success of what he had done and suffered. Having undermined the foundation of Satan's kingdom, it began to fall apace. Swiftly did it hasten to ruin in the world, which might well be compared to Satan's falling like lightning from heaven. Satan before had exalted his throne very high in this world, even to the very stars of heaven, reigning with great glory in his heathen Roman empire. But never before had he such a downfall as he had soon after Christ's ascension. He had, we may suppose, been very lately triumphing in a supposed victory, having brought about the death of Christ, which he doubtless gloried in as the greatest feat that ever he did, and probably imagined he had totally defeated God's design by him. But he was quickly made sensible, that he had only been ruining his own kingdom, when he saw it tumbling so fast so soon after, as a consequence of the death of Christ. For Christ, by his death, having purchased the Holy Spirit, and having ascended, and received the Spirit, he poured it forth abundantly for the conversion of thousands and millions of souls.

Never had Christ's kingdom been so set up in the world. There probably were more souls converted in the age of the apostles than had been before from the beginning of the world until that time. Thus God so soon begins gloriously to accomplish his promise to his Son, wherein he had promised, that he should see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, if he would make his soul an offering for sin. And,

(1.) Here is to be observed the success which the gospel had among the Jews. For God first began with them. He being about to reject the main body of that people, first calls in his elect from among them, before he forsook them, to turn to the Gentiles. It was so in former great and dreadful judgments of God on that nation. The bulk of them were destroyed, and only a remnant saved, or reformed. So it was in the rejection of the ten tribes, long before this rejection. The bulk of the ten tribes were rejected, when they left the true worship of God in Jeroboam's time, and afterwards more fully in Ahab's time. But yet there was a remnant of them that God reserved. A number left their possessions in these tribes, and went and settled in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. And afterwards there were seven thousand in Ahab's time, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. And so, in the captivity into Babylon, only a remnant of them ever returned to their own land. And so now again, by far the greater part of the people were rejected entirely, but some few were saved. And therefore the Holy Ghost compares this reservation of a number that were converted by the preaching of the apostles, to those former remnants, Romans 9:27, "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." See Isaiah 10:22. The glorious success of the gospel among the Jews after Christ's ascension, began by the pouring out of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost, of which we read in Acts 2:1-47. So wonderful was this pouring out of the Spirit, and so remarkable and swift the effect of it, that we read of three thousand who were converted to the Christian faith in one day, Acts 2:41. And probably the greater part of these wereconverted. And after this, we read of God's adding to the church daily such as should be saved, Acts 2:47. And soon after, we read, that the

number of them were about five thousand. Thus were not only a multitude converted, but the church was then eminent in piety, as appears by Acts 2:46-47; Acts 4:32.

Thus the Christian church was first of all of the nation of Israel. And therefore, when the Gentiles were called, they were but as it were added to Israel, to the seed of Abraham. They were added to the Christian church of Israel, as the proselytes of old were to the Mosaic church of Israel. And so were as it were only grafted on the stock of Abraham, and were not a distinct tree. For they are all still the seed of Abraham and Israel, as Ruth the Moabitess, and Uriah the Hittite, and other proselytes of old, were the same people, and ranked as the seed of Israel. So the Christian church at first began at Jerusalem, and from thence was propagated to all nations. So that this church of Jerusalem was the church that was as it were the mother of all other churches in the world, agreeable to the prophecy, Isaiah 2:3-4, “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem: and he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people.” So that the whole church of God is still God’s Jerusalem. They are his spiritual Jerusalem, and are as it were only added to the church, which was begun in the literal Jerusalem.

After this, we read of many thousands of Jews that believed, in Jerusalem, Acts 21:20. And so we read of multitudes of Jews who were converted in other cities of Judea, and not only so, but even in other parts of the world. For wherever the apostles went, if there were any Jews there, their manner was, first to go into the synagogues of the Jews, and preach the gospel to then, and many in one place and another believed, as in Damascus and Antioch, and many other places that we read of in the Acts of the Apostles. In this pouring out of the Spirit which began at the Pentecost following Christ’s ascension, began that first great dispensation which is called Christ’s coming in his kingdom. Christ’s coming thus in a spiritual manner for the glorious setting up of his kingdom in the world, is represented by Christ himself as his coming down from heaven, whither he had ascended, John 14:18. There Christ having been speaking of his ascension, says, “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you,” speaking of his coming by the coming of the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. And, John 14:28 “Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you.” And thus the apostles began to see the kingdom of heaven come with power, as he promised they should, Mark 9:1.

(2.) What is next to be observed is the success of the gospel among the Samaritans. After the success of the gospel had been so gloriously begun among the proper Jews, the Spirit of God was next wonderfully poured out on the Samaritans, who were not Jews by nation, but the posterity of those whom the king of Assyria removed from different parts of his dominions, and settled in the land that was inhabited by the ten tribes whom he carried captive. But yet they had received the five books of Moses, and practiced most of the rites of the law of Moses, and so were a sort of mongrel Jews. We do not find them reckoned as Gentiles in the New Testament. For the calling of the Gentiles is spoken of as a new thing after this, beginning with the conversion of Cornelius. But yet it was an instance of making that a people that were no people. For they had corrupted the religion which Moses commanded, and did not go up to Jerusalem to worship, but had another temple of their own in Mount Gerizzim, which is the mountain of which the woman of Samaria speaks, when she says, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain.” Christ there does not approve of their separation from the Jews, but tells the woman of Samaria, that they worshipped they knew not what, and that salvation is of the Jews. But now salvation is brought from the Jews to them by the preaching of Philip (excepting that before, Christ had some success among them), with whose

preaching there was a glorious pouring out of the Spirit of God in the city of Samaria, where we are told, that, “ the people believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of Christ, and were baptized, both men and women; and that there was great joy in that city,” Acts 8:8-12.

Thus Christ had a glorious harvest in Samaria, which is what Christ seems to have had respect to, in what he said to his disciples at Jacob’s well three or four years before, on occasion of the people of Samaria’s appearing at a distance in the fields coming to the place where Christ was, at the instigation of the woman of Samaria. On that occasion, he bids his disciples lift up their eyes to the fields, for that they were white to the harvest, John 4:35-36. The disposition which the people of Samaria showed towards Christ and his gospel, showed that they were ripe for the harvest. But now the harvest is come by Philip’s preaching. There used to be a most bitter enmity between the Jews and Samaritans. But now, by their conversion, the Christian Jews and Samaritans are all happily united. For in Christ Jesus is neither Jew nor Samaritan, but Christ is all in all. This was a glorious instance of the wolf’s dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard’s lying down with the kid.

(3.) The next thing to be observed is the success there was of the gospel in calling the Gentiles. This was a great and glorious dispensation of divine providence, much spoken of in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and spoken of by the apostles, time after time, as a most glorious event of Christ’s redemption. This was begun in the conversion of Cornelius and his family, greatly to the admiration of Peter, who was used as the instrument of it, and of those who were with him, and of those who were informed of it, as you may see, Acts 10:1-48 and Acts 11:1-30. And the next instance of it that we have any account of, was in the conversion of great numbers of Gentiles in Cyprus, and Cyrene, and Antioch, by the disciples that were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose about Stephen, as we have an account in Acts 11:19-21. And presently upon this the disciples began to be called Christians first at Antioch, Acts 11:26. And after this, vast multitudes of Gentiles were converted in many different parts of the world, chiefly by the ministry of the Apostle Paul, a glorious pouring out of the Spirit accompanying his preaching in one place and another. Multitudes flocked into the church of Christ in a great number of cities where the Apostle came. So the number of the members of the Christian church that were Gentiles, soon far exceeded the number of its Jewish members. Yea so, that in less than ten years’ time after Paul was sent forth from Antioch to preach to the Gentiles, it was said of him and his companions, that they had turned the world upside down, Acts 17:6, “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” But the most remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in a particular city that we have any account of in the New Testament, seems to be that in the city of Ephesus, which was a very great city. Of this we have an account in Acts 19:1-41. There was also a very extraordinary ingathering of souls at Corinth, one of the greatest cities in all Greece. And after this, many were converted in Rome, the chief city of all the world. And the gospel was propagated into all parts or the Roman empire. Thus the gospel sun, which had lately risen on the Jews, now rose upon, and began to enlighten the heathen world, after they had continued in gross heathenish darkness for so many ages. This was a great thing, and a new thing, such as never had been before. All nations but the Jews, and a few who had at one time and another joined with them, had been rejected from about Moses’ time. The Gentile world had been covered over with the thick darkness of idolatry. But now, at the joyful glorious sound of the gospel, they began in all parts to forsake their old idols and to abhor them, and to cast them to the moles and to the bats, and to learn to worship the true God, and to trust in his Son Jesus Christ. And God owned them for his people. Those who

had so long been afar off, were made nigh by the blood of Christ. Men were changed from being heathenish and brutish, to be the children of God, were called out of Satan's kingdom of darkness, and brought into God's marvelous light. And in almost all countries throughout the known world were assemblies of the people of God. Joyful praises were sung to the true God, and Jesus Christ the glorious Redeemer. Now that great building which God began soon after the fall of man, rises gloriously, not in the same manner that it had done in former ages, but in quite a new manner. Now Daniel's prophecies concerning the last kingdom, which should succeed the four heathenish monarchies, begins to be fulfilled. Now the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, began to smite the image on its feet, and to break it in pieces, and to grow great, and to make great advances towards filling the earth. And now God gathers together the elect from the four winds of heaven, by the preaching of the apostles and other ministers, the angels of the Christian church sent forth with the great sound of the gospel trumpet, before the destruction of Jerusalem, agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matthew 24:31. This was the success of Christ's purchase, during this first period of the Christian church, which terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. I would proceed now, in the second place, to take notice of the opposition which was made to this success of Christ's purchase by the enemies of it. — Satan, who lately was so ready to triumph and exult, as though he had gained the victory in putting Christ to death, now finding himself fallen into the pit which he had dug, and finding his kingdom failing so fast, and seeing Christ's kingdom make such amazing progress, such as never had been before, we may conclude he was filled with the greatest confusion and astonishment, and hell seemed to be effectually alarmed by it to make the most violent opposition against it. And, first, the devil stirred up the Jews, who had before crucified Christ, to persecute the church. For it is observable, that the persecution which the church suffered during this period, was mostly from the Jews. Thus we read in the Acts, when, at Jerusalem, the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, how the Jews mocked, and said, "These men are full of new wine," and how the scribes and Pharisees, and the captain of the temple, were alarmed, and bestirred themselves to oppose and persecute the apostles, and first apprehended and threatened them, and afterwards imprisoned and beat them. And breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, they stoned Stephen in a tumultuous rage, and were not content to persecute those that they could find in Judea, but sent abroad to Damascus and other places, to persecute all that they could find everywhere. Herod, who was chief among them, stretched forth his hands to vex the church, and killed James with the sword, and proceeded to take Peter also, and cast him into prison. So in other countries, we find, that almost wherever the apostles came, the Jews opposed the gospel in a most malignant manner, contradicting and blaspheming. How many things did the blessed Apostle Paul suffer at their hands in one place and another! How violent and bloodthirsty did they show themselves towards him, when he came to bring alms to his nation! In this persecution and cruelty was fulfilled the saying of Christ, Matthew 23:34, "Behold, I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city."

3. I proceed to take notice of those judgments which were executed on those enemies of Christ, the persecuting Jews

(1.) The bulk of the people were given up to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart. Christ denounced such a woe upon them in the days of his flesh, as Matthew 13:14-15. This curse

was also denounced on them by the Apostle Paul, Acts 28:25-27, and under this curse, under this judicial blindness and hardness, they remain to this very day, having been subject to it for about 1700 years, being the most awful instance of such a judgment, and monuments of God's terrible vengeance, of any people that ever were. That they should continue from generation to generation so obstinately to reject Christ, so that it is a very rare thing that any one of them is converted to the Christian faith, though their own Scriptures of the Old Testament, which they acknowledge, are so full of plain testimonies against them, is a remarkable evidence of their being dreadfully left of God.

(2.) They were rejected and cast off from being any longer God's visible people. They were broken off from the stock of Abraham, and since that have no more been reputed his seed, than the Ishmaelites or Edomites, who are as much his natural seed as they. The greater part of the two tribes were now cast off, as the ten tribes had been before, and another people were taken in their room, agreeable to the predictions of their own prophets, as of Moses, Deuteronomy 32:21, "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation," and of Isaiah 65:1, "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not." — They were visibly rejected and cast off, by God's directing his apostles to turn away from them, and let them alone, as Acts 13:46-47, "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, it was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles: for so hath the Lord commanded us." And so Acts 18:6; Acts 28:28.

Thus far we have had the scripture history to guide us. Henceforth we shall have the guidance only of two things, viz. Of scripture prophesy, and God's providence, as related in human histories. But I proceed.

(3.) The third and last judgment of God on those enemies of the success of the gospel which I shall mention, is the terrible destruction of their city and country by the Romans. They had great warnings and many means used with them before this destruction. First, John the Baptist warned them, and told them, that the axe was laid at the root of the tree. And that every tree which should not bring forth good fruit, should be hewn down and cast into the fire. Then Christ warned them very particularly, and told them of their approaching destruction, and at the thoughts of it wept over them. And then the apostles after Christ's ascension abundantly warned them. But they proved obstinate, and went on in their opposition to Christ and his church, and in their bitter persecuting practices. Their so malignantly persecuting the Apostle Paul, of which we have an account towards the end of the Acts of the Apostles, is supposed to have been not more than seven or eight years before their destruction. And after this God was pleased to give them one more very remarkable warning by the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, which is an epistle written to that nation of the Jews, as is supposed, about four years before their destruction. Wherein the plainest and clearest arguments are set before them from their own law, and from their prophets, for whom they professed such a regard, to prove that Christ Jesus must be the Son of God, and that all their law pointed to him and typified him, and that their Jewish dispensation must needs have now ceased. For though the epistle was more immediately directed to the Christian Hebrews, yet the matter of the epistle plainly shows that the apostle intended it for the use and conviction of the unbelieving Jews, and in this epistle, he mentions particularly the approaching destruction, as Hebrews 10:25, " So much the more, as ye see the day approaching," and in Hebrews 10:27, he

speaks of the approaching judgment and fiery indignation which should devour the adversaries. But the generality of them refusing to receive conviction, God soon destroyed them with such terrible circumstances, as the destruction of no country or city since the foundation of the world can parallel, agreeable to what Christ foretold, Matthew 24:21, “For then shall be tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” The first destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians was very terrible, as it is in a most affecting manner described by the Prophet Jeremiah, in his Lamentations. But this was nothing to the dreadful misery and wrath which they suffered in this destruction. God, according as Christ foretold, bringing on them all the righteous blood that had been shed from the foundation of the world. Thus the enemies of Christ are made his footstool after his ascension, agreeable to God’s promise in Psalms 110:1-7 at the beginning. And Christ rules them with a rod of iron. They had been kicking against Christ, but they did but kick against the pricks. The briars and thorns set themselves against them in battle. But he went through them. He bound them together. This destruction of Jerusalem was in all respects agreeable to what Christ had foretold of it, Matthew 24:1-51 by the account which Josephus gives of it, who was then present, and was one of the Jews, who had a share in the calamity, and wrote the history of their destruction. Many circumstances of this destruction resembled the destruction of the wicked at the day of judgment, by his account, being accompanied with many fearful sights in the heavens, and with a separation of the righteous from the wicked. Their city and temple were burnt, and razed to the ground, and the ground on which the city stood, was plowed. And so one stone was not left upon another, Matthew 24:2. The people had ceased for the most part to be an independent government after the Babylonian captivity. But the scepter entirely departed from Judah on the death of Archelaus. And then Judea was made a Roman province. After this they were cast off from being the people of God. But now their very city and land are utterly destroyed, and they carried away from it, and so have continued in their dispersions through the world for now above 1600 years.

Thus there was a final end to the Old Testament world. All was finished with a kind of day of judgment, in which the people of God were saved, and his enemies terribly destroyed. — Thus does he who was so lately mocked, despised, and spit upon by these Jews, and whose followers they so malignantly persecuted, appear gloriously exalted over his enemies.

Having thus shown how the success of Christ’s purchase was carried on until the destruction of Jerusalem, come now,

II. To show how it was carried on from that time until the destruction of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine the Great, which is the second great event which is in Scripture compared to Christ’s coming to judgment.

Jerusalem was destroyed about the year of our Lord 68, and so before that generation passed away which was contemporary with Christ. And it was about thirty- five years after Christ’s death. The destruction of the heathen empire under Constantine, was about 260 years after this. In showing how the success of the gospel was carried on through this time, I would, 1. Take notice of the opposition made against it by the Roman empire. 2. How the work of the gospel went on, notwithstanding all that opposition. 3. The peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress that the church was in just before their deliverance by Constantine. 4. The great revolution in Constantine’s time.

1. I would briefly show what opposition was made against the gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, by the Roman empire. The opposition that was made to the gospel by the heathen Roman empire, was mainly after the destruction of Jerusalem, though their opposition began before. But the opposition that was before the destruction of Jerusalem, was mainly by the Jews. But when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews were put out of a capacity of much troubling the church. Now therefore the devil turns his hand elsewhere, and uses other instruments. The opposition which was made in the Roman empire against the kingdom of Christ, was chiefly of two kinds.

(1.) They employed all their learning, and philosophy, and wit, in opposing it. Christ came into the world in an age wherein learning and philosophy were at their height in the Roman empire. This was employed to the utmost against the kingdom of Christ. The gospel, which held forth a crucified Savior, was not at all agreeable to the notions of the philosophers. The Christian scheme of trusting in such a crucified Redeemer, appeared foolish and ridiculous to them. Greece was a country the most famous for learning of any in the Roman empire. But the apostle observes, that the doctrine of Christ crucified appeared foolishness to the Greeks, 1 Corinthians 1:23 and therefore the wise men and philosophers opposed the gospel with all the wit they had. We have a specimen of their manner of opposing, in the story we have of their treatment of the Apostle Paul at Athens, which was a city that had been for many ages the chief seat of philosophers of any in the whole world. We read in Acts 17:18 that the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoics encountered him, saying, “What will this babbler say? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.” So they were wont to deride and ridicule Christianity. And after the destruction of Jerusalem, several of these philosophers published books against it, the chief of whom were Celsus and Porphyry. These wrote books against the Christian religion with a great deal of virulence and contempt, much after the manner that the Deists of the present age oppose and ridicule Christianity. Something of their writings yet remains. As great enemies and despisers as they were of the Christian religion, yet they never denied the facts recorded of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, particularly the miracles which they wrought, but allowed them. They lived too near the times wherein these miracles were wrought to deny them. For they were so publicly done, and so lately, that neither Jews nor heathens in those days appeared to deny them, but they ascribed them to the power of magic.

(2.) The authority or the Roman empire employed all their strength, time after time, to persecute, and if possible to root out Christianity. This they did in ten general successive persecutions. We have heretofore observed, that Christ came into the world when the strength of heathen dominion and authority was the greatest that ever it was under the Roman monarchy, the greatest and strongest human monarchy that ever was on earth. All the strength of this monarchy was employed for a longtime to oppose and persecute the Christian church, and if possible to destroy it, in ten successive attempts, which are called the ten heathen persecutions, which were before Constantine. The first of these, which was the persecution under Nero, was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which the Apostle Peter was crucified, and the Apostle Paul beheaded, soon after he wrote his second epistle to Timothy. When he wrote that epistle, he was a prisoner at Rome under Nero, and was soon after he wrote it beheaded, agreeable to what he says, 2 Timothy 4:6-7, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” — And there were many thousands of other Christians slain in that persecution. The other nine persecutions were all after

the destruction of Jerusalem. Some of these were very terrible indeed, and far exceeded the first persecution under Nero. One emperor after another set himself with the utmost rage to root out the Christian church from the earth, that there should not be so much as the name of Christian left in the world. And thousands and millions were put to cruel deaths in these persecutions. For they spared neither sex nor age, but killed them as fast as they could.

Under the second general persecution, that which was next after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostle John was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he had those visions of which he has given an account in the Revelation. Under that persecution it was reckoned, that about 40,000 suffered martyrdom, which yet was nothing to what were put to death under some succeeding persecutions. Ten thousand suffered that one kind of cruel death, crucifixion, in the third persecution under the Emperor Adrian. Under the fourth persecution, which began about the year of Christ 162, many suffered martyrdom in England, the land of our forefathers, where Christianity had been planted very early, and, as is supposed, in the days of the apostles. And in the later persecutions, the Roman emperors being vexed at the frustration of their predecessors, who were not able to extirpate Christianity or hinder its progress, were enraged to be the more violent in their attempts.

Thus a great part of the first 300 years after Christ was spent in violent and cruel persecutions of the church by the Roman powers. Satan was very unwilling to let go his hold of so great a part of the world, and every way the chief part of it, as the countries contained in the Roman empire were, of which he had had quiet possession for so many ages. And therefore, when he saw it going so fast out of his hands, he bestirred himself to his utmost. All hell was, as it were, raised against it to oppose it with its utmost power.

Satan thus exerting himself by the power or the heathen Roman empire, is called the great red dragon in Scripture, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun, as in Revelation 12:1-17. And the terrible conflict there was between the church of Christ, and the powers of the heathen empire before Constantine's time, is there, in Revelation 12:7, represented by the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels, "And there was war in heaven; and Michael and his angels fought, and the dragon fought and his angels."

2. I would take notice of what success the gospel had in the world before the time of Constantine, notwithstanding all this opposition. — Though the learning and power of the Roman empire were so great, and both were employed to the utmost against Christianity to put a stop to it, and to root it out for so long a time, and in so many repeated attempts. Yet all was in vain. They could neither root it out, nor put a stop to it. But still, in spite of all that they could do, the kingdom of Christ wonderfully prevailed, and Satan's heathen kingdom moldered and consumed away before it, agreeable to the words of the text, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool." And it was very observable, that for the most part the more they persecuted the church, the more it increased, in so much that it became a common saying, The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Herein the church of Christ proved to be like a palm tree. Of which tree it is remarked, that the greater weight is laid upon it, or hung to its branches, the more it grows and flourishes. On which account probably the church is compared to a palm tree in Song of Solomon 7:7, "This thy stature is like to a palm tree." Justin Martyr, an eminent father in the

Christian church, who lived in the age next after the apostles, in some writings of his, which are yet extant, says, that in his days there was no part of mankind, whether Greeks or barbarians, or by whatever name they were called, even the most rude and unpolished nations, where prayers and thanksgivings were not made to the great Creator of the world, through the name of the crucified Jesus. Tertullian, another eminent father in the Christian church, who lived in the beginning of the following age, in some of his writings which are yet extant, sets forth how that in his day the Christian religion had extended itself to the utmost bounds of the then known world, in which he reckons Britain, the country of our forefathers. And thence demonstrates, that the kingdom of Christ was then more extensive than any of the four great monarchies, and moreover says, that though the Christians were as strangers of no long standing, yet they had filled all places of the Roman dominions, their cities, islands, castles, corporations, councils, armies, tribes, the palace, senate, and courts of judicature. Only they had left to the heathen their temples. And that if they should all agree to retire out of the Roman empire, the world would be amazed at the solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it, there would be so few left, and that the Christians were enough to be able easily to defend themselves, if they were disposed to rise up in arms against the heathen magistrates. And Pliny, a heathen who lived in those days, says multitudes of each sex, every age and quality, were become Christians. This superstition, says he, having infected and overrun not the city only, but towns and countries, the temples and sacrifices are generally desolate and forsaken. And it was remarked by both heathen and Christian writers in those days, that the famous heathen oracles in their temples, where princes and others for many past ages had been wont to inquire and receive answers with an audible voice from their gods, which were indeed answers from the devil. I say, those oracles were now silenced and struck dumb, and gave no more answers. And particularly the oracle at Delphos, which was the most famous heathen oracle in the whole world, which both Greeks and Romans used to consult, began to cease to give any answers, even from the birth of Christ. And the false deity who was worshipped, and used to give answers from his oracle in that temple, being once inquired of, why he did not now give answers as he was wont to do, made this reply, as several heathen historians who lived about those times relate, “There is an Hebrew boy,” says he, “who is king of the gods, who has commanded me to leave this house, and be gone to hell, and therefore you are to expect no more answers.” And many of the heathen writers who lived about that time, speak much of the oracles being silenced, as a thing at which they wondered, not knowing what the cause should be. Plutarch, a heathen writer of those times, wrote a particular treatise about it, which is still extant. And Porphyry, one of the heathen writers before mentioned, who opposed the Christian religion, in his writings has these words, “It is no wonder if the city for these so many years has been overrun with sickness, Esculapius, and the rest of the gods, having withdrawn their converse with men. For since Jesus began to be worshipped, no man has received any public help or benefit by the gods.”

Thus did the kingdom of Christ prevail against the kingdom of Satan.

3. I now proceed to take notice of the peculiar circumstances of tribulation and distress just before Constantine the Great came to the throne. This distress they suffered under the tenth heathen persecution, which, as it was the last, so it was by far the heaviest, and most severe. The church before this, after the ceasing of the ninth persecution, had enjoyed a time of quietness for about forty years together, but, abusing their liberty, began to grow cold and lifeless in religion. And carnal contentions prevailed among them, by which they offended God to suffer this dreadful trial

to come upon them. And Satan having lost ground so much, notwithstanding all his attempts, now seemed to bestir himself with more than ordinary rage. Those who were then in authority set themselves with the utmost violence to root out Christianity, by burning all Bibles, and destroying all Christians. And therefore they did not stand to try or convict them in a formal process, but fell upon them wherever they could, sometimes setting fire to houses where multitudes of them were assembled, and burning them all together. And at other times slaughtering multitudes together so that sometimes their persecutors were quite spent with the labor of killing and tormenting them. And in some populous places, so many were slain together, that the blood ran like torrents. It is related, that seventeen thousand martyrs were slain in one month's time, and that during the continuance of this persecution, in the province of Egypt alone, no less than 144,000 Christians died by the violence of their persecutors, besides 700,000 that died through the fatigues of banishment, or the public works to which they were condemned. This persecution lasted for ten years together. And as it exceeded all foregoing persecutions in the number of martyrs, so it exceeded them in the variety and multitude of inventions of torture and cruelty. Some authors who lived at that time, say, they were innumerable, and exceed all account and expression. This persecution in particular was very severe in England. And this is that persecution which was foretold in Revelation 6:9-10, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And at the end of the ten years during which this persecution continued, the heathen persecutors thought they had finished their work, and boasted that they had utterly destroyed the name and superstition of the Christians, and had restored and propagated the worship of the gods.

Thus it was the darkest time with the Christian church just before the break of day. They were brought to the greatest extremity just before God appeared for their glorious deliverance, as the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt was the most severe and cruel, just before their deliverance by the hand of Moses. Their enemies thought they had swallowed them up just before their destruction, as it was with Pharaoh and his host, when they had hemmed in the children of Israel at the Red Sea.

4. I come now, in the fourth place, to the great revolution which was in the world in the days of Constantine, which was in many respects like Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to save his people, and judge the world. The people of Rome being weary of the government of those tyrants to whom they had lately been subject, sent to Constantine, who was then in the city of York in England, to come and take the throne. And he being encouraged, as is said, by a vision of a pillar of light in the heavens, in the form of a cross, in the sight of his whole army, with this inscription, Ôïõôù íéêá, "In this overcome." And the night following, by Christ's appearing to him in a dream with the same cross in his hand, who directed him to make a cross like that to be his royal standard, that his army might fight under that banner, and assured him that he should overcome. Accordingly he did, and overcame his enemies, and took possession of the Imperial throne, and embraced the Christian religion, and was the first Christian emperor that ever reigned. He came to the throne about 320 years after Christ. There are several things which I would take notice of which attended or immediately followed Constantine's coming to the throne.

(1.) The Christian church was thereby wholly delivered from persecution. Now the day of her deliverance came after such a dark night of affliction. Weeping had continued for a night, but now deliverance and joy came in the morning. Now God appeared to judge his people, and repented himself for his servants, when he saw their power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left. Christians had no persecutions now to fear. Their persecutors now were all put down, and their rulers were some of them Christians like themselves.

(2.) God now appeared to execute terrible judgments on their enemies. Remarkable are the accounts which history gives us of the fearful ends to which the heathen emperors, and princes, and generals, and captains, and other great men came, who had exerted themselves in persecuting the Christians, dying miserably, one and another, under exquisite torments of body, and horrors of conscience, with a most visible hand of God upon them. So that what now came to pass might very fitly be compared to their hiding themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains.

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(3.) Heathenism now was in a great measure abolished throughout the Roman empire. Images were now destroyed, and heathen temples pulled down. Images of gold and silver were melted down, and coined into money. Some of the chief of their idols, which were curiously wrought, were brought to Constantinople, and there drawn with ropes up and down the streets for the people to behold and laugh at. The heathen priests were dispersed and banished.

(4.) The Christian church was brought into a state of great peace and prosperity. Now all heathen magistrates were put down, and only Christians were advanced to places of authority all over the empire. They had now Christian presidents, Christian governors, Christian judges and officers, instead of their old heathenish ones. Constantine set himself to put honor upon Christian bishops or ministers, and to build and adorn churches. And now large and beautiful Christian churches were erected in all parts of the world, instead of the old heathen temples. This revolution was the greatest revolution and change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God, in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman empire. This was a remarkable accomplishment of Jeremiah 10:11, “The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.” The chief part of the world was now brought utterly to cast off their old gods and their old religion, to which they had been accustomed much longer than any of their histories give an account of. They had been accustomed to worship the gods so long, that they knew not any beginning of it. It was formerly spoken of as a thing unknown for a nation to change their gods, Jeremiah 2:10-11, but now the greater part of the nations of the known world were brought to cast off all their former gods. That multitude of gods that they worshipped were all forsaken. Thousands of them were cast away for the worship of the true God, and Christ the only Savior. And there was a most remarkable fulfillment of that in Isaiah 2:17-18, “And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish.” And since that, it has come to pass, that those gods that were once so famous in the world, as Jupiter, and Saturn, and Minerva, and Juno, etc. are only heard of as things which were of old. They have no temples, no altars, no worshippers, and have not had for many hundred years.

Now is come the end of the old heathen world in the principal part of it, the Roman empire. And this great revolution and change of the state of the world, with that terrible destruction of the great men who had been persecutors, is compared, in Revelation 6:1-17, to the end of the world, and Christ’s coming to judgment, and is what is most immediately signified under the sixth seal, which followed upon the souls under the altar crying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” This vision of the sixth seal, by the general consent of divines and expositors, has respect to this downfall of the heathen Roman empire. Though it has a more remote respect to the day of judgment, or this was a type of it. The day of judgment cannot be what is immediately intended, because we have an account of many events

which were to come to pass under the seventh seal, and so were to follow after those of the sixth seal.

What came to pass now is also represented by the devil's being cast out of heaven to the earth. In his great strength and glory, in that mighty Roman empire, he had as it were exalted his throne up to heaven. But now he fell like lightning from heaven, and was confined to the earth. His kingdom was confined to the meaner and more barbarous nations, or to the lower parts of the world of mankind. This is the event foretold, Revelation 12:9, etc. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," etc. Satan tempted Christ, and promised to give him the glory of the kingdoms of the world. But now he is obliged to give it to him even against his will. This was a glorious fulfillment of that promise which God made to his Son, that we have an account of in Isaiah 53:12, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This was a great fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the glorious time of the gospel, and particularly of the prophecies of Daniel. Now the kingdom of heaven is come in a glorious degree. It pleased the Lord God of heaven to set up a kingdom on the ruins of Satan's kingdom. And such success is there of the purchase of Christ's redemption, and such honor does the Father put upon Christ for the disgrace he suffered when on earth. And now see to what a height that glorious building is erected, which had been building ever since the fall.

Inference. From what has been said of the success of the gospel from Christ's ascension to the time of Constantine, we may deduce a strong argument of the truth of the Christian religion, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is really from God. This wonderful success of it which has been spoken of, and the circumstances of it which have been mentioned, are a strong argument of it several ways.

1. We may gather from what has been said, that it is the gospel. and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing the world to the knowledge of the true God. That those are no gods whom the heathen worshipped, and that there is but one only God, is what, now since the gospel has so taught us, we can see to be truth by our own reason. It is plainly agreeable to the light of nature. It can be easily shown by reason to be demonstrably true. The very Deists themselves acknowledge, that it can be demonstrated, that there is one God, and but one, who has made and governs the world. But now it is evident that it is the gospel, and that only, which has actually been the means of bringing men to the knowledge of this truth. It was not the instructions of philosophers. They tried in vain, "the world by wisdom knew not God." Until the gospel and the Holy Scriptures came abroad in the world, all the world lay in ignorance of the true God, and in the greatest darkness with respect to the things of religion, embracing the most absurd opinions and practices, which all civilized nations now acknowledge to be childish fooleries. And so they lay one age after another, and nothing proved effectual to enlighten them. The light of nature, and their own reason, and all the wisdom of learned men, signified nothing until the Scriptures came. But when these came abroad, they were successful to bring the world to an acknowledgment of the one only true God, and to worship and serve him. And hence it is that all that part of the world which now does own one only true God, Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and even Deists too,

originally came by the knowledge of him. It is owing to this that they are not in general at this day left in heathenish darkness. They have it all, first of all, either immediately from the Scriptures, or by tradition from their fathers, who had it first from the Scriptures. And doubtless those who now despise the Scriptures, and boast of the strength of their own reason, as being sufficient to lead into the knowledge of the one true God, if the gospel had never come abroad in the world to enlighten their forefathers, would have been as weak and brutish idolaters as the world in general was before the gospel came abroad. The Mahometans, who own but one true God, at first borrowed the notion from the Scriptures. For the first Mahometans had been educated in the Christian religion, and apostatized from it. And this is evidential, that the Scriptures were designed of God to be the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than human reason, or anything else. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that the gospel, and that only, which God never designed as the proper mean for obtaining this effect, should actually obtain it, and that after human reason, which he designed as the proper mean, had been tried for a great many ages without any effect. If the Scriptures be not the Word of God, then they are nothing but darkness and delusion, yea, the greatest delusion that ever was. Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God in his providence would make use of falsehood and delusion, and that only, to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, and that no part of it should be brought to the knowledge of him any other way?

2. The gospel's prevailing as it did against such powerful opposition, plainly shows the hand of God. The Roman government, that did so violently set itself to hinder the success of the gospel, and to subdue the church of Christ, Was the most powerful human government that ever was in the world. And not only so, but they seemed as it were to have the church in their hands. The Christians were mostly their subjects, under their command, and never took up arms to defend themselves they did not gather together, and stand in their own defense. They armed themselves with nothing but patience, and such like spiritual weapons. And yet this mighty power could not conquer them. But, on the contrary, Christianity conquered them. The Roman empire had subdued the world. They had subdued many mighty and potent kingdoms. They subdued the Grecian monarchy, when they were not their subjects, and made the utmost resistance. And yet they could not conquer the church which was in their hands, but, on the contrary, were subdued, and finally triumphed over by the church.

3. No other sufficient cause can possibly be assigned of this propagation of the gospel, but only God's own power. Nothing else can be devised as the reason of it but this. There was certainly some reason. Here was a great and wonderful effect, the most remarkable change that ever was in the face of the world of mankind since the flood. And this effect was not without some cause. Now, what other cause can be devised but only the divine power? It was not the outward strength of the instruments which were employed in it. At first, the gospel was preached only by a few fishermen, who were without power and worldly interest to support them. It was not their craft and policy that produced this wonderful effect. For they were poor illiterate men. It as not the agreeableness of the story they had to tell to the notions and principles of mankind. This was no pleasant fable. A crucified God and Savior was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It was not the agreeableness of their doctrines to the dispositions of men. For nothing is more contrary to the corruptions of men than the pure doctrines of the gospel. This effect therefore can have proceeded from no other cause than the power and agency of God. And if it

was the power of God that was exercised to cause the gospel to prevail, then the gospel is his word. For surely God does not use his almighty power to promote a mere imposture and delusion.

4. This success is agreeable to what Christ and his apostles foretold. — Matthew 16:18, “Upon this rock will I build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” John 12:24, “Verily verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” And John 12:31-32, “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” John 16:8, “When he (the comforter) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment — because the prince of this world is judged.” So the Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1:21-28 declares, how that after the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe, and that God chose the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, and weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are. If any man foretells a thing, very likely in itself to come to pass, from causes which can be foreseen, it is no great argument of a revelation from God. But when a thing is foretold which is very unlikely ever to come to pass, is entirely contrary to the common course of things, and yet it does come to pass just agreeable to the prediction, this is a strong argument that the prediction was from God.

Thus the consideration of the manner of the propagation and success of the gospel during the time which has been spoken of, affords great evidence that the Scriptures are the Word of God.

III. I am now to show how the success of Christ’s redemption is carried on from the time of the overthrow of the heathen Roman empire in the time of Constantine the Great, until the fall of Antichrist, and the destruction of Satan’s visible kingdom on earth, which is the third great dispensation which is in Scripture compared to Christ’s coming to judgment. This is a period wherein many great and wonderful things are brought to pass. Herein is contained a long series of wonders of divine providence towards the Christian church. The greater part of the book of Revelation is taken up in foretelling the events of this period. The success of Christ’s purchase of redemption in this period, appears mainly at the close of it, when Antichrist comes to fall, when there will be a far more glorious success of the gospel than ever was before. And that long series of events which are before, seem to be only to prepare the way for it. And in order to a more clear view of the great works of God in accomplishing the success of Christ’s redemption, and our seeing the glory of them, it will be necessary, as we have done in the foregoing periods, to consider not only the success itself, but the opposition made to it, and the great works of Satan in this period against the church and kingdom of Christ. And therefore, in taking a view of this period, I would take notice of events which may be referred to either of these heads, viz. either to the head of Satan’s opposition to the success of Christ’s redemption, or to the head of the success of Christ’s redemption. And for the more orderly consideration of the events of this period, I would divide it into these four parts, the first reaching from the destruction of the heathen empire to the rise of Antichrist, the second, from the rise of Antichrist to the reformation in Luther’s time, the third, from thence to the present time, the fourth, from the present time, until Antichrist is fallen, and Satan’s visible kingdom on earth is destroyed.

First. I would consider the events of the first part of this period, reaching from the destruction of the heathen empire to the rise of Antichrist. And here, first, I would take notice of the opposition of Satan made in this space of time to the church, and, secondly, the success that the gospel had in it.

1. The opposition. Satan being cast out of his old heathen empire, the great red dragon, after so sore a conflict with Michael and his angels for the greater part of three hundred years, being at last entirely routed and vanquished, so that no place was found any more in heaven for him, but he was cast down, as it were, from heaven to the earth, yet does not give over his opposition to the woman, the church of Christ, concerning which all this conflict had been. But he is still in a rage, and renews his attempts, and has recourse to new devices against the church. The serpent, after he is cast out of heaven to the earth, casts out of his mouth water as a flood, to cause the woman to be carried away of the flood. The opposition that he made to the church of Christ before the rise of Antichrist, was principally of two sorts. It was either by corrupting the church of Christ with heresies, or by new endeavors to restore Paganism.

(1.) I would observe, that after the destruction of the heathen Roman empire, Satan infested the church with heresies. Though there has been so glorious a work of God in delivering the church from her heathen persecutors, and overthrowing the heathen empire. Yet the days of the church's travail not being ended, and the set time of her prosperity not being yet come, as being what was to succeed the all of Antichrist, therefore the peace and prosperity which the church enjoyed in Constantine's time, was but very short:. It was a respite, which gave the church a time of peace and silence, as it were, for half an hour, wherein the four angels held the four winds from blowing, until the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads. But the church soon began to be greatly infested with heresies. The two principal, and those which did most infest the church, were the Arian and Pelagian heresies. The Arians began soon after Constantine came to the throne. They denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and maintained, that they were but mere creatures. This heresy increased more and more in the church, and prevailed like a flood, which threatened to overflow all, and entirely to carry away the church, in so much that before that age was out, that is, before the fourth century after Christ was finished, the greater part of the Christian church were become Arians. There were some emperors, the successors of Constantine, who were Arians, so that the Arians being the prevailing party, and having the civil authority on their side, did raise a great persecution against the true church of Christ, so that this heresy might well be compared to a flood out of the mouth of the serpent, which threatened to overthrow all, and quite carry away the woman. The Pelagian heresy arose in the beginning of the next century. It began by one Pelagius, who was born in Britain. His British name was Morgan. He denied original sin, and the influence of the Spirit of God in conversion, and held the power of free will, and many other things of like tendency. And this heresy did for a while greatly infest the church. Pelagius' principal antagonist, who wrote in defense of the orthodox faith, was Augustin.

(2.) The other kind of opposition which Satan made against the church, was in his endeavors to restore Paganism. And his first attempt to restore it in the Roman empire, was by Julian the apostate. Julian was nephew to Constantine the Great. When Constantine died, he left his empire to his three sons. And when they were dead, Julian the apostate reigned in their stead. He had been a professed Christian. But he fell from Christianity, and turned Pagan, and therefore is called

the apostate. When he came to the throne, he used his utmost endeavors to overthrow the Christian church, and set up Paganism again in the empire. He put down the Christian magistrates, and set up heathens in their room. He rebuilt the heathen temples, and set up the heathen worship in the empire, and became a most notorious persecutor of the Christians, and, as is thought, against his own light. He used to call Christ, by way of reproach, the Galilean. He was killed with a lance in his wars with the Persians. When he saw that he was mortally wounded, he took a handful of his blood, and threw it up towards heaven, crying out, “Thou hast overcome, O Galilean.” And he is commonly thought by divines to have committed the unpardonable sin.

Another way that Satan attempted to restore Paganism in the Roman empire, was by the invasions and conquests of heathen nations. For in this space of time that we are upon, the Goths and Vandals, and other heathen barbarous nations, that dwelt in the north of the Roman empire, invaded the empire, and obtained great conquests, and even overran the empire, and in the fifth century took the city of Rome, and finally subdued and conquered, and took possession of the Western empire, as it was called, or the western half of the empire, and divided it amongst them, divided it into ten kingdoms, with which began the ten horns of the beast. For we are told, that the ten horns are ten kings, who should rise in the latter part of the Roman empire. These are also represented by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image. The invasion and conquests of these heathen nations are supposed to be foretold in Revelation 8:1-13, in what came to pass under the sounding of the first four trumpets. Now these nations, who now took possession of the Western empire, were heathens, so that by their means heathenism was again for a while restored after it had been rooted out. So much for the opposition of Satan against the success of the gospel during this space before the rise of Antichrist. I proceed, 2. To show what success there was of the gospel in this space, notwithstanding this opposition.

(1.) I would observe, that the opposition of Satan in those things was baffled. Though the dragon cast out of his mouth such a flood after the woman to carry her away, yet he could not obtain his design. But the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. These heresies, which for a while so much prevailed, yet after a while dwindled away, and orthodoxy was again restored. And his attempt by Julian was baffled at his death.

(2.) The gospel, during this space of time, was further propagated amongst many barbarous heathen nations in the confines of the Roman empire. In the time of Constantine there was a considerable propagation of the gospel in the East Indies, chiefly by the ministry of one Frumentius. Great numbers of the Iberians, an heathen people, were converted to Christianity by a Christian woman of eminent piety, whom they had taken captive. And some account is given of several other barbarous nations who were not within the Roman empire, that great numbers of them were brought to receive the gospel by the teaching and examples of captives whom they had taken in war. And after this, about the year of Christ 372, the gospel was propagated among the barbarous people that dwelt in Arabia, as it was also among some of the northern nations, particularly a prince of the country of the Goths about this time became Christian, and a great number of his people with him. Towards the latter end of this century, the gospel was also further propagated among the Persians, and also the Scythians, a barbarous people, that the apostle mentions in Colossians 3:11, “Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.” And after this, about the year 430, there was a remarkable conversion of a heathen people, called the Burgundians, to the

Christian faith. About the same time, in this age, the gospel began to be propagated in Ireland. And the Irish, who until now had been heathen, began to receive the Christian faith. About the same time it was further propagated among some barbarous people in Scotland, and also in some other places. In the next century to this, one Zathus, a heathen king, who ruled over a people called the Colchians, was brought to renounce his heathenism, and to embrace the Christian religion. Several other barbarous nations are recorded to have renounced heathenism and embraced Christianity about this time, that I cannot stand to mention.

Thus I have briefly considered the principal events or providence which concern the success of the gospel of Christ from Constantine to the rise of Antichrist.

Second. I come now to the second part of the time from Constantine to the destruction of Antichrist, viz. that which reaches from the rise of Antichrist to the Reformation by Luther and others. And this is the darkest and most dismal day that ever the Christian church saw, and probably the darkest that ever it will see. The time of the church's affliction and persecution, as was observed before, is from Christ's resurrection until the destruction of Antichrist, excepting what the day is, as it were, shortened by some intermissions and times of respite, which God gives for the elect's sake. But this time, from the rise of Antichrist until the Reformation, was a space wherein the Christian church was in its greatest depth of depression, and its darkest time of all. The true church in this space was for many hundred years in a state of great obscurity, like the woman in the wilderness. Indeed she was almost hid from sight and observation. In speaking of the events of this space of time, I would, 1. Take notice of the great machinations and works of the devil against the kingdom of Christ during this time, 2. How the church of Christ was upheld during this time.

I. I would take notice of the great works of the devil against the kingdom of Christ during this time. Satan had done great things against the Christian church before, but had been baffled once and again. Michael and his angels had obtained a glorious victory. How terrible was his opposition during the continuance of the heathen empire; and how glorious was Christ's victory and triumph over him in the time of Constantine! It pleased God now to prepare the way for a yet more glorious victory over him, to suffer him to renew his strength, and to do the utmost that his power and subtlety can help him to. And therefore he suffers him to have a long time to lay his schemes, and to establish his interest, and make his matters strong, and suffers him to carry his designs a great length indeed, almost to the swallowing up of his church, and to exercise a high, and proud, and almost uncontrolled dominion in the world, a long time before Christ finally conquers, and subdues, and utterly ruing his visible kingdom on earth, as he will do in the time of the destruction of Antichrist, thus gloriously triumphing over him after he has done the utmost that his power and subtlety can extend to, and showing that he is above him, after he has dealt most proudly, and lifted himself highest of all. The two great works of the devil which he in this space of time wrought against the kingdom of Christ, are his creating his Antichristian and Mahometan kingdoms, which have been, and still are, two kingdoms, of great extent and strength, both together swallowing up the ancient Roman empire, the kingdom of Antichrist swallowing up the Western empire, and Satan's Mahometan kingdom the Eastern empire. As the Scriptures in the book of Revelation represent it, it is in the destruction of these that the glorious victory of Christ, at the introduction of the glorious times of the church, will mainly consist. And here let us briefly observe how Satan erects and maintains these two great kingdoms of his in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

(1.) With respect to the kingdom of Antichrist. This seems to be the masterpiece of all the contrivances of the devil against the kingdom of Christ, and is evidently so spoken of in Scripture, and therefore Antichrist is the man of sin, or that man of sin, 2 Thessalonians 2:3. He is so called emphatically, as though he were so eminently. So he is called Antichrist, which signifies the opponent or adversary of Christ. Not that he is the only opponent of Christ. There were many others besides him. The Apostle John observes, that in his days there were many Antichrists. But yet this is called the Antichrist, as though there were none but he, because he was so eminently, and above all others. So this contrivance of the devil, is called the mystery of iniquity, 2 Thessalonians 2:7 And we find no enemy of Christ one half so much spoken of in the prophecies of Revelation as this. And the destruction of no enemy is spoken of as so glorious and happy for the church. The craft and subtlety of the devil, above all appears in this work of his, as might be shown, were it not that it would consume too much time. This is a contrivance of the devil to turn the ministry of the Christian church into a ministry of the devil, and to turn these angels of the churches into fallen angels, and so into devils. And in the tyranny, and superstition, and idolatry, and persecution, which he sets up, he contrives to make an image of ancient Paganism, and more than to restore what was lost in the empire by the overthrow of Paganism in the time of Constantine. So that by these means the bead of the beast, which was wounded unto death in Constantine, has his deadly wound healed in Antichrist, Revelation 13:3. And the dragon, that formerly reigned in the heathen Roman empire, being cast out thence, after the beast with seven heads and ten horns rises up out of the sea, gives him his power, and seat, and great authority. And all the world wonders after the beast.

I am far from pretending to determine the time when the reign of Antichrist began, which is a point that has been so much controverted among divines and expositors. It is certain that the 1260 days, or years, which are so often in Scripture mentioned as the time of the continuance of Antichrist's reign, did not commence before the year of Christ 479, because if they did, they would have ended, and Antichrist would have fallen before now. But I shall not pretend to determine precisely how long it was after this that that period began. The rise of Antichrist was gradual. The Christian church corrupted itself in many things presently after Constantine's time, growing more and more superstitious in its worship, by degrees bringing in many ceremonies into the worship of God, until at length they brought in the worship of saints, and set up images in their churches, and the clergy in general, and especially the bishop of Rome, assumed more and more authority to himself. In the primitive times he was only a minister of a congregation, then a standing moderator of a presbytery, then a diocesan bishop, then a metropolitan, which is equivalent to an archbishop. Then he was a patriarch. Then afterwards he claimed the power of universal bishop over the whole Christian church through the world, wherein he was opposed for a while, but afterwards was confirmed in it by the civil power of the Emperor in the year 606. After that he claimed the power of a temporal prince, and so was wont to carry two swords, to signify that both the temporal and spiritual sword was his, and claimed more and more authority, until at length he, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, claimed the very same power that Christ would have, if he was present on earth, and reigned on his throne, or the same power that belongs to God, and used to be called God on earth, and used to be submitted to by all the princes of Christendom. He claimed power to crown princes, and to degrade them at his pleasure. And this power was owned. And it came to that, that kings and emperors used to kiss his feet. The emperors were wont to receive their crowns at his hands, and princes were wont to dread the displeasure of the Pope, as they would

dread a thunderbolt from heaven. For if the Pope was pleased to excommunicate a prince, all his subjects were at once freed from their allegiance to him, yea, and obliged not to own him any more, on pain of excommunication. And not only so, but any man might kill him wherever he found him. And further, the Pope was believed to have power to damn men at pleasure. For whoever died under his excommunication, was looked upon as certainly damned. And several emperors were actually deposed and ejected, and died miserably by his means. And if the people of any state or kingdom did not please him, he had power to lay that state or kingdom under an interdict, which was a sentence pronounced by the Pope against that state or kingdom, whereby all sacred administrations among them could have no validity. There could be no valid baptism, or sacraments, or prayers, or preaching, or pardons, until that interdict was taken off, so that that people remained, in their apprehension, in a miserable, damnable state, and therefore dreaded it as they would a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven. And in order to execute his wrath on a prince or people with whom the Pope was displeased, other princes must also be put to a great deal of trouble and expense. And as the Pope and his clergy robbed the people of their ecclesiastical and civil liberties and privileges, so they also robbed them of their estates, and drained all Christendom of their money, and engrossed the most of their riches into their own coffers by their vast revenues, besides pay for pardons and indulgences, baptisms and extreme unctions, deliverance out of purgatory, and an hundred other things. — See how well this agrees with the prophecies, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; Daniel 7:20-21; Revelation 13:6-7, and Revelation 17:3-4.

During this time also superstition and ignorance more and more prevailed. The Holy Scriptures by degrees were taken out of the hands of the laity, the better to promote the unscriptural and wicked designs of the Pope and the clergy. And instead of promoting knowledge among the people, they industriously promoted ignorance. It was a received maxim among them, that ignorance is the mother of devotion. And so great was the darkness of those times, that learning was almost extinct in the world. The very priests themselves, most of them, were barbarously ignorant as to any commendable learning, or any other knowledge, than their hellish craft in oppressing and tyrannizing over the souls of the people. The superstition and wickedness of the church of Rome, kept growing worse and worse until the very time of the Reformation. And the whole Christian world were led away into this great defection, excepting the remains of the Christian church in the Eastern empire that had not been utterly overthrown by the Turks, as the Greek church, and some others, which were also sunk into great darkness and gross superstition, excepting also those few that were the people of God, who are represented by the woman in the wilderness, and God’s two witnesses, of which more hereafter. This is one of those two great kingdoms which the devil in this period erected in opposition to the kingdom of Christ, and was the greatest and chief. I come now,

(2.) To speak of the other, the second, which is in many respects like unto it, viz. his Mahometan kingdom, which is another great kingdom of mighty power and vast extent, set up by Satan against the kingdom of Christ. He set this up in the Eastern empire, as he did that of Antichrist in the Western.

Mahomet was born in the year of Christ, 570, in Arabia. When he was about forty years of age, he began to give forth that he was the great prophet of God, and began to teach his new invented religion, of which he was to be worshipped as the head next under God. He published his Alcoran, which he pretended he received from the angel Gabriel. And being a subtle, crafty man, and

possessed of considerable wealth, and living among a people who were very ignorant, and greatly divided in their opinions of religious matters, by subtlety, and fair promises of a sensual paradise, he gained a number to be his followers, and set up for their prince, and propagated his religion by the sword, and made it meritorious of paradise to fight for him. By which means his party grew, and went on fighting until they conquered and brought over the neighboring countries. And so his party gradually grew until they overran a great part of the world. First, the Saracens, who were some of his followers, and were a people of the country of Arabia, where Mahomet lived, about the year 700, began dreadfully to waste the Roman empire. They overran a great many countries belonging to the empire, and continued their conquests for a long time. These are supposed to be meant by the “locusts” that we read of in Revelation. And then after this the Turks, who were originally another people, different from the Saracens, but were followers of Mahomet, conquered all the Eastern empire. They began their empire about the year of Christ 1296, and began to invade Europe 1300, and took Constantinople, and so became masters of all the Eastern empire in the year 1453, which is near three hundred years ago. And thus all those cities and countries where were those famous churches of old, that we read of in the New Testament, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc. now all became subject to the Turks. And they took possession of Constantinople, which was named after Constantine the Great, being made by him the head city of the Roman empire, whereas Rome had been until then. These are supposed to be prophesied of by the ‘horsemen’ in Revelation 9:1-21, beginning with Revelation 9:15. And the remains of the Christians that are in those parts of the world, who are mostly of the Greek church, are in miserable slavery under these Turks, and treated with a great deal of barbarity and cruelty, and are become mostly very ignorant and superstitious.

Thus I have shown what great works of Satan were wrought during this space of time in opposition to the kingdom of Christ.

2. I come now to show how the church of Christ was upheld through this dark time. — And here,

(1.) It is to be observed, that towards the former part of this space of time, some of the nations of Christendom held out a long time before they complied with the corruptions and usurpations of the church of Rome. Though all the world wondered after the beast, yet all nations did not fall in at once. Many of the principal corruptions of the church of Rome were brought in with a great deal of struggle and opposition. And particularly, when the Pope gave out, that he was universal bishop, many churches greatly opposed him in it. And it was a long time before they would yield to his exorbitant claims. And so, when the worship of images was first brought into the churches, there were many who greatly opposed it, and long held out against it. And so with respect to other corruptions the church of Rome. Those people that dwelt nearer to the city of Rome complied sooner, but some that were more remote, were a long time before they could be induced to put their necks under the yoke. And particularly ecclesiastical history gives an account, that it was so with great part of the churches in England, and Scotland, and France, who retained the ancient purity of doctrine and worship much longer than many others who were nearer the chief seat of Antichrist.

(2.)In every age of this dark time, there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom, who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the church of Rome. There is no one age of Antichrist, even in the darkest times of all, but ecclesiastical historians mention great many

by name who manifested an abhorrence of the Pope, and his idolatrous worship, and pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries, as historians demonstrate, and mention them by name, and give an account of the testimony which they held. Many of them were private persons, and many of them ministers, and some magistrates, and persons of great distinction. And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.

(3.) Besides these particular persons dispersed here and there, there was a certain people, called the Waldenses, who lived separate from all the rest of the world, who kept themselves pure, and constantly bore a testimony against the church of Rome through all this dark time. The place where they dwelt was the Vaudois, or the five valleys of Piedmont, a very mountainous country, between Italy and France. The place where they lived was compassed about with those exceeding high mountains called the Alps, which were almost impassable. The passage over these mountainous desert countries, was so difficult, that the valleys where this people dwelt were almost inaccessible. There this people lived for many ages, as it were, alone, in a state of separation from all the world, having very little to do with any other people. And there they served God in the ancient purity of his worship, and never submitted to the church of Rome. This place in this desert mountainous country, probably was the place especially meant in Revelation 12:6, as the place prepared of God for the woman, that they should feed her there during the reign of Antichrist.

Some of the Popish writers themselves own, that that people never submitted to the church of Rome. One of the Popish writers, speaking of the Waldenses, says, The heresy of the Waldenses is the oldest heresy in the world. It is supposed that this people first betook themselves to this desert secret place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutions which were before Constantine the Great. And thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, Revelation 12:6. And so, Revelation 12:14, “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place: where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” And the people being settled there, their posterity continued there from age to age afterwards, and being, as it were, by natural walls, as well as by God’s grace, separated from the rest of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption.

These especially were those virgins who were not defiled with the rest of women, or when other women prostituted themselves and were defiled, but they kept themselves pure for Christ alone. They followed the Lamb, their spiritual husband, whithersoever he went. They followed him into this hideous wilderness, Revelation 14:4-5. — Their doctrine and their worship, as there still remain accounts of them, appear to be the same with the Protestant doctrine and worship. And by the confession of Popish writers, they were a people remarkable for the strictness of their lives, for charity and other Christian virtues. They lived in external poverty in this hideous country, but they chose this rather than to comply with the great corruptions of the rest of the world.

They living in so secret a place, it was a long time before they seem to have been much taken notice of by the Romanists. But at last falling under observation, they went out in mighty armies against them, and fell upon them with insatiable cruelty, barbarously massacring and putting to

death men, women, and children, with all imaginable tortures. And so continued persecuting them with but little intermission for several hundred years, by which means many of them were driven out of their old habitations in the valleys of Piedmont, and fled into all parts of Europe, carrying with them their doctrine, to which many were brought over. So their persecutors could not by all their cruelties extirpate the church of God, so fulfilling his word, “that the gates of hell should not prevail a against it.”

(4.) Towards the latter part of this dark time, several noted divines openly appeared to defend the truth, and bear testimony against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and had many followers. The first and principal of these was a certain English divine, whose name was John Wickliff, who appeared about 140 years before the Reformation, and strenuously opposed the Popish religion, and taught the same doctrine that the Reformers afterwards did, and had many followers in England. He was hotly persecuted in his lifetime, yet died in peace. And after he was buried, his bones were dug up by his persecutors, and burnt. His followers remained in considerable numbers in England until the Reformation, and were cruelly persecuted, and multitudes put to death for their religion.

Wickliff had many disciples and followers, not only in England, but in other parts of Europe, whither his books were carried, and particularly in Bohemia, among whom were two eminent divines. The name of one was John Huss. The other’s name was Jerome, a divine belonging to Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. These strenuously opposed the church of Rome, and had many who adhered to them. They were both burnt by the Papists for their doctrine. And their followers in Bohemia were cruelly persecuted, but never extirpated until the Reformation.

Thus having gone through this dark time of the church, which is the second part of the space from Constantine the Great to the destruction of Antichrist, I come now,

03.11c. Period 3 Part 2 (Cont'd)

Third. To the third part, viz. that which begins with the Reformation, and reaches to the present time. And here I would, 1. Speak of the Reformation itself. 2. The opposition which the devil has made to the Reformed church. 3. What success there has lately been of the gospel in one place and another. 4. What the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of his purchase.

1. Here the first thing to be taken notice of is the Reformation. This was begun about 220 years ago, first in Saxony in Germany, by the preaching of Martin Luther, who being stirred in his spirit, to see the horrid practices of the Popish clergy, and having set himself diligently to inquire after truth, by the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the church, very openly and boldly decried the corruptions and usurpations of the Romish church in his preaching and writings, and had soon a great number that fell in with him, among whom was the Elector of Saxony, the sovereign prince of the country to which he belonged. This greatly alarmed the church of Rome. And it did as it were rally all its force to oppose him and his doctrine, and fierce wars and persecutions were raised against it. But yet it went on by the labors of Luther and Melancthon in Germany, and Zuinglius in Switzerland, and other eminent divines, who were contemporary with Luther, and fell in with him, and particularly Calvin, who appeared something after the beginning of the Reformation, but was one of the most eminent Reformers.

Many of the princes of Germany soon fell in with the Reformed religion, and many other states and kingdoms in Europe, as England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, great part of France, Poland, Lithuania, Switzerland, and the Low Countries. So that it is thought, that heretofore about half Christendom were of the Protestant religion, though, since, the Papists have gained ground, so that the Protestants now have not so great a proportion.

Thus God began gloriously to revive his church again, and advance the kingdom of his Son, after such a dismal night of darkness as had been before from the rise of late expositor (Mr. Lowman) who explains the first five vials in Revelation 16:1-21, with greater probability perhaps than any who went before him, explains the fifth vial, which was poured out on the seat of the beast, of what came to pass in the Reformation, explaining the four preceding vials of certain great judgments God brought on the Popish dominions before the Reformation. It is said, Revelation 16:10 that “the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast,” in the original, it is the throne of the beast, “and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.” He poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast, i.e. on the authority and dominion of the Pope. So the word throne is often used in Scripture, so 1 Kings 1:37, “As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David,” i.e. make his dominion and authority greater, and his kingdom more glorious. But now, in the Reformation, the vials of God’s wrath were poured out on the throne of the beast. His throne was terribly shaken and diminished. The Pope’s authority and dominion was greatly diminished,

both as to the extent and degree. He lost, as was said before, about half his dominions. And besides, since the Reformation, the Pope has lost great part of that authority, even in the Popish dominions, which he had before. He is not regarded, and his power is dreaded in no measure as it was wont to be. The powers of Europe have learned not to put their necks under the Pope's feet, as formerly they were wont to do. So that he is as a lion that has lost his teeth, in comparison of what he was once. And when the Pope and his clergy, enraged to see their authority so diminished at the Reformation, laid their heads together, and joined their forces to destroy the Reformation, their policy, which was wont to serve them so well, failed. And they found their kingdom full of darkness, so that they could do nothing, any more than the Egyptians, who rose not from their seats for three days. The Reformed church was defended as Lot and the angels were in Sodom, by smiting the Sodomites with darkness or blindness, that they could not find the door. God then fulfilled that in Job 5:11, etc. "To set up on high those that be low; that those which mourn may be exalted to safety. He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise. He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the forward is carried headlong. They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night. But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty."

Those proud enemies of God's people being so disappointed, and finding themselves so unable to uphold their own dominion and authority, this made them as it were to gnaw their tongues for pain, or bite their tongues for mere rage.

2. I proceed therefore to show what opposition has been made to this success of Christ's purchase by the Reformation by Satan and his adherents, observing, as we go along, how far they have been baffled, and how far they have been successful. The opposition which Satan has made against the Reformed religion has been principally of the following kinds, viz. that which was made. 1. By a general council of the church of Rome. 2. By secret plots and devices. 3. By open wars and invasions. 4. By cruel oppression and persecution, and 5. By bringing in corrupt opinions.

(1.) The first opposition that I shall take notice of is that which was made by the clergy of the church of Rome uniting together in a general council. This was the famous council of Trent, which the Pope called a little while after the Reformation. In that council, there met together six cardinals, thirty-two archbishops, two hundred and twenty-eight bishops, besides innumerable others of the Romish clergy. This council, in all their sittings, including the times of intermission between their sittings, was held for twenty-five years together. Their main business all this while was to concert measures for establishing the church of Rome against the Reformers, and for destroying the Reformation. But it proved that they were not able to perform their enterprise. The Reformed church, notwithstanding their holding so great a council, and for so long a time together against it, remained, and remains still. So that the counsel of the froward is carried headlong, and their kingdom is full of darkness, and they weary themselves to find the door.

Thus the church of Rome, instead of repenting of their deeds, when such clear light was held forth to them by Luther, and other Servants of God, the Reformers, does, by general agreement in council, persist in their vile corruptions and wickedness, and obstinate opposition to the kingdom of Christ. The doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, which were chiefly condemned by

the Reformed, were confirmed by the decrees of their council. And the corruptions, in many respects, were carried higher than ever before. And they uttered blasphemous reproaches and curses against the Reformed religion, and all the Reformed church was excommunicated and anathematized by them. And so, according to the prophecy, “they blasphemed God.” Thus God hardened their hearts, intending to destroy them.

(2.) The Papists have often endeavored to overthrow the Reformation by secret plots and conspiracies. So there were many plots against the life of Luther. The Papists were engaged in contriving to dispatch him, and to put him out of their way. And he, as he was a very bold man, often very much exposed himself in the cause of Christ. But yet they were wonderfully prevented from hurting him, and he at last died in his bed in peace. And so there have been from time to time innumerable schemes secretly laid for the overthrow of the Protestant religion, among which, that which seems to be most considerable, and which seemed to be the most likely to have taken effect, was that which was in the time of King James II of England, which is within the memory of many of us. There was at that time a strong conspiracy between the King of England and Lewis XIV of France, who were both Papists, to extirpate the Northern heresy, as they called the Protestant religion not only out of England, but out of all Europe, and had laid their schemes so, that they seemed to be almost sure of their purpose. They looked upon it, that if the Reformed religion were suppressed in the British realms, and in the Netherlands, which were the strongest part, and chief defense of the Protestant interest, they should have easy work with the rest. And just as their matters seemed to be come to a head, and their enterprise ripe for execution, God, in his providence, suddenly dashed all their schemes in pieces by the Revolution, at the coming in of King William and Queen Mary, by which all their designs were at an end, and the Protestant interest was more strongly established, by the crown of England’s being established in the Protestant house of Hanover, and a Papist being, by the constitution of the nation, forever rendered incapable of wearing the crown of England. Thus they groped in darkness at noon day as in the night, and their hands could not perform their enterprise, and their kingdom was full or darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

After this, there was a deep design laid to bring the same thing to pass in the latter end of Queen Anne’s reign, by the bringing in of the Popish pretender, which was no less suddenly and totally baffled by divine Providence, as the plots against the Reformation, by bringing in the pretender, have been from time to time.

(3.) The Reformation has often been opposed by open wars and invasions. So in the beginning of the Reformation, the Emperor of Germany, to suppress the Reformation, declared war with the Duke of Saxony, and the principal men who favored and received Luther’s doctrine. But they could not obtain their end. They could not suppress the Reformation. For the same end, the King of Spain maintained a long war with Holland and the Low Countries in the century before last. But those cruel wars issued greatly to the disadvantage of the Romish church, as they occasioned the setting up of one of the most powerful Protestant states in Europe, which, next to Great Britain, is the chief barrier of the Protestant religion. And the design of the Spanish invasion of England in Queen Elizabeth’s time, was to suppress and root out the Reformed religion. And therefore they brought in their fleet all manner of instruments of cruelty wherewith to torture the Protestants who would not renounce the Protestant religion. But their design was totally baffled, and their mighty fleet in a great measure ruined.

(4.) Satan has opposed the Reformation with cruel persecutions. The persecutions with which the Protestants in one kingdom and another have been persecuted by the church of Rome, have in many respects been far beyond any of the heathen persecutions which were before Constantine the Great, and beyond all that ever were before. So that Antichrist has proved the greatest and cruelest enemy to the church of Christ that ever was in the world, in this, as well as in all other respects, agreeable to the description given of the church of Rome, Revelation 17:6, “And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” And, Revelation 18:24, “And on her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all them that were slain upon the earth.” The heathen persecutions had been very dreadful. But now persecution by the church of Rome was improved, and studied, and cultivated, as an art or science. Such ways of afflicting and tormenting were found out, as are beyond the thought and invention of ordinary men, or men who are unstudied in those things, and beyond the invention of all former ages. And that persecution might be managed the more effectually, there were certain societies of men established in various parts of the Popish dominions, whose business it should be to study, and improve, and practice persecution in its highest perfection, which are those societies called the courts of inquisition. A reading of the particular histories of the Romish persecution, and their courts of inquisition, will give that idea which a few words cannot express. When the Reformation began, the beast with seven heads and ten horns began to rage in a dreadful manner. After the Reformation, the church of Rome renewed its persecution of the poor Waldenses, and great multitudes of them were cruelly tortured and put to death. Soon after the Reformation, there were terrible persecutions in various parts of Germany, and especially in Bohemia, which lasted for thirty years together, in which so much blood was shed for the sake of religion, that a certain writer compares it to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany. The countries of Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary, were in like manner deluged with Protestant blood. By means of these and other cruel persecutions, the Protestant religion was in a great measure suppressed in Bohemia, and the Palatinate, and Hungary, which before were as it were Protestant countries. Thus was fulfilled what was foretold of the little horn, Daniel 7:20-21, “and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” And what was foretold of the beast having seven heads and ten horns, Revelation 13:7, “And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

Also Holland and the other Low Countries were for many years a scene of nothing but the most affecting and amazing cruelties, being deluged with the blood of Protestants, under the merciless hands of the Spaniards, to whom they were then in subjection. But in this persecution, the devil in a great measure failed of his purpose, as it issued in a great part of the Netherlands casting off the Spanish yoke, and setting up a wealthy and powerful Protestant state, to the great defense of the Protestant cause ever since.

France also is another country, which, since the Reformation, in some respects, perhaps more than any other, has been a scene of dreadful cruelties suffered by the Protestants there. After many cruelties had been exercised towards the Protestants in that kingdom, there was begun a persecution of them in the year 1571, in the reign of Charles IX, King of France. It began with a

cruel massacre, wherein 70,000 Protestants were slain in a few days' time, as the King boasted. And in all this persecution, he slew, as is supposed, 300,000 martyrs. And it is reckoned, that about this time, within thirty years, there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Protestant religion, 39 princes, 148 counts, 234 barons, 147,518 gentlemen, and 760,000 of the common people. But all these persecutions were, for exquisite cruelty, far exceeded by those which followed in the reign of Lewis XIV, which indeed are supposed to exceed all others that ever have been, and being long continued, by reason of the long reign of that king, almost wholly extirpated the Protestant religion out of that kingdom, where had been before a multitude of famous Protestant churches all over the kingdom. Thus it was given to the beast to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them.

There was also a terrible persecution in England in Queen Mary's time, wherein great numbers in all parts of the kingdom were burnt alive. And after this, though the Protestant religion has been for the most part established by law in England, yet there have been very severe persecutions by the high churchmen, who symbolize in many things with the Papists. Such a persecution was that which occasioned our forefathers to flee from their native country, and to come and settle in this land, which was then a hideous howling wilderness. And these persecutions were continued with little intermission until King William came to the throne.

Scotland has also been the scene, for many years together, of cruelties and blood by the hands of high churchmen, such as came very little short of the Popish persecution in Queen Mary's days, and in many things much exceeded it, which continued until they were delivered by King William.

Ireland also has been as it were overwhelmed with Protestant blood. In the days of King Charles I of England, above 200,000 Protestants were cruelly murdered in that kingdom in a few days, the Papists, by a secret agreement, rising all over the kingdom at an appointed time, intending to kill every Protestant in the kingdom at once.

Besides these, there have been very cruel persecutions in Italy, and Spain, and other places, which I shall not stand to relate.

Thus did the devil, and his great minister Antichrist, rage with such violence and cruelty against the church of Christ. And thus did the whore of Babylon make herself drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. And thus, by these persecutions, the Protestant church has been much diminished! Yet with all have they not been able to prevail; but still the Protestant church is upheld, and Christ fulfills his promise, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church."

(5.) The last kind of opposition that Satan has made to the Reformation is by corrupt opinions. Satan has opposed the light of the gospel which shone forth in the Reformation, with many corrupt opinions, which he has brought in and propagated in the world. And here, in the first place, the first opposition of this kind was by raising up the sect of the Anabaptists, which began about four or five years after the Reformation itself began. This sect, as it first appeared in Germany, were vastly more extravagant than the present Anabaptists are in England. They held a great many exceeding corrupt opinions. One tenet of theirs was that there ought to be no civil authority, and so that it was lawful to rebel against civil authority. And on this principle, they refused to submit to magistrates, or any human laws, and gathered together in vast armies, to defend themselves against their civil rulers, and put all Germany into an uproar, and so kept it for some time. The next opposition of this

kind to the Reformation was that which was made by enthusiasts. Those are called enthusiasts who falsely pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost as the prophets were. These began in Germany about ten years after Luther began the Reformation. And there arose various sects of them who were exceeding wild and extravagant. The followers of these are the Quakers in England, and other parts of the British dominions. The next to these were the Socinians, who had their beginning chiefly in Poland, by the teaching of two men. The name of the one was Laelius Socinus, of the other, Faustus Socinus. They held, that Christ was a mere man, and denied Christ's satisfaction, and most of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. Their heresy has since been greatly propagated among Protestants in Poland, Germany, Holland, England, and other places.

After these arose the Arminians. These first appeared in Holland about 130 years ago. They take their name from a Dutchman, whose name was Jacobus Van Harmin, which, turned into Latin, is called Jacobus Arminius. And from his name the whole sect are called Arminians. This Jacobus Arminius was first a minister at Amsterdam, and then a professor of divinity in the university of Leyden. He had many followers in Holland. There was upon this a synod of all the Reformed churches called together, who met at Dort in Holland. The synod of Dort condemned them. But yet they spread and prevailed. They began to prevail in England in the reign of Charles I, especially in the church of England. The church of England divines before that were almost universally Calvinists. But since that, Arminianism has gradually more and more prevailed, until they are become almost universally Arminians. And not only so, but Arminianism has greatly prevailed among the Dissenters, and has spread greatly in New England, as well as Old.

Since this, Arianism has been revived. As I told you before, Arianism, a little after Constantine's time, almost swallowed up the Christian world, like a flood out of the mouth of the serpent which threatened to swallow up the woman. And of late years, this heresy has been revived in England, and greatly prevails there, both in the church of England, and among Dissenters. These hold, that Christ is but a mere creature, though they grant that he is the greatest of all creatures.

Again, another thing which has of late exceedingly prevailed among Protestants, and especially in England, is Deism. The Deists wholly cast off the Christian religion, and are professed infidels. They are not like the heretics, Arians, Socinians, and others, who own the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and hold the Christian religion to be the true religion, but only deny these and these fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. They deny the whole Christian religion. Indeed they own the being of God, but deny that Christ was the son of God, and say he was a mere cheat. And so they say all the prophets and apostles were. And they deny the whole Scripture. They deny that any of it is the Word of God. They deny any revealed religion, or any Word of God at all, and say, that God has given mankind no other light to walk by but their own reason. These sentiments and opinions our nation, which is the principal nation of the Reformation, is very much overrun with, and they prevail more and more.

Thus much concerning the opposition that Satan has made against the Reformation.

3. I proceed now to show what success the gospel has more lately had, or what success it has had in these later times of the Reformed church. This success may be reduced to these three heads. 1. Reformation in doctrine and worship in countries called Christian. 2. Propagation of the gospel among the heathen. 3. Revival of religion in the power and practice of it.

(1.) As to the first, viz. reformation in doctrine, the most considerable success of the gospel that has been of late of this kind, has been in the empire of Muscovy, which is a country of vast extent. The people of this country, so many of them as call themselves Christians, professed to be of the Greek church, but were barbarously ignorant, and very superstitious, until of late years. Their late Emperor Peter the Great, who reigned until within these twenty years, set himself to reform the people of his dominions, and took great pains to bring them out of their darkness, and to have them instructed in religion. And to that end, he set up schools of learning, and ordered the Bible to be printed in the language of the country, and made a law that every family should keep the Holy Scriptures in their houses, and that every person should be able to read the same, and that no person should be allowed to marry until they were able to read the Scriptures. He also reformed the churches of his country in many of their superstitions, whereby the religion professed and practiced in Muscovy is much nearer to that of the Protestants than formerly it used to be. This emperor gave great encouragement to the exercise of the Protestant religion in his dominions. And since that Muscovy has become a land of light, in comparison of what it was before. Wonderful alterations have been brought about in the face of religion for the better within these fifty years past.

(2.) As to the second kind of success which the gospel has lately had, viz. its propagation among the heathen, I would take notice of three things.

[1.] The propagation there has been of the gospel among the heathen here in America. This American continent on which we live, which is a very great part of the world, and, together with its neighboring seas adjoining, takes up one side of the globe, was wholly unknown to all Christian nations until these latter times. It was not known that there was any such part of the world, though it was very full of people. And therefore here the devil had the people that inhabited this part of the world as it were secure to himself, out of the reach of the light of the gospel, and so out of the way of molestation in his dominion over them. And here the many nations of Indians worshipped him as God from age to age, while the gospel was confined to the opposite side of the globe. It is a thing which, if I remember right, I have somewhere lit of as probably supposed from some remaining accounts of things, that the occasion of the first peopling of America was this, that the devil being alarmed and surprised by the wonderful success of the gospel which there was the first three hundred years after Christ, and by the downfall of the heathen empire in the time of Constantine, and seeing the gospel spread so fast, and fearing that his heathenish kingdom would be wholly overthrown through the world, led away a people from the other continent into America, that they might be quite out of the reach of the gospel, that here he might quietly possess them, and reign over them as their god. It is what many writers give an account of. that some of the nations of Indians, when the Europeans first came into America, had a tradition among them, that their god first led them into this continent, and went before them in an ark.

Whether this was so or not, yet it is certain that the devil did here quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor nations of Indians for many ages. But in later times God has sent the gospel into these parts of the world, and now the Christian church is set up here in New England, and in other parts of America, where before had been nothing but the grossest heathenish darkness. Great part of America is now full of Bibles, and full of at least the form of the worship of the true God and Jesus Christ where the name of Christ before had not been heard of for many ages, if at all. And though there has been but a small propagation of the gospel among the heathen here, in comparison of

what were to be wished for. Yet there has been something worthy to be taken notice of. There was something remarkable in the first times of New England, and something remarkable has appeared of late here, and in other parts of America among many Indians, of an inclination to be instructed in the Christian religion. And however small the propagation of the gospel among the heathen here in America has been hitherto, yet I think we may well look upon the discovery of so great a part of the world as America, and bringing the gospel into it, as one thing by which divine Providence is preparing the way for the future glorious times of the church, when Satan's kingdom shall be overthrown, not only throughout the Roman empire, but throughout the whole habitable globe, on every side, and on all its continents. When those times come, then doubtless the gospel, which is already brought over into America, shall have glorious success, and all the inhabitants of this new discovered world shall become subjects of the kingdom of Christ, as well as all the other ends of the earth. And in all probability Providence has so ordered it, that the mariner's compass, which is an invention of later times, whereby men are enabled to sail over the widest ocean, when before they durst not venture far from land, should prove a preparation for what God intends to bring to pass in the glorious times of the church, viz. the sending forth the gospel wherever any of the children of men dwell, how far soever off, and however separated by wide oceans from those parts of the world which are already Christianized.

[2.] There has of late years been a very considerable propagation of the gospel among the heathen in the dominions of Muscovy. I have already observed the reformation which there has lately been among those who are called Christians there. But I now speak of the heathen. Great part of the vast dominions of the Emperor of Muscovy, are gross heathens. The greater part of Great Tartary, a heathen country, has in later times been brought under the Muscovite government. And there have been of late great numbers of those heathen who have renounced their heathenism, and have embraced the Christian religion.

[3.] There has been lately a very considerable propagation of the Christian religion among the heathen in the East Indies, particularly, many in a country in the East Indies called Malabar, have been brought over to the Christian Protestant religion, chiefly by the labors of certain missionaries sent thither to instruct them by the King of Denmark, who have brought over many heathens to the Christian faith, and have set up schools among them, and a printing press to print Bibles and other books for their instruction, in their own language, with great success.

(3.) The last kind of success which there has lately been of the gospel, which I shall take notice of, is the revivals of the power and practice of religion which have lately been. And here I shall take notice of but two instances.

[1.] There has not long since been a remarkable revival of the power and practice of religion in Saxony in Germany, through the endeavors of an eminent divine there, whose name was August Herman Franke, professor of divinity at Halle in Saxony, who being a person of eminent charity, the great work that God wrought by him, began with his setting on foot a charitable design. It began only with his placing an alms box at his study door, into which some poor mites were thrown, whereby books were bought for the instruction of the poor. And God was pleased so wonderfully to smile on his design, and so to pour out a spirit of charity on people there on that occasion, that with their charity he was enabled in a little time to erect public schools for the instruction of poor children, and an orphan house for the supply and instruction of the poor. So that

at last it came to that, that near five hundred children were maintained and instructed in learning and piety by the charity of others. And the number continued to increase more and more for many years, and until the last account I have seen. This was accompanied with a wonderful reformation and revival of religion, and a spirit of piety, in the city and university of Halle, and thus it continued. Which also had great influence in many other places in Germany. Their example seemed remarkably to stir up multitudes to their imitation.

[2.] Another thing, which it would be ungrateful in us not to take notice of, is that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God which has been of late in this part of New England, of which we, in this town, have had such a share. But it is needless for me particularly to describe it, it being what you have so lately been eye witnesses to, and I hope multitudes of you sensible of the benefit of.

Thus I have mentioned the more remarkable instances of the success which the gospel has lately had in the world.

4. I proceed now to the last thing that was proposed to be considered relating to the success of Christ's redemption during this space, viz. what the state of things is now in the world with regard to the church of Christ, and the success of Christ's purchase. And this I would do, by showing how things are now compared with the first times of the Reformation. And, 1. I would show wherein the state of things is altered for the worse, and, 2. How it is altered for the better.

(1) I would show wherein the state of things is altered from what it was in the beginning of the Reformation, for the worse. And it is so especially in these three respects.

[1.] The Reformed church is much diminished. The Reformation in the former times of it, as was observed before, was supposed to take place through one half of Christendom, excepting the Greek church, or that there were as many Protestants as Papists. But now it is not so. The Protestant church is much diminished. Heretofore there have been multitudes of Protestants in France. Many famous Protestant churches were all over that country, who used to meet together in synods, and maintain a very regular discipline. And great part of that kingdom were Protestants. The Protestant church of France was a great part of the glory of the Reformation. But now it is far otherwise. This church is all broken to pieces and scattered. The Protestant religion is almost wholly rooted out of that kingdom by the cruel persecutions which have been there, and there are now but very few Protestant assemblies in all that kingdom. The Protestant interest is also greatly diminished in Germany. There were several sovereign princes there formerly who were Protestants, whose successors are now Papists, as, particularly, the Elector Palutine, and the Elechowetor of Saxony. The kingdom of Bohemia was formerly a Protestant kingdom, but is now in the hands of the Papists. And so Hungary was formerly a Protestant country, but the Protestants there have been greatly reduced, and in a great measure subdued, by the persecutions that have been there. And the Protestant interest has no way remarkably gained ground of late of the church of Rome.

[2.] Another thing wherein the state of things is altered for the worse from what was in the former times of the Reformation, is the prevailing of licentiousness in principles and opinions. There is not now that spirit of orthodoxy which there was then. There is very little appearance of zeal for the mysterious and spiritual doctrines of Christianity. And they never were so ridiculed, and had in contempt, as they are in the present age, and especially in England, the principal kingdom of the

Reformation. In this kingdom, those principles, on which the power of godliness depends, are in a great measure exploded, and Arianism, and Socinianism, and Arminianism, and Deism, are the things which prevail, and carry almost all before them. And particularly history gives no account of any age wherein there was so great an apostasy of those who had been brought up under the light of the gospel, to infidelity. Never was there such a casting off of the Christian and all revealed religion. Never any age wherein was so much scoffing at and ridiculing the gospel of Christ, by those who have been brought up under gospel light, nor anything like it, as there is at this day.

[3.] Another thing wherein things are altered for the worse, is, that there is much less of the prevalence of the power of godliness, than there was at the beginning of the Reformation. There was a glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God that accompanied the first Reformation, not only to convert multitudes in so short a time from Popery to the true religion, but to turn many to God and true godliness. Religion gloriously flourished in one country and another, as most remarkably appealed in those times of terrible persecution, which have already been spoken of. But now there is an exceeding great decay of vital piety. Yea, it seems to be despised, called enthusiasm, whimsy, and fanaticism. Those who are truly religious, are commonly looked upon to be crack-brained, and beside their right mind. And vice and profaneness dreadfully prevail, like a flood which threatens to bear down all before it. — But I proceed now to show, (2.) In what respect things are altered for the better from what they were in the first Reformation.

[1.] The power and influence of the Pope is much diminished. Although, since the former times of the Reformation, he has gained ground in extent of dominion, yet he has lost in degree of influence. The vial which in the beginning of the Reformation was poured out on the throne of the beast, to the great diminishing of his power and authority in the world, has continued running ever since. The Pope, soon after the Reformation, became less regarded by the princes of Europe than he had been before. And so he has been since less and less. Many of the Popish princes themselves seem now to regard him very little more than they think will serve their own designs, of which there have been several remarkable proofs and instances of late.

[2.] There is far less persecution now than there was in the first times of the Reformation. You have heard already how dreadfully persecution raged in the former times of the Reformation. And there is something of it still. Some parts of the Protestant church are at this day under persecution, and so probably will be until the day of the church’s suffering and travail is at an end, which will not be until the fall of Antichrist. But it is now in no measure as it was heretofore. There does not seem to be the same spirit of persecution prevailing. It is become more out of fashion even among the Popish princes. The wickedness of the enemies of Christ, and the opposition against his cause, seem to run in another channel. The humor now is, to despise and laugh at all religion. And there seems to be a spirit of indifference about it. However, so far the state of things is better than it has been, that there is so much less of persecution.

[3.] There is a great increase of learning. In the dark times of Popery before the Reformation, learning was so far decayed, that the world seemed to be overrun with barbarous ignorance. Their very priests were many of them grossly ignorant. Learning began to revive with the Reformation, which was owing very much to the art of printing, which was invented a little before the Reformation. And since that, learning has increased more and more, and at this day is undoubtedly raised to vastly a greater height than ever it was before. And though no good use is

made of it by the greater part of learned men, yet the increase of learning in itself is a thing to be rejoiced in, because it is a good, and, if duly applied, an excellent handmaid to divinity, and is a talent which, if God gives men a heart, affords them a great advantage to do great things for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and the good of the souls of men. That learning and knowledge should greatly increase before the glorious times, seems to be foretold, Daniel 12:4, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” And however little now learning is applied to the advancement of religion. Yet we may hope that the days are approaching wherein God will make great use of it for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

God in his providence now seems to be acting over again the same part which he did a little before Christ came. The age wherein Christ came into the world, was an age wherein learning greatly prevailed, and was at a greater height than ever it had been before. And yet wickedness never prevailed more than then. God was pleased to suffer human learning to come to such a height before he sent forth the gospel into the world, that the world might see the insufficiency of all their own wisdom for the obtaining the knowledge of God, without the gospel of Christ, and the teachings of his Spirit and then, after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. And when the gospel came to prevail first without the help of man’s wisdom, then God was pleased to make use of learning as an handmaid. So now learning is at a great height at this day in the world, far beyond what it was in the age when Christ appeared. And now the world, by their learning and wisdom, do not know God. And they seem to wander in darkness, are miserably deluded, stumble and fall in matters of religion, as in midnight darkness. Trusting to their learning, they grope in the day time as in the night. Learned men are exceedingly divided in their opinions concerning the matters of religion, run into all manner of corrupt opinions, and pernicious and foolish errors. They scorn to submit their reason to divine revelation, to believe anything that is above their comprehension. And so being wise in their own eyes, they become fools, and even vain in their imaginations, and turn the truth of God into a lie, and their foolish hearts are darkened. See Romans 1:21, etc. But yet, when God has sufficiently shown men the insufficiency of human wisdom and learning for the purposes of religion, and when the appointed time comes for that glorious outpouring of the Spirit of God, when he will himself by his own immediate influence enlighten men’s minds. Then may we hope that God will make use of the great increase of learning as an handmaid to religion, as a means of the glorious advancement of the kingdom of his Son. Then shall human learning be subservient to the understanding of the Scriptures, and to a clear explanation and a glorious defense of the doctrines of Christianity. And there is no doubt to be made of it, that God in his providence has of late given the world the art of printing, and such a great increase of learning, to prepare for what he designs to accomplish for his church in the approaching days of its prosperity. And thus the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just, agreeable to Proverbs 13:22.

03.12a. Period 3 Application

History of the Work of Redemption By

Jonathan Edwards

PERIOD III FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TO THE END OF THE WORLD

APPLICATION

Having now shown how the work of redemption has been carried on from the fall of man to the present time, before I proceed any further, I would make some Application.

1. From what has been said, we may see great evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, and that the Scriptures are the Word of God. There are three arguments of this, which I shall take notice of, which may be drawn from what has been said.

(1.) It may be argued from that violent and inveterate opposition there has always appeared of the wickedness of the world against this religion. The religion that the church of God has professed from the first founding of the church after the fall to this time, has always been the same. Though the dispensations have been altered, yet the religion which the church has professed has always, as to its essentials, been the same. The church of God, from the beginning, has been one society. The Christian church which has been since Christ's ascension, is manifestly the same society continued with the church, that was before Christ came. The Christian church is grafted on their root. They are built on the same foundation. The revelation on which both have depended, is essentially the same. For as the Christian church is built on the Holy Scriptures, so was the Jewish church, though now the Scriptures be enlarged by the addition of the New Testament. But still it is essentially the same revelation with that which was given in the Old Testament only the subjects of divine revelation are now more clearly revealed in the New Testament than they were in the Old. But the sum and substance of both the Old Testament and New, is Christ and his redemption. The religion of the church of Israel, was essentially the same religion with that of the Christian church, as evidently appears from what has been said. The ground work of the religion of the church of God, both before and since Christ has appeared, is the same great scheme of redemption by the Son of God. And so the church that was before the Israelite church, was still the same society, and it was essentially the same religion that was professed and practiced in it. Thus it was from Noah to Abraham, and thus it was before the flood. And this society of men that is called the church, has always been built or the foundation of those revelations which we have in the Scriptures, which have always been essentially the same, though gradually increasing. The church before the flood, was built on the foundation of those revelations of Christ which were given to Adam, and Abel, and Enoch, of which we have an account in the former chapters of Genesis, and others of the like import. The church after the flood, was built on the foundation of the revelations made to Noah and Abraham, to Melchisedec, Isaac, and Jacob, to Joseph, Job, and other holy men of whom we have an account in the Scriptures, or other revelations that were to the same purpose. And after this the church depended on the Scriptures themselves as they gradually increased, so that the church of

God has always been built on the foundations of divine revelation, and always on those revelations that were essentially the same, and which are summarily comprehended in the Holy Scriptures, and ever since about Moses' time have been built on the Scriptures themselves. So that the opposition which has been made to the church of God in all ages, has always been against the same religion, and the same revelation. Now therefore the violent and perpetual opposition that has ever been made by the corruption and wickedness of mankind against this church, is a strong argument of the truth of this religion, and this revelation, upon which the church has always been built. Contraries are well argued one from another, We may well and safely argue, that a thing is good, according to the degree of opposition in which it stands to evil, or the degree in which evil opposes it, and is an enemy to it. We may well argue, that a thing is light, by the great enmity which darkness has to it. Now it is evident, by the things which you have heard concerning the church of Christ, and that holy religion of Jesus Christ which it has professed, that the wickedness of the world has had a perpetual hatred to it, and has made most violent opposition against it. That the church of God has always met with great opposition in the world, none can deny. This is plain by profane history as far as that reaches. And before that, divine history gives us the same account. The church of God, and its religion and worship, began to be opposed in Cain's and Abel's time, and was so when the earth was filled with violence in Noah's time. And after this, how was the church opposed in Egypt! And how was the church of Israel always hated by the nations round about, agreeable to that in Jeremiah 12:9, "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her." And after the Babylonian captivity, how was this church persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes and others! And how was Christ persecuted when he was on earth! And how were the apostles and other Christians persecuted by the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans! How violent were that people against the church! And how dreadful was the opposition of the heathen world against the Christian church after this before Constantine! How great was their spite against the true religion! And since that, how yet more violent, and spiteful, and cruel, has been the opposition of Antichrist against the church!

There is no other such instance of opposition. History gives no account of any other body of men that have been so hated, and so maliciously and insatiably pursued and persecuted, nor anything like it. No other religion ever was so maligned age after age. The nations of other professions have enjoyed their religions in peace and quietness, however they have differed from their neighbors. One nation has worshipped one sort of gods, and others another, without molesting or disturbing one another about it. All the spite and opposition has been against this religion which the church of Christ has professed. All other religions have seemed to show an implacable enmity to this. And men have seemed to have, from one age to another, such a spite against it, that they have seemed as though they could never satisfy their cruelty. They put their invention upon the rack to find out torments that should be cruel enough, and yet, after all, never seemed to be satisfied. Their thirst has never been satisfied with blood. So that this is out of doubt, that this religion, and these Scriptures, have always been malignantly opposed in the world. The only question that remains is, What it is that has made this opposition? — Whether or not it has been good or bad? Whether it be the wickedness and corruption of the world, or not, that has done this? But of this there can be no greater doubt than of the other, if we consider how causeless this cruelty has always been, who the opposers have been, and the manner in which they have opposed. The opposition has chiefly been from heathenism and Popery, which things certainly are evil. They are both of them very evil, and the fruits of the blindness, corruption, and wickedness of men, as the

very Deists themselves confess. The light of nature shows, that the religion of heathens, consisting in the worship of idols, and sacrificing their children to them, and in obscene and abominable rites and ceremonies, is wickedness. And the superstitions, and idolatries, and usurpations, of the church of Rome, are no less contrary to the light of nature. By this it appears, that this opposition which has been made against the church of God, has been made by wicked men. And with regard to the opposition of the Jews in Christ's and the apostles' times, it was in a most corrupt time of that nation, when the people were generally become exceeding wicked, as some of the Jewish writers themselves, as Josephus and others, who lived about that time, do expressly say. And that it has been mere wickedness that has made this opposition, is manifest from the manner of opposition, the extreme violence, injustice, and cruelty, with which the church of God has been treated. It seems to show the hand of malignant infernal spirits in it.

Now, what reason can be assigned, why the corruption and wickedness of the world should so implacably set itself against this religion of Jesus Christ, and against the Scriptures, but only that they are contrary to wickedness, and consequently are good and holy? — Why should the enemies of Christ, for so many thousand years together, manifest such a mortal hatred of this religion, but only that it is the cause of God? If the Scriptures be not the Word of God, and the religion of the church of Christ be not the true religion, then it must follow, that it is a most wicked religion, nothing but a pack of lies and abominable delusions, invented by the enemies of God themselves. And if this were so, it is not likely that the enemies of God, and the wickedness of the world, would have maintained such a perpetual and implacable enmity against it.

(2.) It is a great argument that the Christian church and its religion is from God, that it has been upheld hitherto through all the opposition and dangers it has passed through. That the church of God and the true religion, which has been so continually and violently opposed, with so many endeavors to overthrown it, and which has so often been brought to the brink of ruin, and almost swallowed up, through the greatest part of six thousand years, has yet been upheld, does most remarkably show the hand of God in favor of the church. If we consider it, it will appear one of the greatest wonders and miracles that ever came to pass. There is nothing else like it upon the face of the earth. There is no other society of men that has stood as the church has. As to the old world, which was before the flood, that was overthrown by a deluge of waters. But yet the church of God was preserved. Satan's visible kingdom on earth was then once entirely overthrown. But the visible kingdom of Christ never has been overthrown. All those ancient human kingdoms and monarchies of which we read, and which have been in former ages, are long since come to an end. Those kingdoms of which we read in the Old Testament, of the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, etc. are all long ago come to an end. Those four great monarchies of the world have been overthrown one after another. The great empire of proud Babylon was overthrown by the Persians. And then the Persian empire was overthrown by the Greeks. After this the Grecian empire was overthrown by the Romans. And, finally, the Roman empire fell a sacrifice to various barbarous nations. Here is a remarkable fulfillment of the words of the text with respect to other things, even the greatest and most glorious of them. They have all grown old, and have vanished away, "the moth has eaten them up like a garment, and the worm has eaten them like wool," but yet God's church remains.

Never were there so many and so potent endeavors to destroy anything else, as there have been to destroy the church. Other kingdoms and societies of men, which have appeared to be ten times

as strong as the church of God, have been destroyed with an hundredth part of the opposition which the church of God has met with, which shows, that it is God who has been the protector of the church. For it is most plain, that it has not upheld itself by its own strength. For the most part, it has been a very weak society. They have been a little flock. So they were of old. The children of Israel were but a small handful of people, in comparison of the many who often sought their overthrow. And so in Christ's time, and in the beginning of the Christian church after Christ's resurrection, they were but a remnant, whereas the whole multitude of the Jewish nation were against them. And so in the beginning of the Gentile church, they were but a small number in comparison with the heathen, who sought their overthrow. And so in the dark times of Antichrist, before the Reformation, they were but a handful. And yet their enemies could not overthrow them. And it has commonly been so, that the enemies of the church have not only had the greatest number on their side, but they have had the strength on their side in other respects. They have commonly had all the civil authority on their side. So it was in Egypt. The civil authority was on the side of the Egyptians, and the church were only their slaves, and were in their hands. And yet they could not overthrow them. And so it was in the time of the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. The authority was all on the side of the persecutors, and the church was under their dominion. And yet all their cruelty could not extirpate it. And so it was afterwards in the time of the heathen Roman government. And so it was in the time of Julian the apostate, who did his utmost to overthrow the Christian church, and to restore heathenism. And so it has been for the most part since the rise of Antichrist. For a great many ages, the civil authority was all on the side of Antichrist, and the church seemed to be in their hands. And not only has the strength of the enemies of the church been greater than the strength of the church, but ordinarily the church has not used what strength they have had in their own defense, but have committed themselves wholly to God. So it was in the time of the Jewish persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. And so it was in the time of the heathen persecutions before Constantine. The Christians did not only not rise up in arms to defend themselves, but they did not pretend to make any forcible resistance to their heathen persecutors. So it has for the most part been under the Popish persecutions. And yet they have never been able to overthrow the church of God, but it stands to this very day. And this is still the more exceeding wonderful, if we consider how often the church has been brought to the brink of ruin, and the case seemed to be desperate, and all hope gone, and they seemed to be swallowed up. In the time of the old world, when wickedness so prevailed, as that but one family was left, yet God wonderfully appeared, and overthrew the wicked world with a flood, and preserved his church. And so at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh and his host thought they were quite sure of their prey. Yet God appeared, and destroyed them, and delivered his church. And so was it from time to time in the church of Israel, as has been shown. So under the tenth and last heathen persecution, their persecutors boasted that now they had done the business for the Christians, and had overthrown the Christian church; yet in the midst of their triumph, the Christian church rises out of the dust and prevails, and the heathen empire totally falls before it. So when the Christian church seemed ready to be swallowed up by the Arian heresy. So when Antichrist rose and prevailed, and all the world wondered after the beast, and the church for many hundred years was reduced to such a small number, and seemed to be hidden, and the power of the world was engaged to destroy those little remainders of the church. Yet they could never fully accomplish their design, and at last God wonderfully revived his church in the time of the Reformation, and made it to stand as it were on its feet in the sight of its enemies, and raised it

out of their reach. And so since, when the Popish powers have plotted the overthrow of the Reformed church, and have seemed just about to bring their matters to a conclusion, and to finish their design, then God has wonderfully appeared for the deliverance of his church, as it was in the time of the Revolution by King William. And so it has been from time to time. Presently after the darkest times of the church, God has made his church most gloriously to flourish.

If such a preservation of the church of God, from the beginning of the world hitherto, attended with such circumstances, is not sufficient to show a divine hand in favor of it, what can be devised that would be sufficient? But if this be from the divine hand, then God owns the church, and owns her religion, and owns that revelation and those Scriptures on which she is built. And so it will follow, that their religion is the true religion, or God's religion, and that the Scriptures, which they make their rule, are his word.

(3.) We may draw this further argument for the divine authority of the Scriptures from what has been said, viz. that God has so fulfilled those things which are foretold in the Scriptures. — I have already observed, as I went along, how the prophecies of Scripture were fulfilled. I shall now therefore single out but two instances of the fulfillment of Scripture prophecy.

[1.] One is in preserving his church from being ruined. I have just now shown what an evidence this is of the divine authority of the Scriptures in itself considered. I now speak of it as a fulfillment of scripture prophecy. This is abundantly foretold and promised in the Scriptures, as particularly in the text. There it is foretold, that other things shall fail, other kingdoms and monarchies, which set themselves in opposition shall come to nothing, "the moth should eat them up like a garment, and the worm should eat them like wool." And so it has in fact come to pass. But it is here foretold, that God's covenant mercy to his church shall continue forever. And so it hath hitherto proved, though now it be so many ages since, and though the church has passed through so many dangers. The same is promised, Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon that is formed against thee, shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn." And again, Isaiah 49:14-16, "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." The same is promised again in Isaiah 59:21, and Isaiah 43:1-2, and Zechariah 12:2-3. So Christ promises the same, when he says, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now if this be not from God, and the Scriptures be not the Word of God, and the church of Christ built on the foundation of this word be not of God, how could the persons who foretold this, know it? For if the church were not of God, it was a very unlikely thing ever to come to pass. For they foretold the great opposition, and the great dangers, and also foretold that other kingdoms should come to naught, and that the church should often be almost swallowed up, as it were easy to show, and yet foretold that the church should remain. Now, how could they foresee so unlikely a thing but by divine inspiration?

[2.] The other remarkable instance which I shall mention of the fulfillment of Scripture prophecy, is in fulfilling what is foretold concerning Antichrist, a certain great opposer of Christ and his kingdom. And the way that this Antichrist should arise, is foretold, viz. not among the heathen, or those nations that never professed Christianity, but that he should arise by the apostasy and falling away of the Christian church into a corrupt state, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, "For that day shall not come,

except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." — And it is prophesied, that this Antichrist, or man of sin, should be one, that should set himself up in the temple or visible church of God, pretending to be vested with the power of God himself, as head of the church, as in 2 Thessalonians 2:4. And all this is exactly come to pass in the church of Rome. Again, it is intimated, that the rise of Antichrist should be gradual, as there, 2 Thessalonians 2:7, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way." This also came to pass. — Again, it is prophesied of such a great and mighty enemy of the Christian church, that he should be a great prince or monarch of the Roman empire. So he is represented as an horn of the fourth beast in Daniel, or fourth kingdom or monarchy upon earth, as the angel himself explains it, as you may see of the little horn in Daniel 7:1-28. This also came to pass. — Yea it is prophesied, that the seat of this great prince, or pretended vicar of God, and head of his church, should be in the city of Rome itself. In Revelation 17:1-18, it is said expressly, that the spiritual whore, or false church, should have her seat on seven mountains or hills, Revelation 17:9, "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:" and in the last verse of the chapter, it is said expressly, "The woman which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth," which it is certain was at that time the city of Rome. This prophecy also has come to pass in the church of Rome.

Further, it was prophesied, that this Antichrist should reign over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, Revelation 17:15, and that all the world should wonder after the beast, Revelation 13:3. This also came to pass in the church of Rome. It was foretold that this Antichrist should be eminent and remarkable for the sin of pride, pretending to great things, and assuming very much to himself. So in the aforementioned place in Thessalonians, "That he should exalt himself above all that is called God," or that is worshipped. So Revelation 13:5, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies." Daniel 7:20, the little horn is said to have a mouth speaking very great things, and his look to be more stout than his fellows. This also came to pass in the Pope, and the church of Rome. — It was also prophesied, that Antichrist should be an exceeding cruel persecutor, Daniel 7:21. The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, Revelation 13:7, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." Revelation 17:6, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." This also came to pass in the church of Rome. — It was foretold, that Antichrist should excel in craft and policy, Daniel 7:8, "In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man." And Daniel 7:20, "Even of that horn that had eyes." This also came to pass in the church or Rome. — It was foretold, that the kings of Christendom should be subject to Antichrist, Revelation 17:12-13, "And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." This also came to pass with respect to the Romish church. — It was foretold, that he should perform pretended miracles and lying wonders, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Revelation 13:13-14, "And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." This also came to pass in the church of Rome. Fire coming down from heaven, seems to have reference to their excommunications, which were dreaded like fire from heaven. — It was foretold, that he should forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats, 1 Timothy 4:3,

“Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God had created to be received with thanksgiving.” This also is exactly fulfilled in the church of Rome. — It was foretold, that he should be very rich, and arrive at a great degree of earthly splendor and glory, Revelation 17:4, “And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand.” And so Revelation 18:7; Revelation 18:12-13; Revelation 18:16. This also is come to pass with respect to the church of Rome. — It was foretold, that he should forbid any to buy or sell, but those that had his mark, Revelation 13:17, “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” This also is fulfilled in the church of Rome. — It was foretold, that he should sell the souls of men, Revelation 18:13, where, in enumerating the articles of his merchandise, the souls of men are mentioned as one. This also is exactly fulfilled in the same church. — It was foretold, that Antichrist would not suffer the bodies of God’s people to be put into graves, Revelation 11:8-9, “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city and they shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.” This also has literally come to pass with respect to the church of Rome. — I might mention many other things which were foretold of Antichrist, or that great enemy of the church so often spoken of in Scripture, and show that they were fulfilled most exactly in the Pope and the church of Rome.

How strong an argument was this, that the Scriptures are the Word of God!

2. But I come now to a second inference, which is this, from what has been said, we may learn what the spirit of true Christians is, viz. a spirit of suffering. Seeing God has so ordered it in his providence, that his church should for so long a time, for the greater part of so many ages, be in a suffering state, yea, and often in a state of such extreme suffering, we may conclude, that the spirit of the true church is a suffering spirit, otherwise God never would have ordered so much suffering for the church, for doubtless God accommodates the state and circumstances of the church to the spirit that he has given them. We see by what has been said, how many and great suffering the Christian church for the most part has been under for these 1700 years. No wonder therefore that Christ so much inculcated upon his disciples, that it was necessary, that if any would be his disciples, “they must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him.” And we may argue, that the spirit of the true church of Christ is a suffering spirit, by the spirit the church has shown and exercised under her sufferings. . She has actually, under those terrible persecutions through which she has passed, rather chosen to undergo those dreadful torments and to sell all for the pearl of great price, to suffer all that her bitterest enemies could inflict, than to renounce Christ and his religion. History furnishes us with a great number of remarkable instances, sets in view a great cloud of witnesses. This abundantly confirms the necessity of being of a spirit to sell all for Christ, to renounce our own ease, our own worldly profit, and honor, and our all, for him, and for the gospel.

Let us inquire, whether we are of such a spirit. How does it prove upon trial? — Does it prove in fact that we are willing to deny ourselves, and renounce our own worldly interest, and to pass through the trials to which we are called in providence? Alas, how small are our trials, compared with those of many of our fellow Christians in former ages! And I would on this occasion apply that in Jeremiah 12:5, “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then, how canst thou contend with horses?” If you have not been able to endure the light trials to which you have been called in this age, and in this land, how would you be able to endure the far greater trials to

which the church has been called in former ages? Every true Christian has the spirit of a martyr, and would suffer as a martyr, if he were called to it in providence.

3. Hence we learn what great reason we have, assuredly to expect the fulfillment of what yet remains to be fulfilled of things foretold in Scripture. The Scriptures foretell many great things yet to be fulfilled before the end of the world. But there seem to be great difficulties in the way. We seem at present to be very far from such a state as is foretold in the Scriptures, but we have abundant reason to expect, that these things, however seemingly difficult, will yet be accomplished in their season. We see the faithfulness of God to his promises hitherto. How true has God been to his church, and remembered his mercy from generation to generation! We may say concerning what God has done hitherto for his church, as Joshua said to the children of Israel, Joshua 23:14. “That not one thing hath failed of all the Lord our God hath spoken concerning his church,” but all things are hitherto come to pass, agreeable to the divine prediction. This should strengthen our faith in those promises, and encourage us, and stir us up to earnest prayer to God for the accomplishment of the great and glorious things which yet remain to be fulfilled.

It has already been shown how the success of Christ’s redemption was carried on through various periods down to the present time.

4. I come now to show how the success of Christ’s redemption will be carried on from the present time, until Antichrist is fallen, and Satan’s visible kingdom on earth is destroyed. — And with respect to this space of time, we have nothing to guide us but the prophecies of Scripture. Through most of the time from the fall of man to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, we had scripture history to guide us. And from thence to the present time we had prophecy, together with the accomplishment of it in providence, as related in human histories. But henceforward we have only prophecy to guide us. And here I would pass by those things that are only conjectural, or that are surmised by some from those prophecies which are doubtful in their interpretation, and shall insist only on those things which are more clear and evident.

We know not what particular events are to come to pass before that glorious work of God’s Spirit begins, by which Satan’s kingdom is to be overthrown. By the consent of most divines, there are but few things, if any at all, that are foretold to be accomplished before the beginning of that glorious work of God. Some think the slaying of the witnesses, Revelation 11:7-8 is not yet accomplished. So divines differ with respect to the pouring out of the seven vials, of which we have an account Revelation 16:1-21, how many are already poured out, or how many remain to be poured out. Though a late expositor whom I have before mentioned to you, seems to make it very plain and evident, that all are already poured out but two, viz. the sixth on the river Euphrates, and the seventh into the air. But I will not now stand to inquire what is intended by the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared, but only would say, that it seems to be something immediately preparing the way for the destruction of the spiritual Babylon, as the drying up of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of old Babylon, was what prepared the way of the kings of the Medes and Persians, the kings of the east, to come in under the walls, and destroy that city. But whatever this be, it does not appear that it is anything which shall be accomplished before that work of God’s Spirit is begun, by which, as it goes on, Satan’s visible kingdom on earth shall be utterly overthrown. And therefore I would proceed directly to consider what the Scripture reveals concerning the work of God itself, by which

he will bring about this great event, as being the next thing which is to be accomplished that we are certain of from the prophecies of Scripture.

And, first, I would observe two things in general concerning it.

1. We have all reason to conclude from the Scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion in the world. It has been so before those glorious revivals of religion that have been hitherto. It was so when Christ came. It was an exceeding degenerate time among the Jews. And so it was a very dark time before the Reformation. And not only so, but it seems to be foretold in Scripture, that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up his kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of his coming to encourage his elect, who cry to him day and night, in Luke 18:8, he adds this, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, Shall he find faith on the earth?” Which seems to denote a great prevalence of infidelity just before Christ’s coming to avenge his suffering church. Though Christ’s coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to his coming to deliver his church from their long continued suffering persecuted state, which is accomplished only at his coming at the destruction of Antichrist. That time that the elect cry to God, as in Revelation 6:10, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” and the time spoken of in Revelation 18:20, “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her,” will then be accomplished.

It is now a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion, and such a time as this prophesied of in this place, wherein there is but a little faith, and a great prevailing of infidelity on the earth. There is now a remarkable fulfillment of that in 2 Peter 3:3, “Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.” And so Jude 1:17-18, “But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.” Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much darker, before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

2. There is no reason from the Word of God to think any other, than that this great work of God will be wrought, though very swiftly, yet gradually. As the children of Israel were gradually brought out of the Babylonian captivity, first one company, and then another, and gradually rebuilt their city and temple, and as the heathen Roman empire was destroyed by a gradual, though a very swift prevalence of the gospel. So, though there are many things which seem to hold forth as though the work of God would be exceeding swift, and many great and wonderful events should very suddenly be brought to pass, and some great parts of Satan’s visible kingdom should have a very sudden fall, yet all will not be accomplished at once, as by some great miracle, as the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world will be all at once. But this is a work which will be accomplished by means, by the preaching of the gospel, and the use of the ordinary means of grace, and so shall be gradually brought to pass. Some shall be converted, and be the means of the conversion of others. God’s Spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments, and then those instruments shall be used and succeeded. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted after another, one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another. By the representation in Daniel 2:3-4 the stone cut out of the mountain without hands gradually grows. So Christ teaches

us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, Matthew 13:31-32, and like leaven hid in three measures of meal, Matthew 13:33. The same representation we have in Mark 4:26-28 and in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary, Ezekiel 47:1-23. — The Scriptures hold forth as though there should be several successive great and glorious events by which this work should be accomplished. The angel, speaking to the prophet Daniel of those glorious times, mentions two glorious periods, at the end of which glorious things should be accomplished, Daniel 12:11, “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” But then he adds in the next verse, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days,” intimating, that something very glorious should be accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter. But I now proceed to show how this glorious work shall be accomplished.

1. The Spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God’s Holy Spirit, Zechariah 4:6-7, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.” So the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, Ezekiel 39:29, “Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.” We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once, or whether, what hath already been, be not some forerunner and beginning of it. This pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails, and shall cause that vital religion, which is now so despised and laughed at in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth, and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto, agreeable to that in Isaiah 44:3-5. — God, by pouring out his Holy Spirit, will furnish men to be glorious instruments of carrying on this work, will fill them with knowledge and wisdom, and fervent zeal for the promoting the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls, and propagating the gospel in the world. So that the gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greater clearness and power than had heretofore been. For this great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, as is represented in Revelation 14:6-8 that before Babylon falls, the gospel shall be powerfully preached and propagated in the world. This was typified of old by the sounding of the silver trumpets in Israel in the beginning of their jubilee, Leviticus 25:9, “Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.” The glorious times which are approaching, are as it were the church’s jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as is foretold in Isaiah 27:13, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” And there shall be a glorious pouring out of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, and turning many from heresy, and from Popery, and from other false religion, and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness, and for bringing vast multitudes home to Christ. That work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner, and

spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, and shall come as it were in flocks, one flock and multitude after another continually flowing in, as in Isaiah 60:4-5, “Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together.” And so Isaiah 60:8, “Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?” And it being represented in the aforementioned place in the Revelation, that the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the fall of Antichrist. So we may suppose, that it will soon be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation. And it shall spread more and more with wonderful swiftness, and vast numbers shall suddenly be brought in as it were at once, as you may see, Isaiah 66:7-9.

2. This pouring out of the Spirit of God will not effect the overthrow of Satan’s visible kingdom, until there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. In this the Scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus gloriously coming forth, and the destruction of Antichrist is ready at hand, and Satan’s kingdom begins to totter, and to appear to be imminently threatened, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up, and mightily exert themselves to prevent their kingdom being overthrown. Thus after the pouring out the sixth vial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates, to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon, it is represented in Revelation 16:1-21, as though the powers of hell will be mightily alarmed, and should stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ, before the seventh and last vial shall be poured out, which shall give them a final and complete overthrow. We have an account of the pouring out of the sixth in Revelation 16:12. And then upon this, the beloved disciple informs us in the following verses, that “three unclean spirits like frogs shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown, though perhaps he may make as great towards the end of the world to regain it. When the Spirit begins to be so gloriously poured forth, and the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, and the foundations of his kingdom daily undermining, and the pillars of it breaking, and the whole ready to come to swift and sudden destruction, it will greatly alarm all hell. Satan has ever had a dread of having his kingdom overthrown, and he has been opposing of it ever since Christ’s ascension, and has been doing great works to fortify his kingdom, and to prevent it, ever since the day of Constantine the Great. To this end he has set up those two mighty kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet, and brought in all the heresies, and superstitions, and corrupt opinions, which there are in the world. But when he sees all begin to fail, it will rouse him up exceedingly. If Satan dreaded being cast out of the Roman empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world!

It seems as though in this last great opposition which shall be made against the church to defend the kingdom of Satan, all the forces of Antichrist, and Mahometanism, and heathenism, will be united, all the forces of Satan’s visible kingdom through the whole world of mankind. And therefore it is said, that “spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, i.e. there shall be the spirit of Popery, and the spirit of Mahometanism, and the spirit of heathenism, all united. By the beast is meant Antichrist. By the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his heathen kingdom. By the false prophet, in this

book, is sometimes meant the Pope and his clergy. But here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be as it were the dying struggles of the old serpent. A battle wherein he will fight as one that is almost desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition shall be made. It is represented as a battle. It is called the battle of the great day of God Almighty. There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan's kingdom and the church, and probably in all ways of opposition that can be. And doubtless great opposition by external force, wherein the princes of the world who are on the devil's side shall join hand in hand. For it is said, "The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle," Revelation 19:19. And probably withal there will be great opposition of subtle disputers and carnal reasoning, and great persecution in many places, great opposition by virulent reproaches, and also and great opposition by craft and subtlety. The devil now doubtless will ply his skill, as well as strength, to the utmost. The devils, and those who belong to their kingdom, will everywhere be stirred up, and engaged to make an united and violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing So mightily in the world. — But,

3. Christ and his church shall in this battle obtain a complete and entire victory over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together against Christ, and his armies shall come forth against them by his word and Spirit to fight with them, in how august, and pompous, and glorious a manner is this coming forth of Christ and his church to this battle described! Revelation 19:11, etc. And to represent to us how great the victory should be which they should obtain, and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said, Revelation 19:17-18 that "all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men," etc. and then, in the following verses, we have an account of the victory and overthrow. In this victory, the seventh vial shall be poured out. It is said, Revelation 16:16 of the great army that should be gathered together against Christ, "and he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon," and then it is said, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan's last and greatest opposition is conquered. All his measures are defeated. The pillars of his kingdom broken asunder, and will fall of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded, and knows not what else to do. He now sees his Antichristian, and Mahometan, and heathenish kingdoms through the world, all tumbling about his ears. He and his most powerful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done which the church of God had been so long waiting and hoping for, and so earnestly crying to God for, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" Now the time is come. The angel who set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, and swore by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and all things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that when the seventh angel should come to sound, the time should be no longer. And now the time is come. Now the seventh trumpet sounds, and the seventh vial is poured out, both together, intimating, that now all is finished as to the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow, with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall all be broken to

pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. In this victory will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall therein appear in the character of King of kings, and Lord of lords, as in Revelation 19:16. Now Christ shall dash his enemies, even the strongest and proudest of them, in pieces, as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. Then shall strength be shown out of weakness, and Christ shall cause his church as it were to thresh the mountains, as in Isaiah 41:15, "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." And then shall be fulfilled that in Isaiah 42:13-15.

4. Consequent on this victory, Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the church of Christ will have easy work of it, as when Joshua and the children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites, when the sun stood still, and God sent great hailstones on their enemies, they after that went from one city to another, and burnt them with fire. They had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was also after that other great battle that Joshua had with that great multitude at the waters of Merom. So after this glorious victory of Christ and his church over their enemies, over the chief powers of Satan's kingdom, they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belonged. After this the Word of God shall have a speedy and swift progress through the earth. As it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found," Revelation 16:19-20. When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh vial, by which this shall he done, shall be poured out into the air, which is represented in Scripture as the special seat of his kingdom. For he is called the prince of the power of the air, Ephesians 2:2. Now is come the time for punishing leviathan that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isaiah 27:1, "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan, that crooked serpent, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would, 1. Show wherein this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom will chiefly consist. 2. The extent and universality of this overthrow.

I. I would show wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will chiefly consist. I shall mention the particular things in which it will consist, without pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

(1.) Heresies, and infidelity, and superstition, among those who have been brought up tinder the light of the gospel, will then be abolished. Then there will be an end to Socinianism, and Arianism, and Quakerism, and Arminianism, and Deism, which is now so bold and confident in infidelity, shall then be crushed, and driven away, and vanish to nothing, and all shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel, agreeable to that 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." Then shall be abolished all superstitious ways of worship, and all shall agree in worshipping God in his own

ways, Jeremiah 32:39, “And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.”

(2.) The kingdom of Antichrist shall be utterly overthrown. His kingdom and dominion has been much brought down already by the vial poured out on his throne in the Reformation, but then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” When the seventh angel sounds, “the time, times and half, shall be out, and time shall be no longer.” Then shall be accomplished concerning Antichrist the things which are written in Revelation 18:1-24, of the spiritual Babylon, that great city Rome, or the idolatrous Roman government, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the Christian church, first under heathenism, then under Popery. That proud city which lifted herself up to heaven, and above God himself in her pride and haughtiness, that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall that be fulfilled, Isaiah 26:5, “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty city be layeth it low, he layeth it low, even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust.” “She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great mill stone cast into the sea and shall be found no more at all, and shall become an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Now shall she be stripped of all her glory, and riches, and ornaments, and shall be cast out as an abominable branch, and shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets. All her policy and craft, in which she so abounded, shall not save her. And God shall make his people, who have been so persecuted by her, to come and put their foot on the neck of Antichrist, and he shall be their footstool. All the strength and wisdom of this great whore shall fail her, and there shall be none to help her. The kings of the earth, who before gave their power and strength to the beast, shall now hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, Revelation 17:16.

(3.) That other great kingdom which Satan has set up in opposition to the Christian church, viz. his Mahometan kingdom, shall be utterly overthrown. The locusts and horsemen, in the 9th of Revelation, have their appointed and limited time set them there, and the false prophet shall be taken and destroyed. And then, though Mahometanism, has been so vastly propagated in the world, and is upheld by such a great empire, this smoke, which has ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall be utterly scattered before the light of that glorious day, and the Mahometan empire shall fall at the sound of the great trumpet which shall then be blown.

(4.) Jewish infidelity shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have been now for above 1700 years in their rejection of Christ, and instances of the conversion of any of that nation have been so very rare ever since the destruction of Jerusalem, but they have, against the plain teachings of their own prophets, continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying Christ. Yet when this day comes, the thick veil that blinds their eyes shall be removed, 2 Corinthians 3:16. And divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, “and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness, as one that is in bitterness for his first born,” Zechariah 12:10, etc. And then shall the house of Israel be saved. The Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity, and shall wonderfully have their hearts changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy, and shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious King and only Savior, and shall with all their hearts, as with one heart and voice, declare his praises unto other nations.

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews is in Romans 11:1-36. And there are also many passages of the Old Testament which cannot be interpreted in any other sense, which cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable seal of the fulfillment of this great event in providence, by a thing which is a kind of continual miracle, viz. their being preserved a distinct nation in such a dispersed condition for above 1600 years. The world affords nothing else like it. There is undoubtedly a remarkable hand of providence in it. When they shall be called, then shall that ancient people, that were alone God's people for so long a time, be God's people again, never to be rejected more. They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles. And so also shall the remains of the ten tribes, wherever they be, and though they have been rejected much longer than the Jews, be brought in with their brethren the Jews. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and Solomon, as Hosea 1:11 and so in the last chapter of Hosea, and other parts of his prophecy.

Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of the nation of Israel will come to pass. Yet thus much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished, because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles, Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15.

03.12b. Period 3 Application (Cont'd)

(5.) Then shall also Satan's heathenish kingdom be overthrown. Gross heathenism now possesses a great part of the earth, and there are supposed to be more heathens now in the world, than of all other professions taken together, Jews, Mahometans, or Christians. But then the heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glorious gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them, and zeal for their instruction and conversion put into multitudes, and many shall go forth and carry the gospel unto them. And then shall the joyful sound be heard among them, and the Sun of Righteousness shall then arise with his glorious light shining on those many vast regions of the earth that have been covered with heathenish darkness for many thousand years, many of them doubtless ever since the times of Moses and Abraham, and have lain thus long in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and fooled them, and domineered over them, and made a prey of them from generation to generation. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there, and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvelous light.

It is promised, that heathenism shall thus be destroyed in many places. God has said, that the gods that have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jeremiah 10:11 and that he will utterly abolish idols, Isaiah 2:18. — Then shall the many nations of Africa, the nations of Negroes, and other heathens who chiefly fill that quarter of the world, who now seem to be in a state but little above the beasts, and in many respects much below them, be enlightened with glorious light, and delivered from all their darkness, and shall become a civil, Christian, understanding, and holy people. Then shall the vast continent of America, which now in so great a part of it is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be everywhere covered with glorious gospel light and Christian love. And instead of worshipping the devil, as now they do, they shall serve God, and praises shall be sung everywhere to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Savior of the world. So may we expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world, the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of the devil, and so throughout that vast country Great Tartary. And then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the north and south poles, where now men differ very little from the wild beasts, excepting that they worship the devil, and beasts do not. The same will be the case with respect to those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled that in Isaiah 35:1 "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." See also Isaiah 35:6-7.

2. Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to the other thing to be observed concerning it, viz. its universal extent. The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, everywhere throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, that "in him and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed," and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations, agreeable to Haggai 2:7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal

sense be extended to all nations, and the whole earth. There are many passages of Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than that in Isaiah 11:9, “For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” As much as to say, as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea anywhere, but what is covered with water. So there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isaiah 45:22 that all the ends of the earth shall look to Christ, and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” So the most universal expression is used, Daniel 7:27, “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High God.” You see the expression includes all under the whole heaven. When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire, because that was the highest and principal part of the world, and the other nations that were left were low and mean in comparison of those of that empire, it was represented as Satan’s being cast out of heaven to the earth, Revelation 12:9, but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too, and shut up in hell, Revelation 20:1-3. — This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass. Therefore it is said in Revelation 16:17-18, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And this is the third great dispensation of providence which is in Scripture compared to Christ’s coming to judgment. So it is in Revelation 16:15. There, after the sixth vial, and after the devil’s armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ’s glorious victory over them, it is said, “Behold I come quickly; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.” So it is called Christ’s coming in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Speaking of Antichrist, it is said, “and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” See also Daniel 7:13-14, where Christ’s coming to set up his kingdom on earth, and to destroy Antichrist, is called coming with clouds of heaven. And this is more like Christ’s last coming to judgment, than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called, on these accounts:

(1.) That the dispensation is so much greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world.

(2.) On account of the great spiritual resurrection there will be of the church of God accompanying it, more resembling the general resurrection at the end of the world than any other. This spiritual resurrection is the resurrection spoken of as attended with judgment, Revelation 20:4.

(3.) Because of the terrible judgments and fearful destruction which shall now he executed on God’s enemies. There will doubtless at the introducing of this dispensation be a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, deists, and obstinate heretics, and other enemies of Christ, terribly destroying them, with remarkable tokens of wrath and vengeance. And especially will this dispensation be attended with terrible judgments on Antichrist. And the cruel persecutors who belong to the church of Rome, shall in a most awful manner be destroyed, which is compared to a casting of Antichrist into the burning flame, Daniel 7:11 and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Revelation 19:20.

Then shall this cruel persecuting church suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her cruelest persecutions of the saints, agreeable to Revelation 18:6-7. — The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the church, are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hailstones from heaven upon them, every one of the weight of a talent, as it is said on the pouring out of the seventh vial, Revelation 16:21, "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." And now shall be that treading of the wine press spoken of, Revelation 14:19-20.

(4.) This shall put an end to the church's suffering state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. The church's afflicted state is long, being continued, excepting some short intermissions, from the resurrection of Christ to this time. But now shall a final end be put to her suffering state. Indeed after this, near the end of the world, the church shall be greatly threatened. But it is said, it shall be but for a little season, Revelation 20:3, for as the times of the church's rest are but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end. So whatever affliction she may suffer after this, it will be very short. But otherwise the day of the church's affliction and persecution shall now come to a final end. The Scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the church. So Isaiah 51:22. God says to his church with respect to this time, "behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou shalt no more drink it again." Then shall that be proclaimed to the church, Isaiah 40:1-2, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Also that in Isaiah 54:8-9 belongs to this time. And so that in Isaiah 60:20, "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And so Zephaniah 3:15, "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more." The time which had been before this, had been the church's sowing time, wherein she sowed in tears and in blood, but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of the travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end. Now she hath brought forth her son, for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ through the world, is what the church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages, Isaiah 26:17, "Like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord." See Isaiah 60:20, and Isaiah 61:10-11. And now the church shall forget her sorrow, since a man child is born into the world, now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth, as Isaiah 42:10-12. And praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The church on earth, and the church in heaven, shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God, as with one heart, on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles, and the other saints in heaven, Revelation 18:20, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God bath avenged you on her." See how universal these praises will he in Isaiah 44:23, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal church in heaven and earth, in the beginning of Revelation 19:1-21.

(5.) This dispensation is above all preceding ones like Christ's coming to judgment, in that it so puts an end to the former state of the world, and introduces the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Now Satan's visible kingdom shall be overthrown, after it had stood ever since the building of Babel. And the old heavens and the old earth shall in a greater measure be passed away then than before, and the new heavens and new earth set up in a far more glorious manner than ever before.

Thus I have shown how the success of Christ's purchase has been carried on through the times of the afflicted state of the Christian church, from Christ's resurrection, until Antichrist is fallen, and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is overthrown.

— Therefore I come now,

Secondly. To show how the success of redemption will be carried on through that space wherein the Christian church shall for the most part be in a state of peace and prosperity. And in order to this, I would, 1. Speak of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period.

2. Of the great apostasy there shall be towards the close of it, how greatly then the church shall be threatened by her enemies for a short time.

I. I would speak of the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of this period. And in doing this, I would, 1. Describe this prosperous state of the church. 2. Say something of its duration.

First. I would describe the prosperous state the church shall be in.

And, in the general, I would observe two things.

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection, and in a further degree in the time of Constantine. And though the Christian church in all ages of it is called the kingdom of heaven, yet this time that we are upon, is the principal time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel, which speak of the kingdom of heaven, whence the Jews took the name of the kingdom of heaven.

2. Now is the principal fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the glorious times of the gospel which shall be in the latter days. Though there has been a glorious fulfillment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles, and of Constantine, yet the expressions are too high to suit any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatories to this. Other times were the seed time, but this is the harvest. But more particularly,

(1.) It will be a time of great light and knowledge. The present days are days of darkness, in comparison of those days. The light of that glorious time shall be so great, that it is represented as though there should then be no night, but only day, no evening nor darkness. So Zechariah 14:6-7, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."— It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to his

church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed, Isaiah 24:23, “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously.”

There is a kind of veil now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness. But then this veil shall be destroyed, Isaiah 25:7, “And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.” And then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail everywhere. It may be hoped, that then many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines, and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, in Tartary, and other now the most barbarous countries. And not only learned men, but others of more ordinary education, shall then be very knowing in religion, Isaiah 32:3-4, “The eyes of them that see, shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear, shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge.” Knowledge then shall be very universal among all sorts of persons; agreeable to Jeremiah 31:34, “And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.”

There shall then be a wonderful unraveling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion, and clearing up of seeming inconsistencies, so “crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places shall be made plain,” and darkness shall become light before God’s people. Difficulties in Scripture shall then be cleared up, and wonderful things shall be discovered in the Word of God, which were never discovered before. The great discovery of those things in religion which had been before kept hid, seems to be compared to removing the veil, and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple, and was never seen by them. Thus, at the sounding of the seventh angel when it is proclaimed, “that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.” It is added that “the temple of God was opened in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” So great shall be the increase of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the church of God on earth.

(2.) It shall be a time of great holiness. Now vital religion shall everywhere prevail and reign. Religion shall not be an empty profession, as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the church, viz. that there shall be but few saved. For now holiness shall become general, Isaiah 60:21, “Thy people also shall be all righteous.” Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition, but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed everywhere, and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. And it shall be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace, Isaiah 65:20, “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.” And Zechariah 12:8, “He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.” And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on everything, on all men’s common business and employments, and the common utensils of life. All shall be as it were dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes. Everything shall then be done to the glory of God, Isaiah 23:18, “And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord,” and so Zechariah

14:20-21. — And as God's people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice.

(3.) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honor. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under, and wicked men have governed. But now they will be uppermost. The kingdoms shall be given into the hands of the saints of the "Most High God," Daniel 7:27, "And they shall reign on earth," Revelation 5:10, "They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years," Revelation 20:4. In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion, shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of kings' palaces and thrones. And those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men, Isaiah 49:23, "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." Kings shall employ all their power, and glory, and riches, for the advancement of the honor and glory of Christ, and the good of his church, Isaiah 60:16, "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings." And the great men of the world, and the rich merchants, and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his church, Psalms 45:12, "The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour."

(4.) Those will be times of great peace and love. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of the world, instead of such confusion, wars, and bloodshed, as have hitherto been from one age to another, Isaiah 2:4, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." So it is represented as if all instruments of war should be destroyed, as being become useless, Psalms 46:9, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire." See also Zechariah 9:10. Then shall all nations dwell quietly and safely, without fear of any enemy. Isaiah 32:18, "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Also Zechariah 8:10-11. And then shall malice, and envy, and wrath, and revenge, be suppressed everywhere, and peace and love shall prevail between one man and another, which is most elegantly set forth in Isaiah 11:6-10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and ruled. Rulers shall love their people, and with all their might seek their best good, and the people love their rulers, and shall joyfully submit to them, and give them that honor which is their due. And so shall there be an happy love between ministers and their people, Malachi 4:6, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those Christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, brotherly kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men, in their temper and disposition, shall then be like the Lamb of God, the lovely Jesus. The body shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world he united in one amiable society. All nations, in all parts of the world, on every side of the globe, shall then be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God's church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another. A communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end. And the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favor men's covetousness and pride, and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God, and applied to holy uses, as we read in Isaiah 60:5-9. And it will then

be a time wherein men will be abundant in expressing their love one to another, not only in words, but in deeds of charity, as we learn, Isaiah 32:5, “The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful,” and, Isaiah 32:8, “But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.”

(5.) It will be a time of excellent order in the church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the church will then be settled and put into practice. All the world shall then be as one church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful proportion to each other. Then shall that be verified in Psalms 122:3, “Jerusalem is builded as a city, that is compact together.”

(6.) The church of God shall then be beautiful and glorious on these accounts. Yea it will appear in perfection of beauty, Isaiah 60:1, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” Isaiah 61:10, “He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” On these aforementioned accounts, the church will then be the greatest image of heaven itself.

(7.) That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity. Such a spiritual state as we have just described, has a natural tendency to temporal prosperity. It has a tendency to health and long life. And that this will actually be the case, is evident by Zechariah 8:4, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age.” It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness, and cheerfulness of mind, and also wealth, and great increase of children, as is intimated in Zechariah 8:5, “And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.” — But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven, Isaiah 65:21, “They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” And in Micah 4:4, “But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.” Zechariah 8:12, “For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these thing.” See also Jeremiah 31:12-13, and Amos 9:13. Yea then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God’s presence, and acceptance, and favor, Jeremiah 33:9, “And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.” Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days, as to the temporal prosperity which shall obtain in them.

(8.) It will also be a time of great rejoicing, Isaiah 35:10, “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and 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 55:12, “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you.” Isaiah 66:11, “That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” Isaiah 12:3, “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Then will be a time of feasting. That will be the church’s glorious wedding day, so far as her wedding with Christ shall ever be upon earth, Revelation 19:7, “Let us be glad and rejoice; and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made

herself ready." Verse 9, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." But I come now,

Second. To say something of the duration of this state or the church's prosperity. On this I shall be very brief. The Scriptures everywhere represent it to be of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented to be but short. But the representations of this state are quite different, Revelation 20:4, "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus — and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Isaiah 60:15, "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the church through the greater part of the period from the destruction of Satan's visible kingdom in the world to Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment.

II. I now come to speak of the great apostasy there should be towards the close of this period, and how eminently the church should be for a short time threatened by her enemies. And this I shall do under three particulars.

1. A little before the end of the world, there shall be a very great apostasy, wherein great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and his church. It is said in Revelation 20:3, that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and have a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years should be fulfilled. And that after that he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. And accordingly we are told, in the Revelation 20:7-8, that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and should go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, which seems to show as though the apostasy would be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived. And the number of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be vastly great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezekiel, and as it is said in Revelation 20:8, that the number of them is as the sand of the sea, and that they went up on the breadth of the earth, as though they were an army big enough to reach from one side of the earth to the other.

Thus after such an happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love, and peace, and joy, now it shall begin again to be a dark time. Satan shall begin to set up his dominion again in the world. This world shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit of hell shall be opened, and devils shall come up again out of it, and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. And the church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the world, as it did before, shall be reduced to narrow limits again. The world of mankind being continued so long in a state of such great prosperity, shall now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lust and corruption. This we learn from Luke 17:26. etc.

2. Those apostates shall make great opposition to the church of God. The church shall seem to be eminently threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. It is said, Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the sea shore. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them. For her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her. And not only so, but shall have besieged her, shall have compassed her about on every side.

There is nothing in the prophecy which seems to hold forth as though the church had actually fallen into their hands, as the church had fallen into the hands of Antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. God will never suffer this to be again after the fall of Antichrist. For then the day of her mourning shall be ended. But the church shall seem most eminently threatened with utter and sudden destruction.

3. Now the state of things will seem most remarkably to call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment. For then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness that ever it was. For much the greater part of the world shall have become visibly wicked and open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness shall be dreadfully aggravated by their apostasy. Before the fall of Antichrist, most of the world was full of visibly wicked men. But the greater part of these are poor heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the gospel. And others are those that have been bred up in the Mahometan or Popish darkness. But these are those that have apostatized from the Christian church, and the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the great light and privileges of the glorious times of the church, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the church of God enjoys now. This apostasy will be most like the apostasy of the devils of any that ever had before been. For the devils apostatized, and turned enemies to Christ, though they enjoyed the light of heaven. And these will apostatize, and turn enemies to him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the church. That such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ, and should seek the ruin of his church, will cry aloud for such immediate vengeance as was executed on the devils when they fell. The wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness, which will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and his holy religion. And particularly, they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the church shall be in expectation, and of which they will warn them. For now doubtless will be another fulfillment, and the greatest fulfillment, of 2 Peter 3:3-4, "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, and shall laugh at the notion. They shall trample all such things under foot, and shall give up themselves to their lusts, or to eat and drink, and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to be here forever. They shall despise the warnings the church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood, and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, "the Lord will destroy this city." Their wickedness on this account will cry aloud to heaven for Christ's appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance of his enemies, and also because another way that they shall exercise their wickedness will be in the wicked design and violent attempt they shall be engaged in against the holy city of God, against that holy city, wherein lately, and for so long a time, so much of the religion of Christ had been seen. They shall then be about to perpetrate the most horrid design against this church. And the numerousness of the wicked that shall then be, is another thing which shall especially call for Christ's coming. For the world will doubtless then be exceeding full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such terrible desolating extremities, as wars, pestilences, and the like, to diminish them. And the most of this world, which shall be so populous, will be such wicked contemptuous apostates from God. Undoubtedly that will be a day wherein the world will be by far fuller of wickedness than ever

before it was from the foundation of it. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for the destruction of the world by a deluge of waters, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of fire.

Again, the circumstances of the church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearing of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous murderous enemies, just ready to be swallowed up by them. And it will be a most distressing time with the church, excepting the comfort they will have in the hope of deliverance from God. For all other help will seem to fail. The case will be come to the last extremity, and there will be an immediate need that Christ should come to their deliverance. And though the church shall be so eminently threatened, yet so will Providence order it, that it shall be preserved until Christ shall appear in his immediate presence, coming in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels. And then will come the time when all the elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion which has been carried on from the beginning of the church after the fall through all those ages, shall he carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions, whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in. Not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained. All that effect which was intended to be accomplished by them shall now be accomplished.

SECTION II

How the success of redemption shall be accomplished in glory.

THUS I have shown how the success of Christ's redemption has been accomplished during the continuance of the Christian church under the means of grace. We have seen what great revolutions there have been, and are to be, during this space of time, how the great wheels of providence have gone round for the accomplishment of that kind of success of Christ's purchase, which consists in the bestowment of grace on the elect. And we are, in the prosecution of the subject, come to the time when all the wheels have gone round. The course of things in this state of it is finished, and all things are ripe for Christ's coming to judgment.

You may remember, that when I began to discourse of this third proposition, viz. That from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, the whole time is taken up in procuring the success and effect of Christ's purchase of redemption, I observed, that the success of Christ's purchase is of two kinds, consisting either in grace or glory, and that the success consisting in the former of these, is to be seen in those works of God which are wrought during those ages that the church is continued under the means of grace, and that the success, consisting in the latter, will chiefly be accomplished at the day of judgment.

Having already shown how the former kind of success has been accomplished, I come now, in the second place, to the latter, viz. that kind of success which is accomplished in the bestowment of glory on the church, which shall chiefly be bestowed on the church at the day of judgment. — And here I would mention two or three things in the general concerning this kind of success of Christ purchase.

1. How great the success of Christ's purchase is, chiefly appears in this. The success of Christ's purchase does summarily consist in the salvation of the elect. But this bestowment of glory is eminently called their salvation, Hebrews 9:28, "To them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." — So it is called redemption, being eminently that wherein the redemption of the church consists. So in Ephesians 4:30, "Sealed unto the day of redemption," and Luke 21:28, and Ephesians 1:14, "Redemption of the purchased possession."

2 All that is before this, while the church is under the means of grace, is only to make way for the success which is to be accomplished in the bestowment of glory. The means of grace are to fit for glory. And God's grace itself is bestowed on the elect to make them meet for glory.

3. All those glorious things which were brought to pass for the church while under the means of grace, are but images and shadows of this. So were those glorious things which were accomplished for the church in the days of Constantine the Great. And so is all that glory which is to be accomplished in the glorious times of the church which are to succeed the fall of Antichrist. As great as it is, it is all but a shadow of what will be bestowed at the day of judgment. And therefore, as I have already often observed, all those preceding glorious events, by which God wrought glorious things for his church, are spoken of in Scripture as images of Christ's last coming to judgment. But I hasten more particularly to show how this kind of success of Christ's purchase is accomplished.

1. Christ will appear in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven. When the world are thus reveling in their wickedness, and compassing the holy city about, just ready to destroy it, and when the church is reduced to such a great strait, then shall the glorious Redeemer appear. He through whom this redemption has all along been carried on, he shall appear in the sight of the world. The light of his glory shall break forth. The whole world shall immediately have notice of it, and they shall lift up their eyes and behold this wonderful sight. It is said, "every eye shall see him," Revelation 1:7. — Christ shall appear coming in his human nature, in that same body which was brought forth in a stable, and laid in a manger, and which afterwards was so cruelly used, and nailed to the cross.

Men shall now lift up their eyes, and see him coming in such majesty and glory as now is to us utterly inconceivable. The glory of the sun in a clear firmament, will be but darkness in comparison of it. And all the glorious angels and archangels shall attend upon him, thousand thousands ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand round about him. How different a person will he then appear from what he did at his first coming, when he was as a root out of a dry ground, a poor, despised, afflicted man! How different now is his appearance, in the midst of those glorious angels, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places, attending him as his ordinary servants, from what it was when in the midst of a ring of soldiers, with his mock robe and his crown of thorns, to be buffeted and spit upon, or hanging on the cross between two thieves, with a multitude of his enemies about him triumphing over him! This sight will be a most unexpected sight to the wicked world. It will come as a cry at midnight. They shall be taken in the midst of their wickedness, and it will give them a dreadful alarm. It will at once break up their revels, their eating, and drinking, and carousing. It will put a quick end to the design of the great army that will then be compassing the camp of the saints. It will make them let drop their weapons out of their hands. The world, which will then be very full of people, most of whom will be wicked men, will then be filled with dolorous

shrieking and crying. For all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him, Revelation 1:7. And, where shall they hide themselves? — How will the sight of that awful majesty terrify them when taken in the midst of their wickedness! Then they shall see who he is, what kind of a person he is, whom they have mocked and scoffed at, and whose church they have been endeavoring to overthrow. This sight will change their voice. The voice of their laughter and singing, while they are marrying and giving in marriage, and the voice of their scoffing, shall be changed into hideous, yea hellish yelling. Their countenances shall be changed from a show of carnal mirth, haughty pride, and contempt of God's people. It shall put on a show of ghastly terror and amazement. And trembling and chattering of teeth shall seize upon them. But with respect to the saints, the church of Christ, it shall be a joyful and most glorious sight to them. For this sight will at once deliver them from all fear of their enemies, who were before compassing them about, just ready to swallow them up. Deliverance shall come in their extremity. The glorious Captain of their salvation shall appear for them, at a time when no other help appears. Then shall they lift up their heads, and their redemption shall be drawing nigh, Luke 21:28. — And thus Christ will appear with infinite majesty, and yet at the same time they shall see infinite love in his countenance to them. And thus to see their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, will fill their hearts full of gladness. Their countenances also shall be changed, but not as the countenances of the wicked, but shall be changed from being sorrowful, to be exceeding joyful and triumphant. And now the work of redemption will be finished in another sense, viz. that the whole church shall be completely and eternally freed from all persecution and molestation from wicked men and devils.

2. The last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and the living changed. God sent forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather together his elect from the four corners of the earth in a mystical sense, before the destruction of Jerusalem, i.e. he sent forth the apostles, and others, to preach the gospel all over the world. And so in a mystical sense the great trumpet was blown at the beginning of the glorious times of the church. But now the great trumpet is blown in a more literal sense, with a mighty sound, which shakes the earth. There will be a great signal given by a mighty sound made, which is called the voice of the archangel, as being the angel of greatest strength, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." On the sound of the great trumpet, the dead shall be raised everywhere. Now the number of the dead is very great. How many has death cut down for so long a time as since the world has stood! But then the number will be much greater after the world shall have stood so much longer. and through most of the remaining time will doubtless be much fuller of inhabitants than ever it has been. All these shall now rise from the dead. The graves shall be opened everywhere in all parts of the world, and the sea shall give up the innumerable dead that are in it, Revelation 20:13. And now all the inhabitants that ever shall have been upon the face of the earth, from the beginning of the world to that time, shall all appear upon earth at once, all that ever have been of the church of God in all ages, Adam and Eve, the first parents of mankind, and Abel, and Seth, and Methuselah, and all the saints who were their contemporaries, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets of Israel, and the saints in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and all that were of the church in their times, and all the holy apostles of Jesus Christ, and all the saints of their times, and all the holy martyrs under the ten heathen persecutions, and all who belonged to the church in its wilderness state, during the dark times of Antichrist, and all the holy martyrs who have suffered under the cruelty of the Popish persecutions, and all the saints of the present time, and all the saints who are

here in this assembly among the rest, and all that shall be from hence to the end of the world. Now also all the enemies of the church that have or shall be in all the ages of the world, shall appear upon the face of the earth again, all the wicked killed in the flood, and the multitudes that died all over the world among God's professing people, or others, all that died in all the heathen nations before Christ, and all wicked heathens, and Jews, and Mahometans, and Papists that have died since, all shall come together. Sinners of all sorts, demure hypocrites, those who have the fairest and best outside, and open profane drunkards, whoremasters, heretics, deists, and all cruel persecutors, and all that have died or shall die in sin amongst us. And at the same time that the dead are raised, the living shall be changed. The bodies of the wicked who shall then be living, shall be so changed as to fit them for eternal torment without corruption, and the bodies of all the living saints shall be changed to be like Christ's glorious body, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. — The bodies of the saints shall be so changed as to render them forever incapable of pain, or affliction, or uneasiness. And all that dullness and heaviness, and all that deformity, which their bodies had before, shall be put off. And they shall put on strength, and beauty, and activity, and incorruptible unfading glory. And in such glory shall the bodies of all the risen saints appear. And now the work of redemption shall be finished in another respect, viz. that all the elect shall now be actually redeemed in both soul and body. Before this, the work of redemption, as to its actual success, was but incomplete and imperfect. For only the souls of the redeemed were actually saved and glorified, excepting in some few instances. But now all the bodies of the saints shall be saved and glorified together. All the elect shall be glorified in the whole man, and the soul and body in union one with the other.

3. Now shall the whole church of saints be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and all wicked men and devils shall be arraigned before the judgment seat. When the dead saints are raised, then the whole church, consisting of all the elect through all ages, will be standing together, on the face of the earth, at least all excepting those whose bodies were glorified before. And then they shall all mount up as with wings in the air to meet Christ. For it seems that Christ, when he comes to judgment, will not come quite down to the ground, but his throne will be fixed in the air, in the region of the clouds, whence he may be seen by all that vast multitude that shall be gathered before him. The church of saints therefore shall be taken up from the earth to ascend up to their Savior. Thus the apostle tells us, that when the dead in Christ are raised, and the living changed, then those who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. What a wonderful sight will that be, when all the many millions of saints are seen thus mounting up from all parts of the world!

Then shall the work of redemption be finished in another respect. Then shall the whole church be perfectly and forever delivered from this present evil world, forever forsake this cursed ground. They shall take their everlasting leave of this earth, where they have been strangers, and which has been for the most part such a scene of their trouble and sorrow, where the devil for the most part has reigned as god, and has greatly molested them, and which has been such a scene of wickedness and abomination, where Christ their Lord has been cruelly used, and where they have been so bated, and reproached, and persecuted, from age to age, through most of the ages of the world. They shall leave it under foot to go to Christ, and never shall set foot on it again. And there shall be an everlasting separation made between them and wicked men. Before they were mixed together, and it was impossible in many instances to determine which were which. But now all

shall become visible. Both saints and sinners shall appear in their true characters.

Then shall all the church be seen flocking together in the air to the place where Christ shall have fixed his throne, coming from the east and west, and north and south, to the right hand of Christ. What a mighty cloud of them will there be, when all that ever have been of the church of God, all that were before Christ, all that multitude of saints that were in the apostles' time, and all that were in the days of Constantine the Great, and all that were before and since the Reformation, and also all that great multitude of saints that shall be in all the glorious times of the church, when the whole earth shall for so many generations be full of saints, and also all that shall be then living when Christ shall come. I say, what a cloud of them will there be, when all these are seen flocking together in the region of the clouds at the right hand of Christ! And then also the work of redemption will be finished in another respect, viz. that then the church shall all be gathered together. They all belonged to one society before, but yet were greatly separated with respect to the place of their habitation, some being in heaven, and some on earth, and those who were on earth together were separated one from another, many of them by wide oceans, and vast continents. But now they shall all be gathered together, never to be separated any more. And not only shall all the members of the church now be gathered together, but all shall be gathered unto their head, into his immediate glorious presence, never to be separated from him any more. This never came to pass until now. At the same time, all wicked men and devils shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to the left hand of Christ, and, as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and shall not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall be. The devil, that old serpent, shall now be dragged up out of hell. He, that first procured the fall and misery of mankind, and has so set himself against their redemption, and has all along shown himself such an inveterate enemy to the Redeemer. Now he shall never more have anything to do with the church of God, or be suffered in the least to afflict or molest any member of it any more forever. Instead of that, now he must be judged, and receive the due reward of his deeds. Now is come the time which he has always dreaded, and trembled at the thought of, the time wherein he must be judged, and receive his full punishment. He who by his temptation maliciously procured Christ's crucifixion, and triumphed upon it, as though he had obtained the victory, even he shall see the consequences of the death of Christ which he procured. For Christ's coming to judge him in his human nature is the consequence of it. For Christ obtained and purchased this glory to himself by that death. Now he must stand before that same Jesus whose death he procured, to be judged, condemned, and eternally destroyed by him. If Satan, the prince of hell, trembles at the thought of it thousands of years beforehand, how much more will he tremble, proud and stubborn as he is, when he comes to stand at Christ's bar!

Then shall he also stand at the bar of the saints, whom he has so hated, and afflicted, and molested. For the saints shall judge him with Christ, 1 Corinthians 6:3, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Now shall he be as it were subdued under the church's feet, agreeable to Romans 16:20. — Satan, when he first tempted our first parents to fall, deceitfully and lyingly told them, that they should be as gods. But little did be think that the consequence should be, that they should indeed be so much as gods, as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think, that that consequence would follow, that one of that nature which he then tempted, one of the posterity of those persons whom he tempted, should actually be united to God, and that as God he should judge the world, and that he himself must stand trembling and astonished before his

judgment seat. But thus all the devils in hell, who have so opposed Christ and his kingdom, shall now at last stand in utmost amazement and horror before Christ and his church, who shall appear to condemn them.

Now also shall all Christ's other enemies be brought to appear before him. Now shall the wicked proud scribes and Pharisees, who had such a malignant hatred of Christ while in his state of humiliation, and who persecuted Christ to death, those before whose judgment seat Christ was once called and stood, as a malefactor at their bar, and those who mocked him, and buffeted him, and spit in his face. Now shall they see Christ in his glory, as Christ forewarned them in the time of it, Matthew 26:64-65. Then Christ was before their judgment seat. But now it is their turn. They shall stand before his judgment seat with inconceivable horror and amazement, with ghastly countenances, and quaking limbs, and chattering teeth, and knees smiting one against another.

Now also all the cruel enemies and persecutors of the church that have been in all ages, shall come in sight together. Pharaoh and the Egyptians, Antiochus Epiphanes, the persecuting scribes and Pharisees, the persecuting heathen Emperors, Julian the apostate, the cruel persecuting Popes and Papists, Gog and Magog, shall all appear at once before the judgment seat of Christ. They and the saints who have in every age been persecuted by them, shall come in sight one of another, and must confront one another before the great Judge, And now shall the saints on their glorious thrones he made the judges of those unjust kings and rulers who have before judged and condemned them, and cruelly put them to death. Now shall those persecutors behold the glory to which they are arrived whom they before so cruelly despised and so cruelly used. And Christ will make those holy martyrs as it were to come and set their feet on the necks of their persecutors. They shall be made their footstool.

Thus wonderfully will the face of things be altered from what used to be in the former times of the world. Now will all things be coming to rights.

03.12c. Period 3 Application (Cont'd)

4. The righteousness of the church shall be manifested, and all the wickedness of their enemies shall be brought to light. Those saints who had been the objects of hatred, reproach, and contempt in the world, and were reviled and condemned by their persecutors without a cause, shall now be fully vindicated. They shall now appear clothed with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness. It shall be most manifest before the world, that Christ's righteousness is theirs, and they shall as it were gloriously shine forth in it. And then also shall their inherent holiness be made manifest, and all their good works shall be brought to light. The good things which they did in secret shall now be manifested openly. Those holy ones of God, who had been treated as though they were the filth and offscouring of the earth, as though they were not fit to live upon earth, as worse than beasts or devils, shall now, when things shall appear as they are, appear to have been the excellent of the earth. Now God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noon day. And now it shall appear who were those wicked persons that were not fit to live, when all the wickedness of the enemies of Christ and his church, their pride, their malice, their cruelty, their hatred of true religion, shall be set forth in all the horrid acts of it, and with all its aggravations in its proper colors. And now the righteous may be heard before this great Judge, who could not be heard before those unjust judges. Now they shall declare their cause, and shall rise up in judgment against their persecutors, and shall declare how they have been treated by them. And now all the wickedness of the wicked of the whole world shall be brought to light. All their secret wickedness, and their very hearts, shall be opened to view, and as it were turned inside out before the bright light of that great day. And things that have been spoken in the ear, in the closet, and done in the dark, shall be manifested in the light, and proclaimed before all angels and men that are, ever were, or shall be.

5. The sentence shall be pronounced on the righteous and the wicked. Christ, the glorious judge, shall pass that blessed sentence on the church at his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This sentence shall be pronounced with infinite love, and the voice will be most sweet, causing every heart to flow with joy. Thus Christ shall pronounce a sentence of justification on thousands and millions, who have before had a sentence of condemnation passed upon then by their persecuting rulers. He will thus put honor upon those who have been before despised. He will own them for his, and will as it were put a crown of glory upon their heads before the world. And then shall they shine forth as the sun with Jesus Christ in glory and joy, in the sight of all their enemies. And then shall the sentence of condemnation be passed on the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Thus shall the church's enemies be condemned, in which sentence of condemnation, the holy martyrs, who have suffered from them, shall concur. When the words of this sentence are pronounced, they will strike every heart of those at the left hand with inconceivable horror and amazement. Every syllable of it will be more terrible than a stream of lightning through their hearts. We can conceive but very little of those signs and expressions of horror which there will be upon it, of shrieking, quaking, gnashing of teeth, distortions of

countenance, hideous looks, hideous actions, and hideous voices, through all that vast throng.

6. Upon this Christ and all his church of saints, and all the holy angels ministering to them, shall leave this lower world, and ascend up towards the highest heavens. Christ shall ascend in as great glory as he descended, and in some respects greater. For now he shall ascend with his elect church with him, glorified in both body and soul. Christ's first ascension to heaven soon after his own resurrection was very glorious. But this his second ascension, the ascension of his mystical body, his whole church, shall be far more glorious. The redeemed church shall all ascend with him in a most joyful and triumphant manner. And all their enemies and persecutors, who shall be left behind on the accursed ground to be consumed, shall see the sight and hear their songs. And thus Christ's church shall forever leave this accursed world, to go into that more glorious world, the highest heavens, into the paradise of God, the kingdom that was prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

7. When they are gone, this world shall be set on fire, and be turned into a great furnace, wherein all the enemies of Christ and his church shall be tormented forever and ever. This is manifest by 2 Peter 3:7, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." When Christ and his church are ascended to a distance from this world, that miserable company of wicked being left behind, to have their sentence executed upon them here, then, some way or other, this whole lower world shall be set on fire, either by fire from heaven, or by fire breaking out of the bowels of the earth, or both, as it was with the water in the time of the deluge. However, this lower world shall be set all on fire. — How will it strike the wicked with horror, when the fire begins to lay hold upon them, and they find no way to escape it, or flee or hide from it! What shrieking and crying will there be among those many thousands and millions, when they begin to enter into this great furnace, when the whole world shall be a furnace of the fiercest and most raging heat! Insomuch that the Apostle Peter says (2 Peter 3:10; 2 Peter 3:12) that "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up," and that the "heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." And so fierce shall be its heat, that it shall burn the earth into its very center, which seems to be what is meant, Deuteronomy 32:22, "For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." And here shall all the persecutors of the church of God burn in everlasting fire, who have before burnt the saints at the stake, and shall suffer torments far beyond all that their utmost wit and malice could inflict on the saints. And here the bodies of all the wicked shall burn, and be tormented to all eternity, and never be consumed. And the wrath of God shall be poured out on their souls. Though the souls of the wicked in hell do now suffer dreadful punishment, yet their punishment will be so in creased at the day of judgment, that what they suffered before, is, in comparison of it, as an imprisonment to the execution which follows it. And now the devil, that old serpent, shall receive his full punishment. Now shall that which he before trembled for fear of, fully come upon him. This world, which formerly used to be the place of his kingdom, where he set up himself as God, shall now be the place of his complete punishment, and full and everlasting torment. And in this, one design of the work of redemption which has been mentioned, viz. putting Christ's enemies under his feet, shall be perfectly accomplished. His enemies shall now be made his footstool, in the fullest degree. Now shall be the most perfect

fulfillment of that in Genesis 3:15, “It shall bruise thy head.”

8. At the same time, all the church shall enter with Christ, their glorious Lord, into the highest heaven, and there shall enter on the state of their highest and eternal blessedness and glory. While the lower world, which they have left under their feet, is seized with the fire of God’s vengeance, and flames are kindling upon it, and the wicked are entering into everlasting fire, the whole church shall enter, with their glorious head, and all the holy angels attending, in a joyful manner, into the eternal paradise of God, the palace of the great Jehovah, their heavenly Father. The gates shall open wide for them to enter, and there Christ will bring them into his chambers in the highest sense. He will bring them into his Father’s house, into a world not like that which they have left. Here Christ will bring them, and present them in glory to his Father, saying, “Here am I, and the children which thou hast given me,” as much as to say, “Here am I, with every one of those whom thou gavest me from eternity to take the care of, that they might be redeemed and glorified, and to redeem whom I have done and suffered so much, and to make way for the redemption of whom I have for so many ages been accomplishing such great changes. Here they are now perfectly redeemed in body and soul. I have perfectly delivered them from all the ill fruits of the fall, and perfectly freed them from all their enemies. I have brought them all together into one glorious society, and united them all in myself. I have openly justified them before all angels and men, and here I have brought them all away from that accursed world where they have suffered so much, and have brought them before thy throne. I have done all that for them which thou hast appointed me. I have perfectly cleansed them from all filthiness in my blood, and here they are in perfect holiness, shining with thy perfect image.” And then the Father will accept of them, and own them all for his children, and will welcome them to the eternal and perfect inheritance and glory of his house, and will on this occasion give more glorious manifestations of his love than ever before, and will admit them to a more full and perfect enjoyment of himself. And now shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the most perfect sense. The commencement of the glorious times of the church on earth, after the fall of Antichrist, is represented as the marriage of the Lamb. And this shall be the marriage of the Lamb in the highest sense that ever shall be on earth. But after this we read of another marriage of the Lamb, at the close of the day of judgment. After the beloved disciple had given an account of the day of judgment, in the close of Revelation 20:1-15, then he proceeds to give an account of what follows, in Revelation 21:1-27; Revelation 22:1-21. And in Revelation 21:2, he gives an account, that he saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And when Christ shall bring his church into his Father’s house in heaven, after the judgment, he shall bring her thither as his bride, having there presented her, whom he loved, and gave himself for, to himself without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. The bridegroom and the bride shall then enter into heaven, both having on their wedding robes, attended with all the glorious angels. And there they enter on the feast and joys of their marriage before the Father. They shall then begin an everlasting wedding day. This shall be the day of the gladness of Christ’s heart, wherein he will greatly rejoice, and all the saints shall rejoice with him. Christ shall rejoice over his bride, and the bride shall rejoice in her husband, in the state of her consummate and everlasting blessedness, of which we have a particular description in Revelation 21:1-27; Revelation 22:1-21. And now the whole work of redemption is finished. We have seen how it has been carrying on from the fall of man to this time. But now it is complete with respect to all that belongs to it. Now the top stone of the building is laid. In the progress of the discourse on this subject, we have followed the church of God in all the great

changes, all her tossings to and fro that she has been subject to, in all the storms and tempests through the many ages of the world, until at length we have seen an end to all these storms. We have seen her enter the harbor, and landed in the highest heavens, in complete and eternal glory, in all her members, soul and body. We have gone through time, and the several ages of it, as the providence of God, and the Word of God, have led us. And now we have issued into eternity after time shall be no more. We have seen all the church's enemies fixed in endless misery, and have seen the church presented in her perfect redemption before the Father in heaven, there to enjoy this most unspeakable and inconceivable glory and blessedness. And there we leave her to enjoy this glory throughout the never ending ages of eternity.

Now all Christ's enemies will be perfectly put under his feet, and he shall have his most perfect triumph over sin and Satan, and all his instruments, and death, and hell. Now shall all the promises made to Christ by God the Father before the foundation of the world, the promises of the covenant of redemption, be fully accomplished. And Christ shall now perfectly have obtained the joy that was set before him, for which he undertook those great sufferings which he underwent in his state of humiliation. Now shall all the hopes and expectations of the saints be fulfilled. The state of things that the church was in before, was a progressive and preparatory state. But now she is arrived to her most perfect state of glory. All the glory of the glorious times of the church on earth is but a faint shadow of this her consummate glory in heaven. And now Christ the great Redeemer shall be most perfectly glorified, and God the Father shall be glorified In him and the Holy Ghost shall be most fully glorified in the perfection of his work on the hearts of all the church. — And now shall that new heaven and new earth, or that renewed state of things, which had been building up ever since Christ's resurrection, be completely finished, after the very material frame of the old heavens and old earth are destroyed, Revelation 21:1, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." — And now will the great Redeemer have perfected everything that appertains to the work of redemption, which he began so soon after the fall of man. And who can conceive of the triumph of those praises which shall be sung in heaven on this great occasion, so much greater than that of the fall of Antichrist, which occasions such praises as we have described in Revelation 19:1-21! The beloved disciple John seems to want expressions to describe those praises, and says, "It was as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But much more inexpressible will those praises be, which will be sung in heaven after the final consummation of all things. Now shall the praises of that vast and lorious multitude be as mighty thunderings indeed! And now how are all the former things passed away, and what a glorious state are things fixed in to remain to all eternity! — And as Christ, when he first entered upon the work of redemption after the fall of men, had the kingdom committed to him of the Father, and took on himself the administration of the affairs of the universe, to manage all so as to subserve the purposes of this affair. So now, the work being finished, he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, 1 Corinthians 15:24, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." Not that Christ shall cease to reign or have a kingdom after this; for it is said, Luke 1:33, "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." So in Daniel 7:14, "That his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." But the meaning is, that Christ shall deliver up that kingdom or dominion which he has over the world, as the Father's delegate or vicegerent,

which the Father committed to him, to be managed in subserviency to this great design of redemption. The end of this commission, or delegation, which he had from the Father, seems to be to subserve this particular design of redemption. And therefore, when that design is fully accomplished, the commission will cease, and Christ will deliver it up to the Father, from whom he received it.

Chapter 41

04.00. Miscellaneous Observations on Important Theological Subjects

Miscellaneous Observations on Important Theological Subjects By Jonathan Edwards Table of Contents Subject I: Observations on the Facts and Evidences of Christianity, and the Objections of the Infidels Preface and Advertisment to This Edition Chapter 1 - General Observations Chapter 2 - The objection concerning the apostles' apprehensions of the second coming of the Christ answered Chapter 3 - Jesus's prophecies a proof that he was the Christ and a divine person Chapter 4 - The propiety of a general judgment, and a future state Chapter 5 - The miracles of Jesus not counterfeited by his enemies, and superior to those under the Old Testament Chapter 6 - Observations on the Scriptures; -- their authority -- and necessity Chapter 7 - The insufficiency of reason as a substitute for revelation Chapter 8 - On the medium of moral government -- particularly conversation Chapter 9 - Mahometanism compared with Christianity -- particularly with respect to their propagation

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Preface

PRESIDENT EDWARDs has left many manuscript volumes of observations, on almost all subjects in divinity, which either occurred to him from his own meditation, or from the books he read. He wrote these volumes, not with any design they should ever be published in their present form, but that he might retain thoughts which appeared to him worth preserving, both for his own improvement, and for the instruction and edification of others. The judicious author of the life of this great and good man, gave his opinion, that, from these manuscripts, a number of volumes might be published, which, though more imperfect than if the author had prepared them for public view, would afford much new light and entertainment to the church of Christ. The high and well-merited reputation, not only of the books prepared for the press of the President, but of the sermons published since his death, have occasioned many solicitations to his son, Dr. Edwards, of Newhaven, to collect and print such part of those manuscripts as might be generally useful. In compliance with these requests, he has not grudged the labour of transcribing this volume of miscellanies, which, if it prove acceptable, will be followed by more, as the Doctor's health and leisure permit.

Many important and original thoughts occur, on, The evidences of revealed religion -- Moral and religious knowledge only from revelation -- Christ and his apostles taught not that the last judgement was near -- Jesus's prophecies, a proof that was the Christ, and that he was God -- Propriety of the general judgement --Reasonableness of some particular doctrines -- Miracles of Jesus not opposed by counterfeit miracles -- Miracles of Jesus superior to those under the Old Testament -- Much instruction concisely conveyed by scripture metaphors -- Excellencies of

scripture history -- The Propriety of gradual improvement in understanding the Scriptures -- The Propriety of room being left for discovering truth by Scripture consequences -- The necessity of divine revelation vindicated -- Jesus proved the Christ, from his destroying heathen idolatry according to scripture prophecy -- Propagation of Mahometanism not parallel to that of Christianity -- State of the Jewish nation, an evidence of revealed religion --Observations on Christ's miracles. Equally striking and judicious are many of the reflections on the mysteries of revelation -- On the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. -- Many therefore, who relish solid reasoning on religious subjects, though not adorned with the beauties of eloquence, will deem themselves much indebted to Dr. Edwards for gathering these fragments, that nothing might be lost.

Some, who have purchased and read Archbishop Tillotson's sermons, Stapfeni Theologia Polemica, Bennet's Inspiration of the Scriptures, Grotius de Veritate Religionis Christianae, Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology, Religion of Jesus Delineated, Deism Revealed, and Jones on the Canon, may possibly wish that the large quotations from them had been omitted. But Dr. Edwards was advised to publish them, as they may prove an antidote to the deistical notions spreading in some parts of America, where these books are in few hands. These passages may lead some to read these books, who otherwise would not have known them. The President's originality of genius, and attachment to Calvinist principles, did not hinder his seeking and finding instruction in their writings, whose system of theology was very opposite to his. It were well, if in this he was imitated by all who possess distinguished talents, and who boast of liberality of sentiment.

JOHN ERSKINE.

Edin. Sept. 30, 1793.

Advertisement to this Edition THE judiciousness of the "advice" given to Dr. Edwards, and with which he complied, may be justly questioned, respecting the "large quotations" referred to by Dr. Erskine, as they greatly swelled the publication, and thereby impeded the circulation of the President's original and very valuable thoughts. However, in the present edition of his works, it would be extremely improper to insert "long quotations" out of Tillotson, Jones on the Canon, &c. indiscriminately, and without abridgment; not only because these authors are so common in England, compared with America, but also because it will be more satisfactory to the biblical student to consult the originals themselves, and to see the arguments in their proper connexion. This equally applies to the series of "Observations," and to that of the subsequent "Remarks." The latter of these were before cast into distinct chapters, and the former are now reduced to their proper heads, by which they acquire a more interesting aspect, and from the circumstance of an easy connexion, an additional persuasive force.

It is certain that many of the original "Observations," and of the "Remarks on important Theological Controversies," were inserted in the author's common-place book prior to the composition of some of his elaborate publications on the same subjects, when his thoughts appear in a more mature state, and in a more connected form. Of course, where the subjects coincided, he would avail himself of the substance of such adversaria in those treatises. On these grounds, independent of other considerations -- and especially from a due regard to the author's reputation, which is deservedly high -- it is obviously necessary, that a selection more choice and scrupulous be now made. And it may be confidently asserted that these two series, as they now stand, form a very valuable part of the author's work.

04.01. General Observations

Chapter 1: General Observations

§ 1. I SUPPOSE it will be acknowledged by the deists, that the Christian religion is the most rational and pure that ever was established in any societ y of men; and that they will except only themselves, as serving God in a manner more according to his will, than the Christian manner. But can any believe that God has so wholly thrown away mankind, that there never yet has been a society of men that have rightly paid respect to their Creator?

§ It is easily proved that the highest end and happiness of man is to view God's excellency, to love him, and receive expressions of his love. This love, including all those other affections which depend upon, and are necessarily connected with it, we express in worship. The highest end of society among men, therefore, must be, to assist and join with each other in this employment. But how comes it to pass, that this end of society was never yet obtained among deists? Where was ever any social worship statedly performed by them. And were they disposed sociallv to express their love and honour, which way would they go about it? They have nothing from God to direct them. Doubtless there would be perpetual dissensions about it, unless they were disposed to fall in with the Christian model. We may be convinced, therefore, that revelation is necessary to right social worship.

§ 2. There never was any religion but that which we profess, and those formed from it, that pretended to inform us of the nature of God, that there is but one God; how the world came into being, and how God governs it. What other religion discovered God's great designs; what is his will, and how he should be served? declared the reward of obedience and punishment of disobedience; the nature of man's happiness, and the end for which he was made? that gave us good moral rules; told us what will become of the world hereafter; explained how we came to be sinful and miserable, and how we may escape sin and misery? gave an account of the great revolutions of the world, and the successions of God's works in the universe; and where his true worshippers have been, and what has befallen them; or informed us how the world came to apostatize from the true worship of God? Christianity is the only religion that ever pretended that there should a time come, when it should be the religion of the world in general.

§ 3. The Jewish religion, as at present professed, most certainly differs from what reason evidently declares to be the essence of religion. It does not state aright the highest end and happiness of man, his chief business and greatest misery, and the true worship of God. Undoubtedly the Messiah was to come to advance the best interest and true happiness of mankind, which certainly consist in what the gospel declares our Jesus advanced, and not in what the Jews expected the Messiah will do.

§ 4. I think it certain, that seeing the miracles of Christ were done, for three years and a half, so publicly all over Judea; and seeing there was such violent opposition there, so soon after, against the Christians; if the matters of fact had been false, they would have been denied by the Jews

generally; and if this had been the case, we should have known it. The Jews afterwards would much more have denied them; which it is evident they did not. If they had, they would have been also denied by the heathens who wrote against the Christians. But they were not denied. It is impossible that the whole world should have turned Christian, in three hundred years after the facts were so publicly done, if they had been generally false. If the Jews had denied the matters of fact at first, they would undoubtedly have denied them at this day, seeing they are so tenacious of the traditions of their fathers. Christ's resurrection was openly published within a few days after his death, on the day of Pentecost. It is undoubted, that the number of the Christians increased every where exceedingly from that time; so that a considerable alteration was speedily made by it in the face of the world. Whether the matters of fact were written or no, they were universally talked of. The conversion of the Roman empire to the Christian religion, was the most remarkable thing that ever happened among the nations of the world; and it would be unaccountable that it should have happened upon the story of a few obscure men, without inquiring into the matters related.

§ 5. I am convinced of the necessity of a revelation, considering how negligent, dull, and careless about a future happiness, I should be, if I was left to discover that happiness by unassisted reason: especially if there were no revelation at all, about what is pleasing to God; how he accepts our services; after what manner he loves his servants; how he will pardon sin, &c.

§ 6. It is certain that Jesus Christ had none of the advantages of education, to get learning and knowledge; and it is also certain, that every where in his speeches, he showed an uncommon insight into things, a great knowledge of the true nature of virtue and morality, and what was most acceptable to God, vastly beyond the rest of the nation -- take scribes and Pharisees and all. And how did he come by it? how did he get it at Nazareth? Those who have not an education in these days, may get much by books, which are so common: but books of learning were not to be had then. Yea, it is evident that he knew vastly more than any of the philosophers and wise men in the whole world, by those rational descriptions which he gave of God and his attributes; of his government and providence; and of man's nature, business, end, and happiness; of what is pleasing to God; of the immortality of the soul, and a future state. How knew he, so exactly, truths perhaps demonstrable by reason, but never found out before? &c.

§ 7. That Christ was really dead, appears from many considerations. It is very unreasonable to imagine, that he feigned himself dead; for what reason had he to think that he should have success, if he did? or to expect they would take him down before he was quite dead? Or, if he had had such a design, it was impossible that he should act his part so accurately, as not to be discovered or suspected. Besides, if he was not dead when they took him down from the cross, he was very near it; and no doubt but his grievous wounds, the loss of blood, and fasting so long would have extinguished his life before the third day. And if then he only rose out of a swoon, how came he perfectly sound at once? Doubtless, his hands and feet were much torn by bearing his weight so long on iron spikes driven through them. And if he rose from the dead in no supernatural sense, whither did he go when he rose? What became of him? We have no account of his dying again; nor was he yet to be found after a few weeks.

§ 8. If Christianity was not true, it would never afford so much matter for rational and penetrating minds to be exercised upon. If it were false, such minds would find it empty, and it would be a force upon the intellect to be set upon meditating upon that which has no other order, foundation,

and mutual dependence to be discovered in its parts, than what is accidental. A strong and piercing mind would feel itself exceedingly bound and hindered. But in fact, there is the like liberty in the study of Christianity, and as much improvement of the mind, as in the study of natural philosophy, or any study whatsoever; yea, a great deal more. And whatever may be said about Mahometan divinity, I cannot be convinced but that a mind that has the faculty and habit of clear and distinct reasoning, would find nothing but chains, fetters, and confusion, if it should pretend to fix its reason upon it.

§ 9. Seeing the beauty of the corporeal world consists chiefly in representing spiritual beauties, and the beauties of minds are infinitely the greatest; we therefore may conclude, that God, when he created the world, showed his own perfection and beauties far the most charmingly and clearly, in the spiritual part of the world. But seeing spiritual beauty consists principally in virtue and holiness; and seeing there is so little of this beauty to be seen now on earth; hence we may fairly conclude, that there has been a great fall and defection in this part of the spiritual world, from its primitive beauty and charms.

Corollary. Seeing this is so agreeable to the account that the Christian religion gives of the matter; and seeing it is evident, from many arguments, that God intends not to give over man as lost, but has a merciful intention of restoring him, to his primitive beauty; and seeing we are told this, and the manner of it, in the Christian religion alone; and seeing the account is so rational; it is a great confirmation of the truth of Christianity.

§ 10. It is a convincing argument for the truth of the Christian religion, and that it stands upon a most sure basis, that none have ever yet been able to prove it false, though there have been many men of all sorts, many fine wits and men of great learning, that have spent themselves, and ransacked the world, for arguments against it, and this for many ages.

§ 11. It is exceedingly improbable, that it should ever enter into the head of any mortal, to invent such a strange system of visions, as that of the Revelation of St. John, of which he himself could give no account of the meaning or design, and did not pretend to it. What design could he have in it? But, if he had a design, the frame of the vision is not a whit like a random invention, without any view or design as to interpretation.

§ 12. It does not seem to me at all likely, that any person among the Jews, so long ago, should have so perfect a knowledge of nature, and the secret springs of human affections, as to be able to feign any thing so perfectly and exquisitely agreeable to nature, as the incidents in Joseph’s history; and the other histories of the Bible; particularly the history of Genesis.

§ 13. Such kind of miracles as healing the sick, the blind, the deaf, dumb, lame, &c.; and creating bread and flesh, and turning water into wine, are greater, than those that are so much more pompous, as causing universal darkness, dividing the sea, the shaking and burning of mount Sinai, &c. The healing of the sick and distracted, do more especially manifest divine power, for this cause, that we have reason to conclude mankind especially are subject to God’s providence, and that their health and the exercise of their reason, are alone in his hands, and that it is not in the power of any evil spirit to give them and take them at his pleasure, however great power he may be supposed to have over the inanimate creatures. When a person appears, that has evidently the whole course of nature at all times subject to his command, so that he can alter it how and when

be pleases, we have the greatest reason to think that person has divine authority, and that the author and upholder of nature favours him, and gives approbation to what he pretends thereby. For we know, that the course of nature is God's established course of acting upon creatures; and we cannot think that he would give power to any evil spirit to alter it when he pleases, for evil purposes. But Christ manifestly had the course of nature so subject to his will and command.

§ 14. It would not have been proper for Christ constantly to dwell among men after his resurrection. Men would be exceedingly apt to fall into idolatry; and, because they saw the man Christ Jesus, would be apt to direct their worship to the human nature. Therefore we are not to see the man Christ Jesus till we are perfected, and are not liable to temptation on such occasions. For this reason, probably it was not convenient for Christ to appear in great majesty and glory when on earth, but the contrary; for this reason, Christ endeavoured to hide his transfiguration, and many other miracles, till after he was risen; and for this reason, he did not converse constantly with his disciples after his resurrection, as before. All these things were done in a manner the most wise and fit that can be imagined.

§ 15. If human reason, by any thing that has happened since the creation, be really very much corrupted; and if God is still propitious, and does not throw us off, but reserves us for that end for which he made us; it cannot be imagined that he would leave us to our reason as the only rule to guide us in that business, which is the highest end of life: for it is not to be depended upon; and yet we exceedingly need something that may be depended upon, in reference to our everlasting welfare. It does not seem to me reasonable to suppose, that if God be merciful after we have forfeited his favour, he will manifest his mercy only in some mitigations of that misery into which we have plunged ourselves, leaving us inevitably to endure the rest: but that he will quite restore us, in case of our acceptance of his offered favour.

§ 16. It seems much the most rational to suppose, that the universal law by which mankind are to be governed, should be a written law. For if that rule, by which God intends the world shall be regulated, and kept in decent and happy order, be supposed to be expressed no other way than by nature; man's prejudices will render it, in innumerable circumstances, a most uncertain thing. For though "it must be granted, that men who are willing to transgress, may abuse written as well as unwritten laws, and expound them so as may best serve their turn upon occasion; yet it must be allowed, that, in the nature of the thing, revelation is a better guard than a bare scheme of principles without it. For men must take more pains to conquer the sense of a standing, written law, which is ready to confront them upon all occasions. They must more industriously tamper with their passions, and blind their understandings, before they can bring themselves to believe what they have a mind to believe, in contradiction to the words of an express and formal declaration of God Almighty's will, than there can be any pretence or occasion for, when they have no more than their own thoughts and ideas to manage. These are flexible things, and a man may much more easily turn and wind them as he pleases, than he can evade a plain and positive law, which determines the kinds and measures of his duty, and threatens disobedience in such terms as require long practice and experience to mask handsome salvos and distinctions to get over." And upon this account also, that is it fit in every case, when the law is made known, that also the sanctions, the rewards and punishments, should be know at the same time. But nature could never have determined these with any certainty.

§ 17. Raising the dead to life, is given in the Old Testament, as a certain proof of the authority and mission of a prophet; and that what he says is the truth. 1 Kings 17:24. "And the woman said to Elijah, By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." So that if the Old Testament is the word of God, Jesus was a true prophet.

§ 18. The being of God is evident by the Scriptures, and the Scriptures themselves are an evidence of their own divine authority, after the same manner as the existence of a human thinking being is evident by the motions, behaviour, and speech of a body animated by a rational mind. For we know this no otherwise, than by the consistency, harmony, and concurrence of the train of actions and sounds, and their agreement to all that we can suppose to be in a rational mind. These are a clear evidence of understanding and design, which are the original of these actions. There is that universal harmony, consent, and concurrence in the drift, such an universal appearance of a wonderful and glorious design, such stamps every where of exalted wisdom, majesty, and holiness, in matter, manner, contexture, and aim; that the evidence is the same, that the Scriptures are the word and work of a divine mind -- to one that is thoroughly acquainted with them -- as that the words and actions of an understanding man are from a rational mind. An infant, when it first comes into the world, sees persons act, and hears their voice, before it has so much comprehension as to see something of their consistence, harmony, and concurrence. It makes no distinction between their bodies, and other things; their motions and sounds, and the motions and sounds of inanimate things. But as its comprehension increases, the understanding and design begin to appear. So it is with men that are as little acquainted with the Scriptures, as infants with the actions of human bodies. They cannot see any evidence of a divine mind, as the original of it; because they have not comprehension enough to apprehend the harmony, wisdom, &c.

§ 19. Were is not for divine revelation, I am persuaded, that there is no one doctrine of that which we call natural religion, which, notwithstanding all philosophy and learning, would not be for ever involved in darkness, doubts, endless disputes, and dreadful confusion. Many things, now they are revealed, seem very plain. It is one thing, to see that a truth is exceedingly agreeable to reason, after we have had it explained to us, and have been told the reasons of it; and another, to find it out, and clearly and certainly to explain it by mere reason. It is one thing, to prove a thing after we are shown how; and another, to find it out, and prove it of ourselves.

If there never had been any revelation, I believe the world would have been full of endless disputes about the very being of a God; whether the world was from eternity or not; and whether the form and order of the world did not result from the mere nature of matter. Ten thousand different schemes there would have been about it. And if it were allowed that there was a first cause of all things, there would have been endless disputes, and abundance of uncertainty, to determine what sort of a thing that first cause was. Some, it may be, would have thought that it was properly an intelligent mind and voluntary agent. Others may say, that it was some principle of things, of which we could have no kind of ideas. Some would have called it a voluntary agent; some, a principle exerting itself by a natural necessity. There might have been many schemes contrived about this, and some would like one best, and some another; and amongst those that held, that the original of all things was superior intelligence and will, there probably would have been everlasting doubts and disputes, whether there was one only, or more. Some perhaps would have said, there was but one; some that there were two; the one the principle of good, the other the principle of evil; others, that there was a society, or a world of them. And among those that

held that there was but one mind, there would be abundance of uncertainty what sort of a being he was; whether he was good or evil; whether he was just or unjust; holy or wicked; gracious or cruel; or whether he was partly good, and partly evil; and how far he concerned himself with the world, after he had made it; and how far things were owing to his providence, or whether at all; how far he concerned himself with mankind; what was pleasing to him in them, and what was displeasing; or whether he cared any thing about it, whether he delighted in justice and order or not; and whether he would reward the one, and punish the other; and how, and when, and where, and to what degree. There would have been abundance of doubt and dispute concerning what this mind expected from us and how we should behave towards him; or whether he expected we should anywise concern ourselves with him; whether we ever ought to apply ourselves to him any way; whether we ought to speak to him, as expecting that he would take any notice of us; how we should show our respect to him; whether we ought to praise and commend him in our addresses; whether we ought to ask that of him which we need; whether or no he would forgive any, after they had offended him; when they had reason to think they were forgiven, and what they should do that they might be forgiven; and whether it is ever worth the while for them that are so often offending, to try for it; whether there was not some sins so great, that God never would upon any terms forgive them, and how great they must be in order to that. Men would be exceedingly at a loss to know when they were in favour with him, and upon what terms they could be in his favour. They would be in a dreadful uncertainty about a future state; whether there be any, and, if there be, whether it is a state of rewards and punishments; and if it is, what kind of state it is, and how men are to be rewarded and punished, to what degree, and how long; whether man's soul be eternal or not; and if it be, whether it is to remain in another world in a fixed state, or changed often.

Every man would plead for the lawfulness of this or that practice, just as suited his fancy, and agreed with his interest and appetites; and there would be room for a great deal of uncertainty and difference of opinion among those that were most speculative and impartial. There would be uncertainty, in a multitude of instances, what was just, and what unjust. It would be very uncertain how far self-interest should govern men, and how far love to our neighbour; how far revenge would be right, and whether or no a man might hate his neighbour, and for what causes: what degree of passion and ambition was justifiable and laudable: what sensual enjoyments were lawful, and what not: how far we ought to honour, respect, and submit to our parents, and other superiors: how far it would be lawful to dissemble and deceive. It seems to me, there would be infinite confusion in these things; and that there would hardly be any such thing as conscience in the world. The world has had a great deal of experience of the necessity of a revelation; we may see it in all ages, that have been without a revelation. In what gross darkness and brutal stupidity have such places, in these matters, always been overwhelmed! and how many, and how great and foolish mistakes, and what endless uncertainty and differences of opinion, have there been among the most learned and philosophical! Yet there never was a real trial how it would be with mankind in this respect, without having any thing from revelation. I believe that most of those parts of natural religion, that were held by the heathens before Christ, were owing to tradition from those of their forefathers who had the light of revelation. And many of those being most evidently agreeable to reason, were more easily upheld and propagated. Many of their wise men who had influence and rule over them, saw their rectitude and agreeableness to reason better than others. Some of them travelled much, and those things which appeared most agreeable to their reason, they transplanted to their own country. Judea was a sort of light among the nations, though they did not

know it. The practice and principles of that country kept the neighbouring nations in remembrance of traditions, which they had from their forefathers; and so kept them from degenerating so much as otherwise they would have done. In fact, the philosophers had the foundation of most of their truths, from the ancients, or from the Phoenicians, or what they picked up here and there of the relics of revelation.

How came all the heathen nations to agree in the custom of sacrificing? The light of nature did not teach it them; without doubt they had it from tradition; and therefore, it needs not seem strange, that what of natural religion they bad amongst them, came the same way. I am persuaded, that mankind would have been like a herd of beasts, with respect to their knowledge in all important truths, if there never had been any such thing as revelation in the world; and that they never would have risen out of their brutality. We see, that those who live at the greatest distance from revelation, are far the most brutish. The heathens in America, and in some of the utmost parts of Asia and Africa, are far more barbarous than those who formerly lived in Rome, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and Chaldea. Their traditions are more worn out, and they are more distant from places enlightened with revelation. The Chinese, descended probably from the subjects of Noah, that holy man, have held more by tradition from him, than other nations, and so have been a more civilized people. The increase of learning and philosophy in the Christian world, is owing to revelation. The doctrines of revealed religion are the foundation of all useful and excellent knowledge. The word of God leads barbarous nations into the way of using their understandings. It brings their minds into a way of reflecting and abstracted reasoning; and delivers from uncertainty in the first principles, such as, the being of God, the dependence of all things upon him, being subject to his influence and providence, and being ordered by his wisdom. Such principles as these are the basis of all true philosophy, as appears more and more as philosophy improves. Revelation delivers mankind from that distraction and confusion, which discourages all attempts to improve in knowledge. Revelation actually gives men a most rational account of religion and morality, and the highest philosophy, and all the greatest things that belon1g.to learning concerning God, the world, human nature, spirits, providence, time, and eternity. Revelation not only gives us the foundation and first principles of all learning, but it gives us the end, the only end, that would be sufficient to move man to the pursuit.

Revelation redeems nations from a vicious, sinful, and brutish way of living, which will effectually keep out learning. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose, that philosophy might supply the defect of revelation. Knowledge is easy to its that understand by revelation; but we do not know what brutes we should have been, if there never had been any revelation.

§ 20. As Moses was so intimately conversant with God, and so continually under the divine conduct, it cannot be thought, that when he wrote the history of the creation and fall of man, and the history of the church from the creation, he should not be under the divine direction in such an affair.

§ 21. It is certainly necessary, that in the word of God, we should have a history of the life of Christ, of his incarnation, his death, his resurrection, and ascension, and his actions, and of the instructions he gave the world.

If God expects that we shall receive any New Testament at all, we must suppose that God’s providence would be concerned in this matter. God took this care with respect to the books of the

Old Testament, that no books should be received by the Jewish church, and delivered down in the canon of the Old Testament, but what were his word, and owned by Christ. We may therefore conclude, that he would still take the same care of his church, with respect to the New Testament.

§ 22. It seems to me an unaccountable dulness, that when intelligent men read David's Psalms, and other prayers and songs of the Old Testament, they are not at once convinced, that the Jews had the true worship and communion of the one great and holy God; and that no other nation upon earth had them. It seems as clear as the sun at noon-day; and so indeed from all the histories and prophecies of the Old Testament.

§ 23. We need not wonder at all, that God should so often reveal himself by prophets and miracles, to the Israelitish nation, and that now we should see nothing of this nature; for this way of revealing himself is not at all suitable to the present state of the church. The church was then confined to one particular nation, that God chose on purpose to make them the receptacle of his revelation, and the conveyancer of it to the rest of the world. And I can think of no other way that it could be done with any tolerable convenience, but by a chosen peculiar nation, that should alone be God's people, and have the true religion among them. Therefore, it was highly convenient and necessary, that there should be such a manner of communication with such a nation. It was also necessary, in the first transition of this revelation from the Jews to the world, as it was in the apostles' times, that the world receiving this revelation from them, might see God still revealing himself; and so might receive it from God, in the same manner as they received it. But that God should now reveal himself after that manner to his church, is no way necessary, nor at all suitable to the gospel state of the church, which is not any particular enclosure, but is dispersed through the whole world. How is it practicable that God should treat with the church now, in such a way as he did with that peculiar nation? Besides, if it were practicable, it would be very inexpedient for, what need of new revelations to the end of the world? Is it not better that God should give the world a book, that should be the summary of his will, to which all nations in all ages may resort? Prophecy and miracles are nothing without charity; like the shadow without the substance: and seeing the substance is come, what need the shadow should be continued? Seeing the end is come, it would be impertinent still to continue the means. The church now enjoys that glory, in comparison with which all the glory of prophecy and miracles, even those of that extraordinary prophet Moses, is no glory at all, 2 Corinthians 3:10.

§ 24. If there be any such thing needful, or at all proper and suitable, that God should reveal himself to mankind; it is perhaps impossible that he should do it in any other way, or with any other kind of evidence, than he has done it. No kind of miracle can be thought of, that would be more evidential, than those by which Christianity has been confirmed.

§ 25. It is no argument against the reality of the incarnation of Jesus Christ -- whereby God became the same person with a man -- that there is nothing else like it any where to he seen; because it was evidently God's design to show his wisdom, by doing a thing that was, and for ever would have been, far beyond the thoughts of any creatures. Man's fall was God's opportunity to show how far his contrivance and wisdom was beyond that of all creatures.

§ 26. It was often prophesied among the children of Israel, that the gods of the nations round about should perish from off the earth; and that they should cease to be acknowledged and worshipped: but that the worship and acknowledgment of their God should remain for ever, and

should, in due time, take place of those others. Jeremiah 10:11. " The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." This came to pass by means of the Christian religion. It is Christ's appearing, and the preaching of' his doctrine in the world, that has been the means of it all. It is by means of these that the Mahometan parts of the world came to acknowledge the One God: and it is by these means, that even the deists come to it. -- Again, it has been only by means of Jesus Christ's appearing and teaching, that the world ever came to have any clear, distinct, and rational notions about a future state; notions every way agreeable to reason.

It is a confirmation that God designed the Christian religion should succeed the Jewish; that, speedily after the introduction of the Christian religion, God, in his providence, by the destruction of the temple, and dispersion of the Jewish nation, made that religion impracticable. It was prophesied of old, that God should be acknowledged and worshipped by other nations, and that other nations were to be God's people. Therefore there was a religion to succeed the Jewish, very different as to external worship; because the Jewish religion was not fitted for more than a single nation; nor is it practicable by the world in general. But the Christian religion is exceedingly fitted for universal practice.

§ 27. There are these things remarkable in Christ's raising Lazarus from the dead, John 11:11-57 viz. that he called upon God, before he did it, to do it for him; and thanked him that he had heard him; and told him, that he knew that he heard him always: and when he spake to him he called him Father; and told him that he spake to him for that end, that others that stood by, when they should see that what he asked of him, was granted in such an extraordinary thing, might believe that he sent him. Now, can it be imagined, that God would thus hear an impostor?

§ 28. It is an evidence that the apostles had their doctrine from inspiration of some invisible guide and instructor, that there was such a vast and apparent difference made in them at once after Pentecost. They were illiterate, simple, undesigning, ignorant men before; but afterward, how do they express themselves in their speeches and epistles! they do not speak as being in the least at a loss about the scheme of salvation, and the gospel-mysteries. With what authority do they teach! in how learned and intelligent a manner! How came Saul by his scheme, and by all his knowledge of the Christian doctrines and mysteries, immediately upon his conversion?

§ 29. Christ joined pardoning sins with his healing the sick. When one came to be healed, he first told him, that his sins were forgiven; and when the Jews found fault that he should pretend to forgive sins, then, immediately, he heals the person's disease, that they might believe that he had the power to forgive sins, and tells them that he does it for this end. Matthew 9:2. Mark 2:3. Luke 5:18. Now, if Christ were an impostor, can it be believed, that God would so countenance such horrid blasphemy as this would be, to enable him to cure the disease by a word speaking? a work which God appropriates to himself as his own, Psalms 103:3. Would God give an impostor this attestation to a blasphemous lie, when he pretended to do it as an attestation to his divine mission?

§ 30. Christ, by the works which he wrought, showed that he had an absolute and sovereign power over the course of nature, and over the spiritual and invisible world, and over the bodies and souls of men. It was not so with other prophets; they could not work what miracles they pleased, and when they pleased. They could work miracles, only when they were excited and directed to it by a

special command or impulse from heaven. But Christ wrought them as of his own power at all times. Men came to him, under the notion that he was able; and Christ required that they should believe in order to it; to which never any prophet pretended. Moses was shut out of the land of Canaan, partly for working a miracle in his own name, and not sanctifying the Lord God. "Must we fetch water out of this rock?" The prophets never pretended that they themselves had properly any power to work miracles; but disclaimed it. God never subjected the course of nature to them, to work miracles by their own word and command upon all occasions. Care was taken in all the miracles wrought by the prophets, that it should be visible, that what was done, was done only by God; and that what they said or did, upon which the miracle was wrought, was by particular revelation from heaven. They who came to Christ, that he might work miracles for them, did it in the faith, that by his own power and holiness he was able to do it for them. The leper said, Matthew 8:2. "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." He believed that Christ could work miracles when he would. This Christ approved of. Matthew 8:8. "But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Matthew 9:18 "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thine hand on her, and she shall live." Matthew 9:28. " Believe ye that I am able to do this? they said unto him, Yea, Lord." Matthew 9:21. "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." In Matthew 16:9; Christ reproves his disciples, because they were afraid of wanting bread, not remembering how he had fed multitudes in the wilderness; which implies, that he was able to do the like again when he pleased. He cast out devils as of his own power and authority; Mark 1:27. "With authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." And Christ, as having power of his own to work miracles, gave power to his disciples, as Matthew 10:1-42. Mark 3:14. and Mark 6:7, &c.; and Luke 9:1-62 and Luke 10:1-42 and so miracles were wrought in Christ's name, by the apostles, and many other disciples. Moses did not in the least pretend to any such thing. But Christ did pretend, and he declares himself fellow with God in working; John 5:17. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

§ 31. If there must be a revelation, it is convincing, that the Christian revelation is the true one; that it has been by means of this revelation, and this only, that the world has come to the knowledge of the one only true God. Till this came, all the world lay in ignorance of him. But when this came, it was successful to bring the world to the acknowledgment of him. If there be a true revelation in the world, it is not to be supposed, that by a false one, an imposture, the world should come to the knowledge of the true God. If the Christian revelation be not the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of the true God, it is strange that the world, which was before ignorant of him, should be brought to the knowledge of him by it; and no part of it ever be brought to the knowledge of him by any other means.

§ 32. It is an argument for the truth of the Christian revelation, that there is nothing else that informs us, what God designs by that series of revolutions and events that are brought to pass in the world; what end he seeks, and what scheme he has laid out; agreeably to the challenge which God makes to the gods, and prophets, and teachers of the heathen world, Isaiah 41:22-23. It is most fit, that the intelligent beings of the world should be made acquainted with it. The thing that is God's great design, is something concerning them; and the revolutions by which it is to be brought to pass, are revolutions among them, and in their state. The state of the inanimate, unperceiving part of the world, is nothing regarded any otherwise, than in a subserviency to the perceiving and intelligent part. And it is most rational to suppose that God should reveal the design he has been

carrying on, to his rational creatures; that as God has made them capable of it, they may actively fall in with and promote it, acting herein as the subjects and friends of God. -- The Christian revelation is a design most worthy of an infinitely wise, holy, and perfect being.

§ 33. The doctrine of the general resurrection at the end of the world, upon many accounts, seems to me a most credible doctrine. There are a multitude of resemblances of it in nature and providence, which, I doubt not, were designed to be types of it. It seems credible on this account, that the work of the Redeemer is wholly a restoring work from beginning to end; and that he would repair all the ruins brought on the world by sin.

§ 34. If the New Testament be not a divine revelation, then God never yet has given the world any clear revelation of a future state. But if a revelation be needful upon any account, it is that we may have some certain and distinct knowledge of the future invisible world. If God designed a true revelation, it is not probable that he would suffer that any false revelation should anticipate it, and do the work beforehand. And, upon many other accounts that might be mentioned, it is incredible that the true revelation should still be deferred.

§ 35. It is very unreasonable to make it an objection against the Christian revelation, that it contains some things that are very mysterious and difficult to our understandings, and that seem to us impossible. If God will give revelation from heaven of the very truth concerning his own nature, acts, counsels, and ways, and of the spiritual and invisible world; it is unreasonable to expect any other, than that many things in such a revelation should be utterly beyond our understanding. For, was there ever a time, when, if there had been a revelation of the very truth in philosophical matters -- concerning created things, which are of a vastly lower nature, and must be supposed more proportioned to our understandings -- there would not have appeared many things; not only to the vulgar, but to the learned of that age, absurd and impossible? If many of those positions in philosophy, which are now received by the learned world as indubitable truths, had been revealed from heaven to be truths in past ages, they would have seemed as impossible as the most mysterious Christian doctrines do now. I believe, that if, even now, there should come a revelation from heaven of what is the very truth in these matters, without deviating at all to accommodate it to our received notions and principles, there would be many things in it that would seem absurd and contradictory. I now receive principles as certain, which once, if they had been told me, I should have regarded as difficult as any mystery in the Bible. Without doubt, much of the difficu1ty that we have about the doctrines of Christianity, are from wrong principles that we receive. We find that those things which are received as principles in one age, and are never once questioned, are yet exploded in another age, as light increases. If God make a revelation to us, he must reveal to us the truth as it is, without accommodating himself to our notions and principles; which would indeed be impossible: for those things which are our received notions in one age, are contrary to what are so in another; and the word of God was not given for any particular age, but for all ages. It surely becomes us to receive what God reveals to be truth, and to look upon his word as proof sufficient; whether what he reveals squares with our notions or not.

I rather wonder that the word of God contains no more mysteries in it; and I believe it is because God is so tender of us, and reveals only such things as he sees that man, though so weak a creature, if of an humble and an honest mind, can well enough bear. Such tenderness we see in Christ towards his disciples; he had many things to say, but forbore, because they could not bear

them yet. Though God does not depart from truth to accommodate himself to our manner of thinking, yet I believe he accommodates himself to our way of understanding, in his manner of expressing and representing things; as we are wont to do, when teaching little children.

§ 36. What can be more reasonable, than to believe a man, when he tells us, that he is sent from God to heal the diseases of our souls, and, in order that we may believe him, heals all sorts of men, of all manner of diseases by a touch or a word; and plainly shows that he can do it when he will, let the disease be what it will? He tells us, that he will deliver us from spiritual and eternal death; that he will raise us from the dead, and give us eternal life; so that we shall live for ever, and not die: and to prove this, he gives evidence that he has power over men's lives by restoring them after they are dead; and rises from the dead himself. He tells us, that he will bestow heavenly glory on us; and will translate us into heaven: and, to confirm us in this belief, tells us, that we shall see himself, after his death, ascend into heaven. What more could we desire? He tells us that he will undertake for us, and appear for us before God; and that we need not doubt, if be pleads for us, he shall procure acceptance, and, that we may see that it is true, he asks of God, concerning a man who had been dead four days, that he may come to life again; and tells God, that he asks it for this end that we may see that he always hears him, and grants what he requests: and accordingly, at his request, the dead man comes to life.

§ 37. "What argument more proper (says Dr. Tillotson) to convince them of another life after this, than to see a man raised from the dead and restored to a new life? What fitter to satisfy a man concerning heaven and the happy state of those there, than to see one visibly taken up into heaven? And what more fit to assure us that the promises of the gospel are real, and shall be made good to us, than to see him who made those promises to us, raise himself from the dead, and go up into heaven, and from thence dispense miraculous gifts abroad in the world, as evidences of the power and authority with which he is invested? All the philosophical arguments which a man can bring for the soul's immortality and another life, will have no force upon vulgar apprehensions, in comparison of these sensible demonstrations, which give an experiment of the thing, and furnish us with an instance of something of the same kind, and of equal difficulty with that which is propounded to our belief."

§ 38. Why was not Christ, after he rose from the dead, during his stay upon earth, with his disciples, as he was before? The very different states that Christ and his disciples were now in, would not allow of it. Christ, before his death, while in his humiliation, was in a like state with them. He was subject to hunger and thirst, as they were; he needed sleep as they did; he needed the like defence from the weather that they did, and the like: but when be was risen from the dead, the case was exceedingly altered; he then began his exaltation. He put off mortality and all the infirmities of his body. The nature of his body was different from theirs, as things celestial differ from things terrestrial. Mortal beings are not apt for a cohabitation with immortal; nor terrestrial with celestial; nor corruption with incorruption. God will not thus mix and confound heaven and earth.

§ 39. Much of the Scriptures is apt to seem insipid to us now, as though there were no great matter of instruction in it; because the points of instruction most plainly contained in it, are old to us, and what we have been taught from our infancy. The doctrines are so plain to us now, that there seems to have been no need of a particular revelation of such things; especially of insisting upon them so much. But how exceedingly different would it have seemed if we had lived in those times

when the revelation was given, when the things were in a great measure new, at least as to that distinctness and expressiveness of their revelation? If we had an idea of the state of the world, when God gave the revelation, they would appear glorious instructions, bringing great light into the world, and most worthy of God.

§ 40. It was not allowed under the Old Testament, to hate personal enemies, to wish for revenge, or to pray for their hurt; except as speaking in the name of the Lord. So that there is no inconsistence between the religion of the Old Testament and New, in this respect. The apostle Paul himself doth thus imprecate vengeance on his enemies; 2 Timothy 4:14. "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works." Revenge, or a desire of it, was forbidden by the law of Moses, Leviticus 19:18; yea, there, the love of our enemy is implicitly commanded. Doing good to enemies is required, Exodus 23:4-5. "If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou seest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." And this was agreeable to the sense of the saints of those times, as appears from Job 31:29. "If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him." Proverbs 24:17. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, nor let thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." And Proverbs 17:5. "He that is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished." We cannot think that those imprecations we find in the Psalms and Prophets, were out of their own hearts, for cursing is spoken of as a very dreadful sin in the Old Testament; and David, whom we hear oftener than any other praying for vengeance on his enemies, by the history of his life, was of a spirit very remote from spiteful and revengeful. He himself in the Psalms gives us an account of his wishing well to his enemies, and doing good to them, Psalms 7:4; praying for them, and grieving at their calamities, Psalms 35:13-14. And some of the most terrible imprecations that we find in all the Old Testament, are in the New spoken of as prophetical, even those in Psalms 109:1-31; as in Acts 1:20. Jeremiah 12:3. We have instances of this kind even in the apostles and the disciples of the Lamb of God, as 2 Timothy 4:14. Peter says to Simon Magus, "Thy money perish with thee." They wish them ill, not as personal, but as public, enemies to the church of God. Sometimes what they say is in the name of the church, see Jer. 5:34, 35.; Matthew 1:19 "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily." This is a remarkable and eminent instance of the Christian spirit; and this verse is an evidence, that that meekness, gentleness, forgiveness, and kindness to enemies which the gospel prescribes, were duties under the law, and before Christ came.

§ 41. I once told a boy of about thirteen years of age, that a piece of any matter two inches square, was eight times as large as one of but one inch square; or that it might be cut into eight pieces, all of them as big as that of but one inch square. He seemed at first not to think me in earnest, and to suspect that I only meant to make game of him. But when I had taken considerable pains to convince him that I was in earnest, and that knew what I said to be true, he seemed to be astonished at my positiveness; and exclaimed about the impossibility and absurdity of it; and would argue, how was it possible for two inches to be eight inches? and all that I could say, did not prevail upon him, to make him believe it. I suppose it seemed to him as great a contradiction, that what was but just twice so long, and twice so broad, and twice so thick, should yet be eight times so big; as that twice one should make eight, or any other absurdity whatsoever. And when I afterwards showed him the truth of it, by cutting out two cubes, one an inch, and another two

inches square; and let him examine the measures, and see that the measures were exact, and that there was no deceit; and cut the two inch cube into eight equal parts, and he counted the parts over and over, and took the parts one by one and compared them with the one inch cube, and spent some time in counting and comparing; he seemed to be astonished, as though there were some witchcraft in the case; and hardly to believe it after all. For he did not yet at all see the reason of it. I believe it was a much more difficult mystery to him, than the Trinity ordinarily is to men; and seemed to him more evidently a contradiction, than any mystery of religion to a Socinian or deist.

§ 42. Some may be ready to object against the Christian religion, that there seem to be innumerable difficulties and inconsistencies attending it, but that a multitude of heads have been employed for many ages, till at length such solutions have been found out for many of them, as are in some measure plausible. To this I answer, That as there has been a long time to answer objections, so there has been a long time to strengthen them. As there have been many ages to solve difficulties, so there have been as many to find out difficulties and inconsistencies. Besides, there has been all this time to make difficulties more plain, and bring on inconsistencies more to the light; and by thorough and exact consideration to make them more manifest and apparent. Time wonderfully brings truth to the light; and wears off by degrees false colourings and disguises. The truth will always have most advantage by time. Appearing inconsistencies, being well founded, will grow plainer and plainer, and difficulties more and more evident. Time will discover more circumstances to strengthen and confirm them, and so pretences of solution will appear more and more evidently absurd and ridiculous. When parties contend by argument and inquiry, time greatly helps that party which has truth on its side, and weakens the contrary. It gradually wears away the sandy foundation, and rots away the building that is not made of substantial materials. The Christian religion has evermore, in all ages, had its enemies, and that among learned men. Yea, it is observable, that there have commonly been some of the most subtle of men to scan the Christian scheme, and to discover the objections that lie against it, and have done it with a good will to overthrow it. -- Thus it was in Judea, in the infancy of the church. The scribes and Pharisees, and the wise men among the Jews, employed all their wisdom against it. Thus, in the first ages of the church, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called. Christianity had the wisdom, learning, and subtlety of the world to oppose it. In latter ages, how many learned and subtle men have done their utmost against Christianity! So that the length of time for persons to strengthen their own side in this controversy, brought as an objection against Christianity, is much more an argument for it, than an objection against it.

§ 43. If there be a revelation from God to the world, it is most reasonable to suppose, and natural to expect, that he should therein make known not only what manner of being he is, but also that he should lead mankind to an understanding of his works of creation and providence. These things the Christian revelation opens to us in such a manner as might be expected. This alone gives any tolerable account of the work of creation, and this reveals to us the scheme of providence, and what is God’s main design in the whole, a design worthy of himself. And we are shown how these events all point to this main work of power, wisdom, and grace. We have a particular account how this greatest work has actually been wrought in the fulness of time, as to those great acts which are the main ground of it; and how that was foretold in the several ages of the world.

These things are exceedingly agreeable to a rational supposition, in case God makes a revelation to mankind. But if the Scriptures are not a revelation of God, then man, the principal creature God has made in this world, the only intelligent creature, to whom be has subjected this lower part of the creation, is left wholly and entirely in the dark about God's works both of creation and providence, and has nothing whereby to judge what God's scheme is, in all the great changes he sees come to pass in the world, or what he aims to accomplish. Every thing lies in darkness and confusion before him, without any possibility of his determining any thing, or to direct him what to think of God's works which he beholds, or what affections he should exercise towards the Supreme Governor, on occasion of them.

Chapter 43

04.02. The objection concerning the apostles' apprehensions of the second coming ...

Chapter 2: The objection concerning the apostles’ apprehensions of the second coming of the Christ answered

§ 1. WITH respect to that objection against the truth of the Christian religion, That the apostles seem often to speak of the coming of Christ to judgment, as if they thought it near at hand; I will begin with what the apostle Paul says that may have such appearance. -- In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, which is reckoned to be the first of his epistles in the order of time; and particularly 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. he says, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep: for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord." He speaks of those that should then be alive, in the first person plural; and of those that should be asleep, in the third person. Thus it would have been more natural for him to have said, They which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent us, who shall then be asleep. -- And in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Then they which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with us.

§ 2. Considering the scope of the apostle in these verses, all that can be inferred from such a manner of speaking, is, that it might, for ought was then revealed, be while they lived. For the scope of the apostle was to comfort the Thessalonians concerning their friends that were already dead, with the consideration, that they should surely meet them again, at the day of the Lord’s coming. And therefore, it was most proper and natural for the apostle to speak of them in the third person. And it is but just to suppose, that it was only the uncertainty of the time, that was the ground of the apostle’s using such a manner of expression; because he, in this very context, speaks of the time as altogether uncertain; as it follows immediately in the beginning of the next chapter, "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," &c. The apostle, by the expression he uses, probably had in his mind those words of Christ in Acts 1:7. "It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

§ 3. We have an instance of a like nature with this, in the words of Joseph to his brethren, Genesis 50:25. "God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." He does not say, God shall visit your posterity, and they shall carry up my bones from hence. Yet it cannot be argued, that Joseph concluded that the redemption out of Egypt would be in that generation. So the nature and design of the apostle’s discourse, necessarily gave him to distinguish between those that should be alive at Christ’s coming, and the deceased relations of the Christian Thessalonians. He speaks of them as already dead, and of their now living friends then meeting them risen from the dead. -- That the apostle did not intend to be understood, as though it were

certain that Christ would come while they were living, is evident, from what he himself says, speaking of those very words, and expressly denying that he intended any such thing; or that he supposed it to be certain, that the coming of Christ was at hand, in any such sense. See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3. where he very earnestly warns them not to understand him in any such sense. "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," &c.

§ 5. Now it is evident, that the apostle does not thus write to them the second time, endeavouring to retract any thing he had written before; but it must be because he really did not intend so at first; for this epistle was written soon after the other, while the same fellow-labourers were with him. -- And if we well observe the contents of this and the foregoing epistle, the principal occasion of the apostle's writing the second so soon after the other, seems to have been an information he received, that his former epistle had been misunderstood in this particular: and being much concerned about it, and fearing the ill consequences of such a misunderstanding, he writes to guard them from the mischief of such a mistake, and to establish them in it, that it is uncertain when the Lord will come, as he had told them before in his other epistle. And he argues the great uncertainty there was, whether it would be in that age or not, from what the Holy Ghost had revealed about the coming of antichrist.

§ 6. That this apostle did not expect Christ's coming in that generation, may be argued from his speaking as though he expected that those that were then alive, would rise from the dead at Christ's second coming, as in 1 Corinthians 6:14. "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power." And 2 Corinthians 4:14. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

§ 7. From what the apostle says in this second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, there appears a necessity, that those passages in any other of his epistles, that look as though he expected that Christ would come in that age, should be understood in some other sense; and that the apostle really did not mean so, as his words on a cursory view would lead us to suppose. For here the apostle is very express, and full, and earnest in it, that he would by no means be so understood. It is a farther evidence, that those passages in other epistles must be understood in some other sense, that there are passages in this very epistle, particularly in the first chapter, that we should be ready to think had such a look, were it not that the apostle himself, immediately in the second chapter, denies any such meaning.

§ 8. In this sense we must understand those passages, in which it is spoken of as a duty of Christians, to look and wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus; as, Titus 2:13. 1 Corinthians 1:7. Php 3:20. There is a necessity of understanding, in like manner, the following passages -- which were all written after this to the Thessalonians -- Romans 13:11-12. "And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." We cannot understand this as though the apostle concluded, the day of judgment would come while they lived; because he had before explained himself otherwise;

but only that the day of Christ's kingdom, which is the day of the salvation of the church of Christ, was at hand. And so, Php 4:5. "Let you moderation be known to all men: the Lord is at hand." And Hebrews 10:25. "Exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

§ 9. Christ's coming was indeed at hand in many respects; and in such respects as might well have all that influence upon those to whom the apostle wrote that he intended. The coming of Christ at the overthrow of the heathen empire, might well be said to be at hand; and Christ's last coming to judgment, might well, considering all things, be said to be at hand, as the apostle Peter observes, though there should be thousands of years between. The apostle Paul speaks of ages to come, Ephesians 2:7. That it was not to be till many generations were past: yet it was at hand, in a sense agreeable to the common language of the Holy Spirit. So, Christ's first coming was spoken of as very nigh at hand, of old. Haggai 2:6-7 "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." Yet there was then above 500 years to it. And when it was about 400 years, it is said, Malachi 3:1 "The Lord whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." And when it was about 700 years to the gospel day, it is said to be but a very little while. Isaiah 29:17-18. " Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." So God represents, as though he would very quickly perform all the things prophesied of by Jeremiah, though some of them were not to be fulfilled in many ages; Jeremiah 1:10-12. So the time is said to be at hand, for the accomplishment of all the prophecies of the book of Revelation, and Christ's last coming at the conclusion of them, Revelation 1:3. And Revelation 22:7, Revelation 22:10, Revelation 22:12, Revelation 22:20. though the book evidently contains a series of events for many ages.

§ 10. Again, when the apostle Peter says, with respect to Christ's last coming, and its being said to be at hand, that "a thousand years in God's sight are but as one day," it is no new conceit of his own, to save reputation; but God's language that he had used of old justifies him in so saying. And the expression that the apostles used about the approach of Christ's coming, did not tend to the disappointment of God's people. For Christ's coming to reward them at death was at hand, when they should have such a comfortable and full prospect of their complete reward at Christ's last coming; so that they shall anticipate, and as it were have a possession of it. Though the time appears long to us in our dim-sighted state, yet it will appear as nothing to them. The second coming of Christ was so nigh at hand, that the church of God might well take all that comfort from what was really to be understood by those expressions. The first coming of Christ was very often spoken of for the comfort of the saints of the Old Testament, under great afflictions, though they were never like to see it in this lifetime. So in the case of Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and Daniel.

§ 11. As to that text of the apostle in 1 Corinthians 10:11. "And they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come;" the connexion of these words with the context, and the drift of the apostle, explain his meaning. For his drift is only this, that what had happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness, happened to them for ensamples, and were written for our sakes, though they happened so long ago, or though we live so long after them, and, with respect to them, in the ends of the world, or in the latter part of the world's duration, called the latter days.

§ 12. As to 1 Peter 4:7. "The end of all things is at hand;" how did this same apostle explain this propinquity? 2 Peter 3:7-8. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And it is to be considered, that the apostle Peter was under no temptation to change his voice in this matter, from any experience of the events failing as yet. He had not lived long enough to prove, but that Christ's words -- whence any may suppose they might expect Christ's second coming before the generation passed away, and before some that were then present should taste of death -- might be fulfilled in that sense.

§ 13. That there was no such notion prevailing among the disciples, that Christ should come while most of them lived, is manifest from this, that when the disciples mistook the design of Christ's words, John 21:22. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" and from thence, for a while, entertained a notion that that disciple was not to die till Christ came; it seems they, even while under this mistake, looked upon it as the distinguishing privilege of that disciple, which none of the rest were to expect. And it is evident, that John himself concluded no such thing, as that Christ should come in his lifetime, because he speaks of that notion of the other disciples about him as ill-founded.

§ 14. It is a further argument, that, when the apostles used such kind of language as that, "the Lord is at hand," &c. they did not use it in any such sense, as that it should be in that age or the next; that the apostle John, who was accustomed to their language, uses it still, even after he had prophesied of many great events, which plainly were to have their accomplishment in many successive ages. As Revelation 3:11. "Behold, I come quickly." And he uses it repeatedly at the end of the book, after he had given an account of those future events, in Revelation 22:7. "Behold, I come quickly;" Revelation 22:12. "Behold, I come quickly;" and Revelation 22:20. "He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly." Revelation 17:1-18 alone is sufficient to convince any one, that John could not suppose that his prophecies could be fulfilled, but in several successive ages.

§ 15. It is an argument, that such a nearness of Christ's last coming as the objection supposes, was not the doctrine that the apostles so much insisted upon; that the church prevailed still, when they saw that Christ did not come. Such a disappointment would have been a dreadful blow to Christianity, if this had been the universal expectation of Christians, and it had been raised by the abundant promises of Christ and his apostles. They probably, upon it, would have exceedingly lost ground, and shrunk away. But the fact was very much the contrary.

§ 16. Christ often speaks of his last coming, as that which would be long delayed; Matthew 25:5. "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Luke 20:9. "A certain man planted a vineyard;" Luke 20:19. "After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." Matthew 24:48. "My Lord delayeth his coming." So Luke 17:22.

§ 17. It is evident, that when Christ speaks of his coming; of his being revealed; of his coming in his kingdom, or his kingdom coming; he has respect to his appearing in those great works of his power, justice, and grace, which should be in the destruction of Jerusalem, and other extraordinary providences which should attend it. So, in Luke 17:22-37, with Luke 18:1-8. Christ speaks of the kingdom of God coming; of the coming days of the Son of man being revealed; and

of the Son of man coming. But yet, it is evident he has respect to the destruction of Jerusalem, by Luke 17:37 "And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? and he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." See also Luke 19:13-15. So, when the disciples had been observing the magnificence of the temple, and Christ had said to them, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down," -- having respect to the destruction of Jerusalem -- the disciples asked him, when these things should be? and what should be the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world? By Christ's coming, they have plainly a respect to that time of the destruction of the temple, which Christ had spoken of; and therefore, their question is thus expressed by St. Mark, Mark 13:4. "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" And in like manner by St. Luke, Luke 21:7.; and Christ has many things in his answer agreeable to this sense of this question. He warns them to beware of others that should come in his stead, Matthew 24:4-5. Then he proceeds to tell them what will precede the end, i. e. the end of the world, which the disciples inquired after, and tells them what shall be signs of its approach; Matthew 24:6-16. And then speaks of the desolation of Jerusalem, and of the land, as that end and that coming of his which they inquired after; Matthew 24:15-21, Matthew 24:28; and more plainly, Luke 21:20-24. From these things, it follows,

§ 18. That when Christ speaks of his coming, his coming in his kingdom, &c. as being in that generation, and before some who were then alive should taste of death, there is no need of understanding him of his coming to the last judgment; but it may well be understood of his coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, which, as has been shown, he calls by these names, and which he also distinguishes from his coming to the last judgment, and consummation of all things. Yea,

§ 19. It is evident, that he did not suppose his coming to the last judgment, and the consummation of all things, would be till a long time after the destruction of Jerusalem. The calling of the Gentiles, instead of the Jews, is spoken of as what should be principally after the destruction of Jerusalem; Matthew 21:41, Matthew 21:43. Luke 20:15-16. Matthew 22:7-10. But this Christ himself speaks of as a gradual work, in the parables of the grain of mustard seed, and of the leaven hid in three measures of meal; Matthew 13:31-33. Luke 13:19-21. Mark 4:26-32. And it is very manifest, that Christ did not suppose the consummation of all things to take place, till long after the destruction of Jerusalem, Luke 21:24. where it is said of the Jews, that they should be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

04.03. Jesus's prophecies a proof that he was the Christ and a divine person

3: Jesus’s prophecies a proof that he was the Christ and a divine person

§ 1. AS CHRIST wrought miracles in a very different manner from the prophets, acting therein in his own name, and as doing what he did of his own power and will; so, also, he uttered prophecies in a way very diverse from that of the ancient prophets. The ancient prophets, when they uttered their predictions, were wont to introduce them after this manner, Hear ye the word of the Lord; or, Thus saith the Lord; showing, that they did not speak of their own knowledge, but by special revelation and direction from God. Christ foretold things to come in a remarkably different manner and style, introducing his predictions, not with a Thus saith the Lord, but, Verily, verily, I say unto you; as, Matthew 23:36. Matthew 24:34-35. Matthew 26:13, and Matthew 26:21. Matthew 14:30. Luke 21:31-32; John 13:38. John 14:12. John 16:20-22. The following place is very remarkable, showing what great authority Christ attributed to his own word in his predictions, Matthew 24:34-35. "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." These words are annexed to the chief prophecies that Christ ever uttered, which are contained in Matthew 24:1-51. See the same, Luke 21:31-32.

§ 2. Christ foretold future events, and those to be accomplished after his death, not only as what he knew by his own knowledge, but what he himself would bring to pass; both future blessings to his church and people, and future calamity and destruction to those persons and people that were his enemies. --

§ 3. First, He foretold great events for the benefit of his church that he would bring to pass; John 14:12-14. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me; the works that I do, he shall do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." John 16:7-11. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." And John 16:20-22. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful. But your sorrow shall be turned into joy. -- And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." See John 13:1-38. John 14:1-31. John 15:1-27. and John 16:1-33: and Luke 21:15-18. "For I will give you a mouth of wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish." Luke 24:49. "And behold, I send the promise of my Father

upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." So he foretold his own resurrection from the dead, as what he himself would bring to pass by his own power; John 2:19. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John 10:17-18. "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Mark 16:17-18. "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

§ 4. Secondly, He foretold many great events implying awful calamity and destruction to his enemies, as what he himself would bring to pass. Thus he speaks of that mighty destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, as that from which he would have protected them if they had believed on him, Matthew 23:36-38. "Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come on this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." This destruction is spoken of as what he would bring upon them, as punishment for their rejection and contempt of him. Luke 19:12-14. "He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man reign over us." With Luke 19:27. "But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay before me."

§ 5. Christ not only foretold things future, as having ability in himself to accomplish them, but he promised to give others ability to foretell future events by his Spirit, and hereby should honour him, as having, in his foreknowledge of future things, the same honour with the Father. John 16:7. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." John 16:13-15. "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine. Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you."

§ 6. It is observable, that never any prophet gave such great and manifold opportunity for proof and trial, whether he was a true prophet or not, in the multitude of predictions of events to be fulfilled in his lifetime,and during that generation after his death: and also in the plainness of his predictions; most of them being delivered not in visionary mystical representations, but in a manner intelligible to all.

§ 7. Therefore, the supposition that, if Christ were an imposter, God would so order it, that all these predictions -- many of them so strange and wonderful, and in themselves so exceedingly unlikely -- should exactly come to pass; and that God’s providence should so wonderfully confirm his words, beyond those of any other prophet that ever had been in the world, is extremely unreasonable; especially considering the following things:

§ 8. 1st, That God had of old given this as a sign, by which his people might know a true prophet; viz. the coming to pass of the things foretold by him. And this rule is annexed by Moses to that great promise which God gave of the Messiah, Deuteronomy 18:15, &c. "The Lord thy God will

raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." -- Now therefore, since Jesus professed to be the Messiah, and the great Prophet foretold and promised by God in this place, and uttered so many great and wonderful prophecies; it might be expected, if he was a pretender, and spake presumptuously, and uttered what the Lord had not spoken, that God should not have confirmed his prophecies in his providence; but in that case, would have given his people opportunity to refute by this rule his pretences.

§ 9. 2nd, That foretelling future events is spoken of by God, as one great thing wherein the Messiah should differ from the false gods and false prophets, and vain pretenders of the heathens. In that great prophecy of the kingdom of the Messiah, beginning with the fortieth chapter of Isaiah to the end of the book, the foretelling of future events, in such a manner as to show that the person who foretells, does foresee, and has a view of futurity, is often mentioned as a divine prerogative, and therefore as a good evidence, that he that does so is a divine person, or speaks by divine authority. Therefore the prophets and gods of the heathens are often challenged on this head, and the proof of their authority often put upon this issue: Isaiah 41:21-28. Isaiah 42:8-9. Isaiah 43:9-12. Isaiah 44:6-8. Isaiah 45:3, and Isaiah 45:21. Isaiah 46:10. Isaiah 48:14. -- In this prophecy it is declared, that herein the Messiah should differ from all vain pretenders; (see Isaiah 41:27 and Isaiah 42:1-25 at the beginning; compared with Isaiah 41:21-29.) Now therefore, is it credible, that God would so order it, that one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, should, in so high a degree, have this honour, which God had mentioned as the great and distinguishing honour which be would put on the true Messiah, as his elect, in whom his soul delighted?

§ 10. 3d, That the foretelling of future events, as by his own knowledge, and as events that are to be accomplished by his own power, is spoken of by God as his great prerogative and sure evidence of the divinity of the person who can do thus; and God speaks thus, in those very places which he is foretelling the coming of the Messiah. Isaiah 41:21-23. "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth, and show us what shall happen. -- Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Isaiah 41:26. "Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and before-time, that we may say, He is righteous? Yea, there is none that showeth; yea, there is none that declareth; yea, there is none that heareth your words." Then, in the next words, God promises the Messiah, Isaiah 41:27. "The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings;" i.e. that foreshows glorious future things which God is

about to do for his people.

§ 11. Therefore, since God mentions the foretelling of future events in this manner, as a certain note of divinity, and a distinguishing honour that he would put on the Messiah, his elect in whom his soul delighteth, is it credible, that God would put this honour, in so great a degree, on one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, and the beloved of God? And especially, when he pretended, in this respect, to have the same honour which belongs to God; as John 16:13-15. "He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." He also speaks of his knowledge of divine secrets, and future events, as the effect of the peculiar love that God had to him; John 5:20. "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doth."

§ 12. Great changes in kingdoms and nations, coming to pass according to God's predictions, is often spoken of by God himself as a great evidence of his being the only true God. The foretelling of the destruction of' Babylon by Cyrus, is greatly insisted on by God, as a great evidence of his being the true God, and as most clearly and greatly distinguishing him from all pretenders to divinity. See Isaiah 41:21-27. see also Isaiah 44:25-28, and Isaiah 46:10. But Jesus was one that professed divinity, and foretold revolutions of nations as great and strange as this, yea, far more wonderful. He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, which had been the holy city, and of the nation of Jews, who had been God's own people, and whose protector he had in a special manner been, and towards whom he exercised a most peculiar providence. He also foretold the deliverance of the Christians who were in Jerusalem. It was a greater thing, and less to be expected, that such a city and such a nation should be destroyed, that that destruction should befall a nation of aliens. Therefore, to foretell this destruction, with the various circumstances of it, as they actually took place, is a greater evidence of divine foreknowledge, than to foretell the destruction of a nation of aliens.

§ 13. The turning of the wilderness into a fruitful field, is spoken of by God as a peculiar work of God, and a certain sign of a divine hand; Isaiah 41:18-20. "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree. I will set in the desert, the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box-tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this." It is evident this is not intended in a literal sense, but signifies the happy change in the state of mankind, from a state wherein men are represented as barren, as briers and thorns, and as wild beasts, to a morally excellent and happy state. This might be proved by the frequent use of such figures in the prophecies of Scripture. But it is manifest, that this, according to Christ's prediction, was effected, in a remarkable manner, by Christ himself, and his apostles and followers, in the turning of the world from heathenism, to the knowledge and worship of the true God, to just apprehensions of his moral government, and from all manner of vice, to virtue.

§ 14. It is remarkable that it is foretold, Isaiah 42:1-25 that the Messiah should set judgment in the earth, and his law or religion among the nations, particularly the isles, or Europe, against strong opposition, and through great sufferings, under which his church should seem ready to be extinguished or crushed, like smoking flax, or a bruised reed: but that, finally, judgment should be

brought forth to victory.

04.04. The propiety of a general judgment, and a future state

4: The propiety of a general judgment, and a future state

§ I. THE DOCTRINE taught in the Scriptures, that at the end of the world all mankind shall stand together before the judgment-seat of the supreme Lawgiver and Judge, to have all things visibly set to rights -- and justice made visibly to take place with respect to all the persons, actions, and affairs of the moral world, by the infinitely wise, holy and just Head of it -- is a most reasonable doctrine, and much commends itself to our belief, from the reason of the thing, on the supposition of a moral government maintained over the world by him who created it. For this implies, that he governs the world as its lawgiver and judge, and will treat men as accountable creatures. God's moral government not only requires, that there should be divine laws, and an execution of them in rewards and punishments; but also that both should be made visible. It is requisite that the subject should have proper means of knowing what the laws are, by which he is obligated, and the grounds of the obligation; and that others who are his fellow-subjects should also know his obligations. For, as men are made to dwell in society, this cannot well be, without knowing each other's obligations, and being able to judge of the good or evil of each other's actions. It is likewise requisite that the subject of the laws should have proper means of knowing the grounds of the rewards or punishments of which he is the subject, in the execution of the laws; and that it should be made manifest, to the conscience of him who is rewarded or punished, what he is rewarded or punished for, and the ground on which the Judge assigns such a retribution; and, if he see others punished or acquitted, that the ground of it should be manifested to him, that he may see the justice of it. That there should be some judicial proceeding in which that should take place, seems absolutely necessary, in order to a proper manifestation of the grounds of the subject's reward or punishment, and a display of the justice of his judge to his own conscience; which must be if the subject be dealt with as a rational moral agent.

§ 2. Hence it is of necessity, that every one of mankind must be the subject of such a dispensation of God towards him, which may fitly be called an appearing before the judgment-seat of God. And it is most reasonable to suppose, that this judicial proceeding will not be secret; that each individual will not be judged so, that the transaction with respect to him will be out of the sight and knowledge of all others; but that truth and righteousness will be made visibly to take place, after a prevalence of wrong, wickedness, and confusion, in the violations of a divine law, which was public, and the law of their union and regulation in society; many of those violations are of course visible to others, and others are concerned in them, either in being united in the wickedness, and accessary to it or a party concerned in suffering the injury done by that wickedness.

§ 3. Reasonable creatures are the eye of the world; they are capable of beholding the beauty and excellency of the Creator's workmanship, and those displays of himself, which he had made in his works: and therefore it is requisite, that the beauty and excellency of the world, as God hath constituted it, should not be hid or kept secret. But the beauty of God's constitution of the world, consists mainly, without doubt, in the intelligent part of the world, which is the head and end of all

the rest, et instar omnium. But the beauty and order of God's constitution of this, consists chiefly in his moral regulation of it. Now, therefore, since God has made the beauty and regularity of the natural world so publicly visible to all; it is much more requisite, that the moral beauty and regularity of his disposals in the intelligent world, should be publicly visible. For the beauty of God's works consists a thousand times more in this, than in the other. It is reasonable to suppose, that these will be as publicly visible as the brightness and beautiful order and motions of the heavenly bodies, and the regular successions of the various seasons of the year, and the beauties of nature in the air and on the face of the earth. The moral deformity and confusion of the world, is most public; it stands forth continually in view through all ages. It is therefore fit, that the rectifying of this deformity and disorder, and the bringing of light out of darkness, should also be made publicly visible to those creatures, that are made to be the eye of the creation, to behold its beauty, and the glory of the Creator in it. God has given man a nature, which, if it be under the influence of true virtue, desires above all things to behold this kind of order and beauty. When man sees a great and horrid crime committed, as some nefarious act of injustice, cruelty, &c. the nature of the reasonable creature has something in it, which desires and makes it requisite, that he should see justice done, and right take place, with respect to such an act. The mind or heart, as it were, fails in such a case, if it neither sees this, nor hopes to see it.

§ 4. If it be requisite that judgment should be public, and that many should stand together before the judgment-seat; on the same account, it will appear most reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should appear together in one great assembly, before the judgment-seat. The whole world is one commonwealth and kingdom, all made of one blood, all under one moral head, one law, and one government; and all parts of it are joined in communication one with another. All are sinners, and yet God appears placable to all, &c. All dwell in one habitation, viz. this earth, under the same roof of the visible heavens, having the same sun to enlighten them, &c. Besides, many of the causes and controversies to be decided by the Supreme Judge of the world, are of the most public nature; as causes between princes and heads of great kingdoms and monarchies, and their people; and causes between one nation and another. Yea, there are many causes which the Supreme Judge must bring to as issue, wherein the greater part of the world is concerned. And, when the cause and controversy between these two is judged, it is requisite that both parties should appear together before the judgement-seat. The Roman emperors had to do with other nations that were without the limits of the empire, to the utmost ends of the earth; as with the Scythians, the Persians, the Arabians, the Indians, the Chinese, the Germans, Cimbrians, and Africans. So that it is requisite, when they appear to be judged, that not only the people of the Roman empire should appear with them, but also those other nations. Thus, all the nations of Europe have dealings one with another continually; and these European nations have some dealings with almost all other nations upon earth, in Asia, Africa, and America.

§ 5. It is therefore necessary, that all nations should be gathered together before the judgment-seat of the Supreme Lawgiver and Judge, that he may determine between them, and settle all things by his wise, righteous, and infallible decision. And many of the good and evil acts that are done, though the world is not properly concerned in them as a party interested, yet are public through the world. They are done in the sight of the world, and greatly draw the attention of mankind. It is fit, therefore, that they should be as publicly judged. And, it is to be observed, that the longer the world stands, the more and more communication have the different parts of it

together. So that, at the end of the world, there will probably be the highest reason, in this respect, that all nations that shall then be found upon the earth, should be called together before the judgment-seat of God.

§ 6. As it is requisite, that all who dwell on the face of the earth at the same time, should appear together before the judgment-seat; so it is also requisite, that all generations that have succeeded one another, appear together. Many of the moral acts, both good and bad, not only are public in this respect, that they are known over great part of the face of the earth, in or near the time of them; but also they are made public to all following generations by tradition and history. And if the actions of one generation are not visible to all, yet the actions of one generation are very visible to the generation immediately following, and theirs to the next; and so, all, in this sense, are very visible one to another. And as all nations of the world are morally concerned one with another, though not so as each one immediately concerned with every other nation; yet all are mutually concerned by concatenation. -- One nation is concerned with the next, and that with the next, and so on: so that there is need that all should appear together to be judged.

§ 7. All generations of men, from the beginning to the end of the world, are morally concerned one with another. -- The first generation is concerned with the next, and that with the next, and so on to the end of the world. Therefore it is requisite that all should appear together to be judged. Parents may injure their children, and children may injure their parents' and so they are two parties in one cause which must be decided by the Supreme Judge. Therefore, it is needful, that they, as parties, should appear together when their cause is judged. Parents and children, or a younger generation and an older, may be accessary to each other's crimes, or united in each other's virtuous deeds; and therefore, it is requisite that they should be judged together. Yea, the present generation may become accessary to an injury committed by their ancestors ages ago. For, in many things, they stand in the stead of those ancestors, and act for them, and have power to continue the injury, or to remove it.

§ 8. Posterity is concerned in the actions of their ancestors or predecessors, in families, nations, and most communities of men, as standing in some respect in their stead. And some particular persons may injure, not only a great part of the world contemporary with them, but may injure and undo all future generations of many individuals, families, or larger communities. So that men who live now, my have an action against those who lived a thousand years ago; or there may be a cause which needs to be decided by the Judge of the world, between some of the present generation, and some who lived a thousand years ago. Princes who, by rapine and cruelty, ruin nations, are answerable for the poverty, slavery, and misery of the posterity of those nations. So, as to those who broach and establish opinions and principles, which tend to the overthrow of virtue, and propagation of vice, and are contrary to the common rights and privileges of mankind. -- Thus, Mahomet has injured all succeeding posterity, and is answerable, at least in a degree, for the ruin of the virtue of his followers in many respects, and for the rapine, violence, and terrible devastations which his followers have been guilty of toward the nations of the world, and to which they have been instigated by the principles which he taught them. And, whoever they were, who first drew away men from the true religion, and introduced and established idolatry, they have injured all nations that have to this day partaken of the infection.

§ 9. In like manner, persons, by their virtue, may be great benefactors to mankind, through all succeeding generations. Without a doubt, the apostle Paul, and others who assisted him, and following generations, may properly become the subjects of a judicial proceeding, with respect to that great religious change and revolution in the nations subject to the Roman empire, in abolishing heathenish idolatry, and setting up Christianity in the room of it.

§ 10. The end of the divine judgment is the manifestation of the divine justice: and how fit is it, that the justice of the universal and supreme Head and Judge of all mankind, in governing his kingdom, should be most publicly manifested, and exhibited to his whole kingdom! This doctrine of the day of judgment, exceedingly becomes the universal moral Head of the world, who rules through all generations.

§ 11. If there shall ever come a time, wherein the Lawgiver and Judge of the world will publicly regulate the moral state of all generations, the end of the world, when there shall be a final period to all farther probation, seems to be a proper time for it. If ever, by divine wisdom and righteousness, there be brought about a righteous, holy, and glorious issue of the confused state of the world, it will be, when this world shall have come to an end. As the proper time for judging a particular person, is, when the probationary state of that person is at and end; so the proper time for public judgment of the world, is, when the probationary world comes to an end.

§ 12. There is all reason to think, that the wicked will hereafter be punished together, having a place of punishment assigned for them, where they shall suffer divine vengeance in sight of one another; and that the righteous will also be rewarded together. If so, it is most requisite that their judgment should be together; that they might understand the ground and reason of the punishment, and of that reward, which they shall see in each other.

§ 13. It is most agreeable to reason, that there is a future state of rewards and punishments, wherein God will reward and make happy good men, and make wicked men miserable. And if there be a future state of happiness to God’s favourites, it is rational to suppose, that this should be ETERNAL: because, otherwise, God’s greatest favourites, to whom he gives the greatest rewards in another world, would, in one respect, have most to torment them; to wit, the dreadful and eternal end of that sweet happiness. The sweeter and more happy life is, the more terrible are death and the thoughts and expectations of it. It is not likely that God would add such a sting to the sweetest enjoyments and rewards of his greatest favourites. It is rational, therefore, to suppose, that the life he gives them after death, is life eternal; life that is not to come to an end by another worse death, consisting not only in the destruction of the body, but the abolition of the soul. God has not made them like the brutes, who cannot contemplate futurity, and therefore have no allay to present enjoyment by the prospect of an end by death. And if it be so, that there be an eternal state of happiness in another world, set before us to be sought after; then, how rational are the Christian doctrines and precepts, of placing our affections on heavenly objects; of weanedness from the world; of behaving as pilgrims and strangers on the earth; of not laying up treasure on the earth, but in heaven; of selling all for the kingdom of heaven; of not looking at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal! Hence, also the reasonableness of the Christian precepts of patience under sufferings, seeing these afflictions are but for a moment, in comparison with the duration of the future weight of glory.

§ 14. The doctrine of the gospel concerning an INVISIBLE WORLD, to which good men are to be transferred, and where they are to have their inheritance and fixed abode, is most rational on this account, that this visible world is corruptible in its own nature. Such is the nature and constitution of it, that it must come to an end. And it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Creator would leave it gradually to perish, languishing in a decayed, broken, miserable state, through thousands of ages, gradually growing more and more wretched, before it is quite destroyed. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose, that there will be a time wherein its Creator will immediately interpose, to put the world to an end, and destroy it suddenly. And at that time, all the living inhabitants of the world, that are not taken from it and translated to some other abode, must perish, and be destroyed in a very awful manner, by the immediate hand of God, with most inexpressible manifestations of his might power and great majesty. And who can believe, that at that time, when God in this manner immediately interposes, he will make no distinction between the virtuous and his enemies? that this awful destruction and wrath shall come upon all alike? There will be no necessity of it from the course of nature. For at that time, by the supposition God will be an end to the course of nature. God will immediately and miraculously interpose. The whole affair shall be miraculous, and by God's immediate hand; and therefore, a miraculous deliverance of the good will not be at all beside God's manner of operation at this time. He can as easily, and, without departing any more from the stated course of things, miraculously deliver the virtuous, as he can miraculously destroy the wicked.

§ 15. Therefore we may well suppose, that at that time, when God is about to put an end to the frame of this visible universe, the virtuous will be translated into some other world, beyond the limits of the visible one. And if God designs thus to deal with all the good that shall be found alive on the earth at that time, how rational is it to suppose, that he deals in like manner with the good in all generations? That they are all translated into that distant invisible world? Without doubt, the world into which God will receive his favourites, when this corruptible world shall perish, shall be incorruptible. He will not translate them from one corruptible world to another. He will not save them from one world that is to perish, to carry them to another world that is to perish. Therefore, they shall be immortal, and have eternal life; and, doubtless, that world will be unspeakably better than this, and free from all that destruction, that fleeting, fading, perishing, empty nature, that attends all the things of this world; and their bodies shall be immortal, and as secure from perishing as the world is to which they are translated.

§ 16. This makes it most reasonable to suppose, that good men, in all ages, are translated to that world. For why should so vast a difference be made, between the virtuous that shall be of the last generation, and the virtuous of all preceding generations? Seeing there is a far distant and invisible world provided for some of the virtuous inhabitants of this world, it is reasonable to suppose, that all the good shall have their habitation and inheritance together there, as one society, partaking of the same reward: as they were of the same race of mankind, and loved and served God, and followed him in the same state here below, in the performance of the same duties, the same work, and under like trials and difficulties.

§ 17. It is also, hence, rational to suppose, that there should be a RESURRECTION of the bodies of the saints of all past generations. For, from what has been observed before, the bodies of the saints of the last generation will be preserved from perishing with the world, and will be translated. And, doubtless, if all the good of all generations are to have a like reward, and are to dwell

together in the same world in one society, they shall be in a like state, partaking of a like reward.

§ 18. The reasonableness of the doctrine of the resurrection will appear, if we suppose, that union with a body is the most rational state of perfection of the human soul: which may be argued from consideration, that this was the condition in which the human soul was created at first; and that its separation from the body is no improvement of its condition, being an alteration brought on by sin, and was inflicted under the notion of evil, and expressly as punishment, upon the forfeiture of a privilege. >From whence we must conclude, that the former state of union to the body, was a better state than the disunion which was threatened. Sin introduced that death that consists in the separation of body and soul. The state of innocency was embodied: the state of guilt was disembodied. Therefore, as Christ came to restore from all calamities which came from sin, it is most reasonable to suppose, that he will restore the union of soul and body.

04.05. The miracles of Jesus not counterfeited by his enemies, and superior to those under...

5: The miracles of Jesus not counterfeited by his enemies, and superior to those under the Old Testament

§1. IT ADDS to the evidence which is given to the truth of Christianity by the multitude of miracles wrought by Christ, his apostles and followers in the first century, that there were no pretences of inspiration, or miracles, among the Jews (at least none worth notice) in Judea, or any other part of the world. If all that multitude, and that long-continued series of miracles, recorded to be wrought in confirmation of Christianity, were fictions, vain pretences, or enthusiastic imaginations; why were there no pretences or imaginations of the same sort, on the other side, among the Jews, in opposition to these? Those of the Jews that were opposed to Christianity, were vastly the greater part of the nation. -- And they had as high an opinion of the honourableness of those gifts of prophecy and miracles, as Christians. They had as much in their notions and tempers, to lead them to a fondness of the claim of such an honour to their party. They were exceedingly proud of their special relation to God, and of their high privilege as the peculiar favourites of heaven; and, in this respect, were exalted far above all the world: which is a temper of mind, (as we see abundantly,) above all others, leading men to pretences of this nature.

§ 2. There could be nothing peculiar in the constitution of the first Christians, tending to enthusiasm, beyond the rest of the Jews: for they were of the same blood, the same race and nation. Nor could it be because they wanted zeal against Christianity, and a desire to oppose and destroy it; or wanted envy and virulent opposition of mind to any pretences in the Christians to excel them in the favour of God, or excellency of any gifts or privileges whatsoever. They had such zeal and such envy, even to madness and fury.

§ 3. The true reason, therefore, why so vast a multitude of miracles were said, and believed, to be openly wrought among Christians for so long a time, even for a whole age, and none among the Jews, must be, that such was the state of things in that age, that it was not possible to palm false pretences of such a kind upon the world; and that those who were most elated with pride, and most ambitious of such an honour, could see no hope of succeeding in any such pretences; and because the Christians indeed were inspired, and were enabled to work miracles, and did work them, as was pretended and believed, in great multitudes, and this continually for so long a time. But God never favoured their adversaries with such a privilege.

§ 4. When Moses objected (Exodus 4:1-31) that perhaps the people would not believe his mission, God directed him to work two miracles to convince them: first, the transmutation of his rod to and from a serpent; and, secondly, the making his hand leprous, and healing the leprosy. And it is to be noted, that the preference is given to the last miracle, as being especially what might well be regarded as a good evidence of Moses’s divine mission; Exodus 4:8. "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the

voice of the later sign." By which it is manifest, that such a sort of miracles as Christ wrought, and which he most abounded, in viz. his healing the bodies of men when diseased, were a proper and good evidence of a divine mission.

§ 5. Moses tells pharaoh, Exodus 8:10. "The frogs shall be removed, that thou mayest know that there is none like the Lord our God." The magicians could bring up frogs, but not remove them. They brought plagues, but took away none. But if the driving out the frogs was such an evidence of the distinguishing power of the Almighty; how much more the driving out devils from the bodies and souls of men, silencing their oracles, turning them out of their temples, and out of those who used curious arts, as at Ephesus, and afterwards abolishing their worship through the Roman empire! For the gods that were worshipped in the heathen world, were devils, Psalms 106:37. Deuteronomy 32:17. Leviticus 17:7. Christ, by the prevailing of the Christian religion, cast out those devils out of the very land of Egypt. And which was the greatest work, to drive the frogs out of Egypt, or to drive out the impure spirits that were the gods of Egypt? It is spoken of, Isaiah 19:1. As a glorious manifestation of the majesty of God, that he should ride on a swift cloud, and should come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt should be moved at his presence. See also Jeremiah 43:12. But when Christ came into Egypt, in the preaching of his gospel, he moved, dispossessed, and banished the idols of Egypt, and abolished them out of the world. And not only did Christ thus drive away the devils, the false gods, out of Egypt, but out of all the nations round about Canaan, that were known by the Israelites, even to the utmost extent of the then known heathen world. These gods were by Christ dispossessed of their ancient tenements, which they had holden age after age, time out of mind. They were utterly abolished; so that they have had no worshippers now for a great many ages, no temples, no sacrifices, no honours done them. They are old, obsolete things now, utterly disregarded in the world. It is abundantly spoken of in the Old Testament as a future glorious work of God, greatly manifesting his power and majesty, and that he should prevail against and destroy the gods of the heathens, and abolish their worship. But our Jesus has the honour of this glorious work.

§ 6. Again, when Korah and his company charged Moses and Aaron with taking too much upon them, Moses says, Numbers 16:5. "To-morrow, the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy, and will cause him to come near unto him; even him who he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him." And again, Numbers 16:28-30. "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind: if these men die the common death of all men," &c. If the miraculous taking away of men’s lives be so great an evidence of Moses and Aaron’s divine mission, and of their being holy, and chosen and appointed of God, how much more is raising men from the dead an evidence of the same work! Which is the greatest work, to take away men’s lives, or to restore them to life after they are dead; or, indeed, miraculously to save them from death, when they are sick with mortal diseases? Again; God’s causing the earth to open and swallow those wicked men, is no more an evidence of a divine hand, that Christ’s preventing the sea from swallowing up those that were in the ship by immediately quieting the winds and sea by a word speaking, when the ship was even covered with waves, through the violence of the tempest: at another time, upholding Peter from sinking and being swallowed up by the tempestuous sea, when walking on the water. Elisha’s causing iron to swim, is mentioned in the Old Testament as a great miracle. But this was not greater then Christ’s walking on the water, and causing Peter to walk upon it. -- When Elijah had restored to life the

widow’s son, she says, 1 Kings 17:24. "By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." But this sort of miracles Christ wrought, besides rising from the dead himself.

§ 7. Moses speaks of God’s stilling the tempest in Egypt, and causing the thunder and hail to cease, as that which will convince Pharaoh, that the earth was the Lord’s, Exodus 9:29. Then, by parity of reason, Christ’s stilling the tempest, and causing the winds and seas to obey him, is an evidence, that the seas and earth were his. Moses, to convince the people of his divine mission, took some of the water of the river, and poured it out on the dry land, and it was turned to blood; Exodus 7:17-20. But this was not a greater work, nor so glorious, as Christ’s turning water into wine.

§ 8. Abraham’s conquering the four kings and their armies, with his armed servants and confederates, greatly affected Melchisedek, king of Salem, and convinced him, that Abraham was God’s chosen friend; chosen, that he and his posterity might be blessed as God’s people. But what is this to Jesus’s conquering the world in its greatest strength; and, when united under that, which by the prophet Daniel is represented, as the greatest, and by far the strongest monarchy, by his handful of poor, weak, illiterate disciples?

§ 9. Christ’s victory over the false gods of the nations, in this conquest, was far more conspicuous, as the opposition was to them; the strife was more directly with them; the thing professedly sought and aimed at by Christ in the conflict, was the utter destruction of these false gods, the entire rooting of them out, and the abolition of their worship out of the world: and such a victory was obtained; those false gods were forsaken, their oracles silenced, their temples destroyed, their images every where burnt, and their remembrance made to cease; so that now, for many ages, they have not been remembered, any otherwise, than as instances of great blindness and folly of their votaries.

§ 10. How often are the miracles wrought in Egypt spoken of as clear evidences, that he that wrought them, was the Supreme God, and the only true God; Exodus 7:3-5; Exodus 8:10, Exodus 8:19, Exodus 8:22.

§ 11. The work of Gideon in conquering the Midianites and the multitudes that were joined with them, by three hundred men, with the light of lamps and sound of trumpets, is celebrated as a great work of God’s power, Judges 6:14 and Judges 7:2, Judges 7:7. But this is but a mere type of Christ’s conquering the world by the preaching of the gospel. This victory over Midian is spoken of in the Scripture, as representing the conquests of the Messiah, Isaiah 9:4.

04.06. Observations on the Scriptures; -- their authority -- and Necessity

6: Observations on the Scriptures; -- their authority -- and Necessity

§ 1. SOME may ask, why the Scripture expresses things so unintelligibly? It tells us of Christ's living in us, of our being united to him, of being the same spirit, and uses many other such like expressions. Why doth it not call directly by their intelligible names, those things that lie hid under these expressions? I answer, Then we should have a hundred pages to express what is implied in these words, "ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost;" neither would it after all be understood by the one fourth part of mankind. Whereas, as it is expressed, it serves as well to practice, if we will believe what God says, that, some way or other, we are inhabited by the Holy Ghost as a temple, and therefore we ought to keep ourselves holy and pure. And we are united to Christ as much as members are to the head; and therefore ought to rejoice, seeing we know that his union proceeds from his love to us; and that the effects of it are joy, happiness, spiritual and eternal life, &c. By such similitudes, a vast volume is represented to our minds in three words; and things that we are not able to behold directly, are presented before us in lively pictures.

§ 2. There is a strange and unaccountable kind of enchantment, if I may speak, in scripture history, which although it is destitute of all rhetorical ornaments, makes it vastly more pleasant, agreeable, easy, and natural than any other history whatever. It shines bright with the amiable simplicity of truth. There is something in the relation, that, at the same time, very much pleases and engages the reader, and evidences the truth of the fact. It is impossible to tell fully what I mean, to any that have not taken notice of it before. One reason doubtless is this: The Scripture sets forth things just as they happened, with the minute circumstances of time, place, situation, gesture, habit, &c. in such a natural method, that we seem to be actually present; and we insensibly fancy, not that we are readers, but spectators, yea, actors in the business. These little circumstances wonderfully help to brighten the ideas of the more principal parts of the history. And, although the Scripture goes beyond other histories, in mentioning such circumstances; yet no circumstances are mentioned, but those that wonderfully brighten the whole. So the story is told very fully, and without in the least crowding things together, before one has fully taken up what was last related; and yet told in much less room than any one else could tell it. Notwithstanding the minute circumstances mentioned, which other historians leave out, it leads along our ideas so naturally and easily, that they seem to go neither too fast nor too slow. One seems to know as exactly how it is from the relation, as if he saw it. The mind is so led on, that sometimes we seem to have a full, large, and particular history of a long time: so that if we should shut the book immediately, without taking particular notice, we should not suppose the story had been told in half so little room; and yet a long train of ideas is communicated. The story is so narrated, that our mind, although some facts are not mentioned, yet naturally traces the whole transaction. And although it be thus skilfully contrived, yet things are told in such a simple, plain manner, that the least child can understand them. This is a perfection in the sacred writer, which no other authors

can equal.

§ 3. It is an argument with me, that the world is not yet near its end, that the church has made no greater progress in understanding the mysteries of the Scriptures. The Scriptures, in all their parts, were made for the use of the church here on earth; and it seems reasonable to suppose that God will, by degrees, unveil their meaning to his church. It was made mysterious, in many places having great difficulties, that his people might have exercise for their pious wisdom and study, and that his church might make progress in the understanding of it, as the philosophical world makes progress in the understanding of the book of nature, and in unfolding its mysteries. A divine wisdom appears in ordering it thus. How much better is it to have divine truth and light break forth in this way, than it would have been, to have had it shine at one to every one, without any labour or industry of the understanding? It would be less delightful, and less prized and admired, and would have had vastly less influence on men's hearts, and would have been less to the glory of God.

§ 4. It seems to be evident, that the church is not as yet arrived to that perfection in understanding the Scripture, which we can imagine is the highest that God ever intended the church should come to. There are a multitude of things in the Old Testament, which the church then did not understand, but were reserved to be unfolded in the Christian church, such as most of their types, and shadows, and prophecies, which make up the greatest part of the Old Testament. So I believe there are now many truths that remain to be discovered by the church, in the glorious times that are approaching.

§ 5. Another thing from which we may draw the same conclusion, is, that it is the manner of God, to keep his church on earth in hope of a still more glorious state: and so their prayers are enlivened, when they pray that the interest of religion may be promoted, and God's kingdom may come. God kept the church, under the Old Testament, in hope of the times of the Messiah. The disciples of Christ were kept in hope of the conversion of the Roman empire, which was effected about three hundred years after. But it seems to me, not unlikely, that the church, from that time, should have no more to hope for from God's word, no higher advancement, till the consummation of all things. Indeed, there will be a great but short apostacy, a little before the end of the world; but then, it is probable, the thing that the church will hope and long for, will be Christ's last coming, to advance his church to its highest and its everlasting glory; for that will then appear to be the only remedy: for the church will expect no more from the clear light and truth which will have been so gloriously displayed already, under the millennium. Another end of thus keeping his church in hope is, to quicken and enliven their endeavours to propagate religion, and to advance the kingdom of Jesus. It is a great encouragement to such endeavours, to think, that such times are coming, wherein Christianity shall prevail over all enemies. And it would be a great discouragement to the labours of nations, or pious magistrates and divines, to endeavour to advance Christ's kingdom, if they understood that it was not to be advanced. And indeed, the keeping alive such hopes in the church, has a tendency to enliven all piety and religion in the general, amongst God's people.

§ 6. When we inquire, whether or no we have scripture grounds for any doctrine, the question is, Whether or no the Scripture exhibits it any way to the eye of the mind, or to the eye of reason? We have no grounds to assert, that it was God's intent, by the Scripture, in so many terms, to declare every doctrine that he would have us believe. There are many things the Scripture may suppose that we know already. And if what the Scripture says, together with what is plain to reason, leads

to believe any doctrine, we are to look upon ourselves as taught that doctrine by the Scripture. God may reveal things in Scripture, which way he pleases. If, by what he there reveals, the thing is any way clearly discovered to the understanding, or eye of the mind, it is our duty to receive it as his revelation.

§ 7. The greatest part of Christians were very early agreed what books were canonical, and to be looked upon as the rule of their faith. It is impossible, in the nature of things, but some churches must receive the books long after others, as they lay at a greater distance from the places where they were written, or had less convenience of communication with them. Besides, as Christianity, for a long time, laboured under the disadvantages of continual persecution, no general councils could be convened, and so there could be no public notification of universal agreement in this matter. But notwithstanding all these things, it is yet discoverable, that, as soon as can be supposed, after the writing the books, the Christians, in all countries, remarkably agreed in receiving them as canonical.

§ 8. Several of the first writers of Christianity, have left us, in their works, catalogues of the sacred books of the New Testament, which, though made in countries at a vast distance from each other, do very little differ. Great were the pains and care of those early Christians, to be well assured what were the genuine writings of the apostles, and to distinguish them from all pretended revelations of designing men, and the forgeries they published under sacred title. Thus, when a presbyter of Asia had published a spurious piece, under the name of Paul, he was immediately convicted, and notice of the forgery was soon conveyed to Carthage and the churches of Africa.

§9. Hence it follows, that the primitive Christians are proper judges to determine what book is canonical, and what not. For nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, in those early ages, an agreement so universal, without good and solid foundation: or, in other words, it is next to impossible, either that so great a number of men should agree in a cheat, or be imposed upon by a cheat. But there are some particular circumstances that make the inference more clear as to the Christian books, than others; such as, the prodigious esteem the books at first were received with; the constant use that was made of them in their religious assemblies; the translations made of them very early into other languages, &c.

§ 10. The omission of a book in some one or two particular catalogues, cannot, with any reason, be urged against its canonical authority, if it be found in all, or most of the others, and any good reason can be assigned for the omission, where it occurs. Thus, for instance, the Revelation is omitted, either perhaps because it was not known to the author, or its credit was not sufficiently established in the country where he lived; or perhaps, which may be as probable as the other, because it being so full of mysteries, few or none were judged proper or able to read it to any purpose. This was certainly the case in England: this book being, for this reason, omitted in the public calendar for reading the Scriptures, though it be received into the canon. If, therefore, these, or any such good reasons, can be assigned for the omission of a book in a particular catalogue, it will be very unfair to infer that such book is apocryphal, especially when it is to be found in many or most other catalogues.

§ 11. The catalogues drawn up by Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, (A.D. 315,) -- by Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, (A.D. 370,) -- by Jerome, of Dalmatia, (A.D. 382,) -- by Ruffin, presbyter of Aquilegium, (A.D. 390,) -- by Augustine, bishop of Hippo, (A.D. 394,) -- by forty-four bishops,

assembled in the 3d council of Carthage, (A.D. 416,) were perfectly the same with ours now received.

§ 12. It is exceedingly natural to suppose, that these two things together, would soon lead the apostles to write some history of the acts, and doctrine, and sufferings of Christ, their great Lord, and the head of the Christian church; viz. first, Their unavoidable experience of the need of such a thing; and, secondly, The example of the penmen of the Old Testament, in writing the history of Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and others, whose persons and actions they esteemed of vastly less importance than those of the Son of God, who was greater than Jonas, or David, or Solomon, or Moses, or Abraham.

§ 13. It is a great argument, that there were some genuine gospels, or authentic histories of Christ's life and death, that the Christian church had under the name of gospels, that there were such a multitude of forged fabulous accounts, or histories, of Christ, all under the same name of gospels. These fictions are evidently counterfeits or imitations of something that was looked on by all as true and undoubted. And, that there should be such a multitude of counterfeits and imitations of these gospels, shows not only that there were genuine gospels, but also shows the great value and importance of these genuine gospels, and the high repute they had in the Christian churches. -- Mr. Jones mentions the following spurious gospels, now not extant, mentioned by the writers of the primitive church: By the writers of the second century, the gospel of Judas Iscariot; the gospel of Truth; the gospel of the Egyptians; the gospel of Valentinus; the gospel of Marcion. By the writers of the third century, the gospel of the Twelve Apostles; the gospel of Basilides; the gospel of Thomas; the gospel of Matthias. By the writers of the fourth century, the gospel of Scythianus; the gospel of Bartholomew; the gospel of Apelles; the gospel of Lucianus; the gospel of Heychius; the gospel of Perfection; the gospel of Eve; the gospel of Philip; the gospel of the Ebionites; the gospel of Jude; the gospel of Encratites; the gospel of Cerinthus; the gospel of Merinthus; the gospel of Thaddeus; the gospel of Barnabas; the gospel of Andrew. And some he mentions beside, that are now extant; as, the gospel of our Saviour's infancy; the gospel of Nicodemus.

§ 14. Public societies cannot be maintained without trials and witnesses: and if witnesses are not firmly persuaded, that he who holds the supreme power over them, is omniscient, just, and powerful, and will revenge falsehood, there will be dependence on their oaths, or most solemn declarations. -- God therefore must be the supreme magistrate; society depends absolutely on him; and all the kingdoms and communities are but provinces of his universal kingdom, who is King of kings, Lord of lords, and Judge of judges. -- Thus, as mankind cannot subsist out of society, nor society itself subsist without religion; I mean, without faith in the infinite power, wisdom, and justice of God, and a judgment to come; religion cannot be a falsehood. It is not credible, that all the happiness of mankind, the whole civil world, and peace, safety, justice, and truth itself, should have nothing to stand on but a lie: it is not to be supposed that God would give the world no other foundation. So that religion is absolutely necessary, and must have some sure foundation. But there can be no good, sure foundation of religion, without mankind having a right idea of God, and some sure and clear knowledge of him, and of our dependence on him. Lord Shaftesbury himself owns, that wrong ideas of God will hurt society as much, if not more, than ignorance of him can do.

§ 15. Now the question is, "Whether nature and reason alone can give us a right idea of God, and are sufficient to establish among mankind a clear and sure knowledge of his nature, and the relation we stand in to him, and his concern with us? It may well be questioned, whether any man hath this from the mere light of nature. Nothing can seem more strange, than that the wisest and most sagacious of all men, I mean the philosophers, should have searched with all imaginable candour and anxiety for this, and searched in vain, if the light of nature alone is sufficient to give it to, and establish it among, mankind in general." -- There never was a man known or heard of, who had an idea of God, without being taught it. -- Whole sects of philosophers denied the very being of God; and some have died martyrs to Atheism, as, Vaninus, Jordanus, Bruno, Cosimir, Liszinsai, and Mahomet Effendi. -- A man, confined to a dungeon all his days, and deprived of all conversation with mankind, probably would not so much as once consider who made him, or whether he was made or not, nor entertain the least notion of God. There are man instances of people born absolutely deaf and blind, who never showed the least sense of religion or knowledge of God.

§ 16. It is one thing, to work out a demonstration of a point, when once it is proposed; and another, to strike upon the point itself. I cannot tell whether any man would have considered the works of creation as effects, if he had never been told they had a cause. We know very well, that, even after the being of such a cause was much talked of in the world, and believed by the generality of mankind; yet many and great philosophers held the world to be eternal; and others ascribed, what we call the works of creation, to an eternal series of causes. If the most sagacious of the philosophers were capable of doing this, after hearing so much of a first cause and a creation, what would they have done, and what would the gross of mankind, who are inattentive and ignorant, have thought of the matter, if nothing had been taught concerning God and the origin of things; but every single man left solely to such intimation as his own senses and reason could have given him? We find, the earlier ages of the world did not trouble themselves about the question, whether the being of God could be proved by reason; but either never inquired into the matter, or took their opinions, upon that head, merely from tradition. But, allowing that every man is able to demonstrate to himself, that the world, and all things contained therein, are effects, and had a beginning, which I take to be a most absurd supposition, and look upon it to be almost impossible for unassisted reason to go so far; yet, if effects are to be ascribed to similar causes, and a good and wise effect must suppose a good and wise cause, by the same way of reasoning, all the evil and irregularity in the world must be attributed to an evil and unwise cause. So that either the first cause must be both good and evil, wise and foolish, or else there must be two first causes, an evil and irrational, as well as a good and wise principle. Thus, man left to himself, would be apt to reason, "If the cause and the effects are similar and conformable, matter must have a material cause; there being nothing more impossible for us to conceive, than how matter should be produced by spirit, or any thing else but matter." The best reasoner in the world, endeavouring to find out the causes of things, by the things themselves, might be led into the grossest errors and contradictions, and find himself, at the end, in extreme want of an instructor.

§ 17. In all countries we are acquainted with, knowledge bears an exact proportion to instruction. Why does the learned and well educated reason better than the mere citizen? why the citizen better than the boor? why the English boor better than the Spanish? why the Spanish better than the Moorish? why the Moorish better than the Negro? and why he better than the Hottentot? If,

then, reason is found to go hand in hand, and step by step, with education; what would be the consequence, if there were no education? There is no fallacy more gross, than to imagine reason, utterly untaught and undisciplined, capable of the same attainments in knowledge, as reason well refined and instructed: or to suppose, that reason can as easily find in itself principles to argue from, as draw the consequences, when once they are found; I mean, especially in respect to objects not perceivable by our senses. In ordinary articles of knowledge, our senses and experience furnish reason with ideas and principles to work on: continual conferences and debates give it exercise in such matters; and that improves its vigour and activity. But, in respect to God, it can have no right idea nor axiom to set out with, till he is pleased to reveal it.

§ 18. What instance can be mentioned, from any history, of any one nation under the sun, that emerged from atheism or idolatry, into the knowledge or adoration of the one true God, without the assistance of revelation? The Americans, the Africans, the Tartars, and the ingenious Chinese, have had time enough, one would think, to find out the true and right idea of God; and yet, after above five thousand years' improvements, and the full exercise of reason, they have, at this day, got no further in their progress towards the true religion, than to the worship of stocks and stones and devils. How many thousand years must be allowed to these nations, to reason themselves into the true religion? What the light of nature and reason could do to investigate the knowledge of God, is best seen by what they have already done. We cannot argue more convincingly on any foundation, than that of known and incontestable facts.

§19. Le Compte and Duhald assure us, the Chinese, after offering largely to their gods, and being disappointed of their assistance, sometimes sue them for damages, and obtain decrees against them from the Mandarin. This ingenious people, when their houses are on fire, to the imminent peril of their wooden gods, hold them to the flames, in hopes of extinguishing them by it. The Tyrians were a wise people; and therefore, when Alexander laid siege to their city, they chained Apollo to Hercules, to prevent his giving them the slip.

§ 20. Revenge and self-murder were not only tolerated, but esteemed heroic, by the best of the heathen. I know not, in all profane history, six more illustrious characters, than those of Lycurgus, Timoleon, Cicero, Cato Uticensis, Brutus, and Germanicus. The first encouraged tricking and stealing, by an express law. The second, upon principle, murdered his own brother. Cicero, with all his fine talk about religion and virtue, had very little of either; as may appear by what he says, (I think it is in a letter to Atticus,) on the death of his daughter Tullia, "I hate the very gods, who hitherto have been so profuse in their favours to me;" and by deserting his friends and his country and turning a servile flatterer to Caesar. Brutus concludes all his mighty heroism with this exclamation: "Virtue, I have pursued thee in vain, and found thee to be but an empty name;" and then kills himself. Cato's virtue was not strong enough to hinder his turning a public robber and oppressor; (witness his Cyprian expedition;) nor to bear up against the calamities of life: and so he stabbed himself, and ran away, like a coward, from his country and the world. Germanicus, who exceeded all men in his natural sweetness of temper, at the approach of death, called his friends about him, and spent his last moments in pressing them to take revenge of Piso and Plancina, for poisoning or bewitching him; in directing them how this might be best done; and in receiving their oaths for the performance of his request. His sense of religion he thus expressed on that occasion: "Had I died by the decree of fate, I should have had just cause of resentment against the gods, for hurrying me away from my parents, my wife and my children, in the flower of my youth, by an

untimely death."

§ 21. Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, who were more inclined to the belief of a future existence, than the other philosophers, plead for it with arguments of no force; speak of it with the utmost uncertainty; and therefore, are afraid to found their system of duty and virtue on the expectation of it. Their notions of morality were of a piece with their religion, and had little else for a foundation than vain-glory. Tully, in his treatise of Friendship, says, that virtue proposes glory as its end, and hath no other reward. Accordingly, he maintains, that wars undertaken for glory, are not unlawful, provided they are carried on without the usual cruelty. Diogenes, and the sect of the Cynics, held, that parents have a right to sacrifice and eat their children; and that there is nothing shameful in committing the grossest acts of lewdness publicly, and before the faces of mankind. The virtuous sentiments discovered by the philosophers on some occasions, will neither pailliate these execrable principles, nor suffer us to think those who could abet them, fit instructors for mankind. Zeno, Cleombrotus, and Menippus, committed murder on themselves: the last, because he had lost a considerable sum of money, which, as he was an usurer, went a little too near his heart. That I do not charge the philosophers with worse principles and practices, than they themselves maintain, and their own pagan historians ascribe to them, any one may satisfy himself, who will consult Diogenes, Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, Lucian, Plutarch, and the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero.

§ 22. Thus, it is plain, whether we consider what the human understanding could do, or what it actually did, that it could not have attained to a sufficient knowledge of God, without revelation; so that the demonstration brought in favour of some religion, ends in a demonstration of the revealed. When we attentively consider the nature of man, we find it necessary he should have some religion. When we consider the nature of God, we must conclude he never would have made a falsehood necessary to the happiness of his rational creatures; and that therefore there must be a true religion. And when we consider, that, by our natural faculties, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a right idea of God, till he reveals it to us; that all the Gentile world hath run into the grossest theological errors, and, in consequence of these, into the most enormous customs and crimes; and that no legislator ever founded his scheme of civil government on any supposed religious dictates of nature, but always on some real or pretended revelations: we cannot help ascribing all the true religion in the world to divine instruction; and all the frightful variety of religious errors to human invention, and to that dark and degenerate nature, by the imaginary light of which, deists suppose the right idea of God may be easily and universally discovered.

§ 23. Socrates, who never travelled out of Greece, had nothing to erect a scheme of religion or morality on, but the scattered fragments of truth, handed down from time immemorial among his countrymen, or imported by Pythagoras, Thales, and others, who had been in Egypt and the East. These he picked out from a huge heap of absurdities and errors, under which they were buried; and, by the help of a most prodigious capacity, laying them together, comparing them with the nature of things, and drawing consequences from them, he found reason to question the soundness of the Grecian theology and morality. But this is all the length he seems to have gone. He reasoned extremely well against the prevailing errors of his time; but was able to form no system of religion or morality. This was a work above the strength of his nature, and the lights he enjoyed. He taught his disciples to worship the gods, and to ground the distinction between right and wrong on the laws of their country; in the latter of which he followed the saying of his master

Archelaus, who taught, that what is just or dishonest, is defined by law, not by nature.

§ 24. The notions of Plato concerning the divine nature, were infinitely more sublime and nearer the truth, than those of his master Socrates. He did not content himself merely with removing errors: he ventured on a system; and maintained, that virtue is a science, and that God is the object and source of duty; that there is but one God, the fountain of all being, and superior to all essence; that be hath a Son, called The World; that there is a judgment to come by which the just who have suffered in this life, shall be recompensed in the other, and the wicked punished eternally; that God is omnipresent; and consequently, that the wicked, if he were to dive into the deepest caverns of the earth, or should get wings, and fly into the heavens, would not be able to escape from him; that man is formed in the image of God; and that, in order to establish laws and government, relations made by true traditions and ancient oracles are to be consulted. These points, so much insisted on by Plato, are far from being the growth of Greece, or his own invention, but derived from Eastern traditions, which we know he travelled for, at least as far as Egypt. He was wiser than his teacher, (who was a much greater man,) because his lights were better: but, as they were not sufficient, he ran into great errors, speaking plainly as if he believed in a plurality of gods; making goods, women, and children, common, &c.

§ 25. The natural faculties of men, in all nations, are alike; and did nature itself furnish all men with the means and materials of knowledge, philosophy need never turn traveller, either in order to her own improvement, or to the communication of her lights to the world. How came it to pass that Scythia did not produce so many, so great philosophers, as Greece? I think it very evident, that the great difference between these countries as to learning and instruction, arose from this: the latter had the benefit of commerce with the Phoenicians, from whence they came by the knowledge of letters, and probably of navigation; and with the Egyptians, from whom they learned the greater part of their theology, policy, arts, and sciences. Such advantages the Scythians wanted; and therefore, although their natural talents were as good as those of the Grecians, they were not able to make any improvements in philosophy. Why are the Asiatic Scythians at this day as ignorant as ever, while the European Scythians are little inferior to the other nations of Europe in arts and politeness? And how does it come to pass, that we, at this day, take upon us to approve the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, rather than that of Epicurus and Aristippus? The Grecians were divided in this matter; some followed the notions of the former, and others those of the latter. Why did not reason put the matter out of question in those times, or at least immediately after? The infinite contradictions and uncertainties among the ancient philosophers produced the sects of the sceptics. In respect to religion, Socrates and Plato either were, or pretended to be, sceptics, beating down the absurd notions of others, but seldom building up any thing of their own; or, when they did, building on mere conjectures, or arguments suspected by themselves.

§ 26. If it be said, the finding out of truth by the light of nature, is a work of time; time hath taught the Tartars, Africans, and Americans, little or nothing of true theology or morality, even yet. Time of itself can search nothing. It was the Christian religion that opened the eyes of the polite nations of Europe, and even of the deists of this age, wherein their eyes are still open, and they have any true principles by which they are able to examine the philosophy of the ancients, and, by comparing their several opinions one with another, and with the truths derived from the Christian revelation, to decide in favour of some against the rest.

§ 27. As to the doctrine of THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL; it is certain nothing can be more agreeable to reason, when once the doctrine is proposed and thoroughly canvassed; while, at the same time, there is no one probable opinion in the world which mankind, left entirely to themselves, would have been more unlikely to have started. Who, if he was not assured of it by good authority, would ever take it into his head to imagine, that man, who dies, and rots, and vanishes for ever, like all other animals, still exists? It is well, if this, when proposed, can be believed; but, to strike out the thought itself, is somewhat, I am afraid, too high and difficult for the capacity of men. The only natural argument of any weight, for the immortality of the soul, takes its rise from this observation, that justice is not extended to the good, nor executed upon the bad, man in this life; and that, as the Governor of the world is just, man must live hereafter to be judged. But as this only argument that can be drawn from mere reason, in order either to lead us to a discovery of our own immortality, or to support the opinion of it when once started, is founded entirely on the knowledge of God and his attributes; and as we have already seen, that such knowledge is almost unattainable by the present light of nature, the argument itself, which, before the fall, could not possibly have been thought of, is, since the fall, clogged with all the difficulties mere reason labours under, in finding out a right idea of God. And besides, this argument in itself is utterly inconclusive, on the principles of the deists of our age and nation; because they insist that virtue fully rewards, and vice fully punishes itself. It is no wonder that many heathen nations believed a future state, as they received it by tradition from their ancestors. -- But yet, there is this evidence that mankind had not this doctrine merely from the easy and plain dictates of reason and nature, that many did not believe it.

§ 28. Socrates, in the Phaedon of Plato, says, most men were of opinion, that the soul, upon its separation from the body, is dissipated and reduced to nothing. And Tully, in his first Tusculan question, says, Pherecydes Syrus, preceptor to Pythagoras, was the first person known to the learned world, who taught the immortality of the soul. The other arguments brought by Plato and Cicero for the immortality of the soul, besides that already mentioned, are very inconclusive. They themselves thought so. The former, in his Phaedon, makes Socrates speak with some doubt concerning his own arguments, and introduces Simias saying to Socrates, after having listened to his principal reasonings, "We ought to lay hold of the strongest arguments for this doctrine, that either we ourselves, or others, can suggest to us. If both ways prove ineffectual, we must however put up with the best proofs we can get, till some promise or revelation shall clear up the point to us." -- One of Plato’s arguments for the immortality of the soul, is this: "Every cause produces an effect contrary to itself; and that, therefore, as life produces death, so death shall produce life." Cicero, to prove that the soul will exist after it is separated from the body, endeavours to prove that it existed before it was joined to it; and to that end he insists, "that what we call aptness in children to learn, is nothing more than memory." Another argument of Plato is this: "That alone which moves itself, inasmuch as it is never deserted by itself, never ceases to move: but the mind moves itself, and borrows not its motion from any thing else, and therefore must move, and consequently exist, for ever." The wisdom of Socrates and Plato united, produce such arguments for a most favourite opinion, as they themselves are dissatisfied with, and therefore call for more than human help.

§ 29. Cicero being so fond of this opinion, that, as he says, he would rather err with Plato in holding it, than think rightly with those who deny it, poorly echoes the arguments of Plato; adds

little to them himself; and, at the conclusion, in a manner giving up the point, with all the arguments brought to support it, endeavours to comfort himself and others against the approach of death, by proving death to be no evil, even supposing the soul to perish with the body. And this great philosopher, with all his knowledge, gives but one lot to the good and evil in another life. It was his opinion, If the soul is immortal, it must be happy: if it perishes with the body, it cannot be miserable. This consolation he administers alike to all men, without making any distinction, and consequently leaves moral obligation on a mere temporal footing, which, in effect, is not a whit better than downright atheism. But in his dream of Scipio, when he does not reason nor seem to inculcate any particular doctrine, he indeed introduces the elder Scipio telling the younger, by way of dream, that those who served their country, and cultivated justice and the other virtues, should go to heaven after death: but that the souls of those that had violated the laws of the gods and men, should, after leaving their bodies, be tossed about on the earth, and not return to heaven for many ages. Now, if a person of Cicero's abilities and learning could, from the light of nature, work out no better scheme than this, which renders futurity almost useless to moral obligation, how much farther from truth and reason must we suppose the bulk of mankind to stray, if each ignorant person is to lie left entirely to his own thoughts and discoveries, in respect to the future rewards of virtue, and punishments of vice?

§ 30. Thus, upon considering the extent and strength of human faculties, we have found them at present utterly incapable of attaining to any competent notion of a divine law, if left wholly to themselves. This is vastly confirmed by experience; from which it appears, that mankind, instead of being able, through a long series of ages, by the mere light of nature, to find out a right idea of God and his laws; on the contrary -- after having, without doubt been well acquainted at first with both -- gradually, and at length almost universally, lost sight of both; insomuch, that idolatry as bad as atheism, and wickedness worse than brutality, were established for religion and law in all countries. The philosophers who lived in the most knowing countries, and sought for religion and moral truth, but sought in vain, as the wisest of them confess, render this argument still more cogent and conclusive.

§ 31. As the apostle Paul observes in Romans 1:1-32, men did not like to retain God in their knowledge; and, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Thus were their foolish hearts darkened; upon which God gave them over to a reprobate mind, and gave them up to uncleanness, to sins of all kinds, even such as were utterly against nature. St. Chrysostom, in his descant on this passage, says, "The Gentiles fell into a kind of madness, insomuch, that having deprived themselves of the light, and involved their minds in the darkness of their own thoughts, their attempt to travel towards heaven ended in a miserable shipwreck, as his must do, who, in a dark night, undertakes a voyage by sea." Being guided by conceit, and too great an attachment to sensible things, they entered upon a wrong way; so that, still the longer they travelled, the farther they wandered from the knowledge of the true God, and right religion. The doctrine of St. Paul, concerning the blindness into which the Gentiles fell, is so confirmed by the state of religion in Africa, America, and even China, where, to this day, no advances towards the true religion have been made, that we can no longer be at a loss to judge of the insufficiency of unassisted reason, to dissipate the prejudices of the heathen world, and open their eyes to religious truths.

§ 32. The starting of a proposition is one thing, and the proof of it quite another. Every science has its proofs in the nature of things. Yet all sciences require to be taught; and those require it most, the first principles of which lie a little out of the reach of ordinary capacities. The first principles of religion, being of a high and spiritual nature, are harder to be found out than those of any other science; because the minds of men are gross and earthly, used to objects of sense; and all their depraved appetites and corrupt dispositions, which are by nature opposite to the true religion, help to increase the natural weakness of their reason, and clip the wings of their contemplation, when they endeavour, by their own strength, to soar towards God and heavenly things. No man in his, nor hardly in any other time, knew better how to catch at the evidence of divine truths discovered in the works of creation, nor had better opportunities, than Plato. Yet, with all the help he derived from foreign and domestic instruction, he finds himself on every occasion at a loss. When he speaks of God and divine matters, he relies on oracles, traditions, and revelations; and having got a little taste of this kind of instruction, is every now and then confessing his want of more, and wishing for it with the greatest anxiety. And, not thinking the traditions which he was acquainted with sufficient, he talks of a future instructor to be sent from God, to teach the world a more perfect knowledge of religious duties. "The truth is," (says he, speaking in his first book De Legibus, concerning future rewards and punishments,) "to determine or establish any thing certain about these matters, in the midst of so many doubts and disputations, is the work of God only." In his Phaedon, one of the speakers says to Socrates concerning the immortality of the soul, "I am of the same opinion with you, that in this life, it is either absolutely impossible, or extremely difficult, to arrive at a clear knowledge in this matter." In the apology he wrote for Socrates, he puts these words into his mouth, on the subject of reformation of manners: "You may pass the remainder of your days in sleep, or despair of finding out a sufficient expedient for this purpose, if God, in his providence, doth not send you some other instructor." And in his Epinomis he says, "Let no man take upon him to teach, if God do not lead the way."

§ 33. In the book De Mundo, ascribed to Aristotle, we have a remarkable passage to this effect: "It is an old tradition, almost universally received, that all things proceeded from God, and subsist through him; and that no nature is self-sufficient, or independent of God’s protection and assistance." In his Metaphysics, he ascribes the belief of the gods, and of this, that the Deity compasses and comprehends all nature, to a traditionary habit of speaking, handed down from the first men to after-ages. Cicero, in his treatise concerning the nature of the gods, introduces Cotta blaming those who endeavoured, by argumentation, to prove there are gods, and affirming that this only served to make the point doubtful, which, by the instructions and traditions their forefathers, had been sufficiently made known to them, and established. Plutarch, speaking of the worship paid to a certain ideal divinity, which his friend had called in question, says, "It is enough to believe pursuant to the faith of our ancestors, and the instructions communicated to us in the country where we were born and bred; than which, we can neither find out, nor apply, any argument more to be depended on."

§ 33. It will be further useful to observe, that the thoughts of men, with regard to any internal law, will be always mainly influenced by their sentiments concerning the chief good. Whatsoever power or force may do in respect to the outward actions of a man, nothing can oblige him to think or act, as often as he is at liberty, against what he takes to be his chief good or interest. No law, nor system of laws, can possibly answer the end and purpose of a law, till the grand question, what is

the chief happiness and end of man, be determined, and so cleared up, that every man may be fully satisfied about it. Before our Saviour's time, the world was infinitely divided on this important head. The philosophers were miserably bewildered in all their researches after the chief good. Each sect, each subdivision of a sect, had a chief good of its own, and rejected all the rest. They advanced, as Varro tells us, no fewer than 288 opinions in relation to this matter; which shows, by a strong experiment, that the light of nature was altogether unable to settle the difficulty. Every man, if left to the particular bias of his own nature, chooses out a chief good for himself, and lays the stress of all his thoughts and actions on it. Now, if the supposed chief good of any man should lead him, as it often does, to violate the laws of society, to hurt others, and act against the general good of mankind, he will be very unfit for society; and consequently, as he cannot subsist out of it, an enemy to himself.

§ 35. If Christianity came too late into the world, what is called natural religion came full as late; and there are no footsteps of natural religion, in any sense of the words, to be found at this day, but where Christianity hath been planted. In every place else, religion hath no conformity with reason or truth. So far is the light of nature from lending sufficient assistance. It is strange, that the natural light should be so clear, and yet the natural darkness so great, that in all unassisted countries the most monstrous forms of religion, derogatory to God, and prejudicial to man, should be contrived by some, and swallowed by the rest, with a most voracious credulity. I could wish most heartily, that all nations were Christians; yet, since it is otherwise, we derive this advantage from it, that we have a standing and contemporary demonstration of that which nature, left to herself, can do. Had all the world been Christians for some ages past, our present libertines would insist that Christianity had done no service to mankind; that nature could have sufficiently directed herself; and that all the stories told, either in sacred or profane history, of the idolatry and horrible forms of religion in ancient times, were forged by Christian priests, to make the world think revelation necessary, and natural reason incapable of dictating true and right notions of religion. But, as the case stands at present, we have such proofs of the insufficiency of unassisted reason in this behalf, as all the subtlety of libertines is unable to evade.

§ 36. All that the Grecians, Romans, and present Chinese, know of true religion, they were taught traditionally. As to their corrupt notions and idolatries, they were of their own invention. The Grecians, who were by far the most knowing people of the three, were as gross idolaters as the rest, till Plato's time. He travelled into the East, and ran higher towards truth in his sentiments of religion, than others; but still worshipped the idols of his country, and durst not speak out all he knew. However, he formed a great school, and, both through his writings and scholars, instructied his countrymen in a kind of religious philosopy, that tended much more directly and strongly to reformation of manners, than either the dictates of their own reason, or of their other philosophers. All the philosophy of the Gentile nations, excepting that of Socrates and Plato was derived from the source of self-sufficiency. These two acknowledge the blindness of human nature, and the necessity of a divine instructor. No other heathen philosopher founded his morality on any sense of religion, or ever dreamt of an inability in man to render himself happy.

04.07. The insufficiency of reason as a substitute for revelation

7: The insufficiency of reason as a substitute for revelation

§ 1. BY REASON, I mean that power or faculty an intelligent being has to judge of the truth of propositions; either immediately, by only looking on the propositions, which is judging by intuition and self-evidence; or by putting together several propositions, which are already evident by intuition, or at least whose evidence is originally derived from intuition.

Great part of Tindal's arguing, in his Christianity as old as the Creation, proceeds on this ground, That since reason is the judge whether there be any revelation, or whether any pretended revelation be really such; therefore reason, without revelation, or undirected by revelation, must be the judge concerning each doctrine and proposition contained in that pretended revelation. This is an unreasonable way of arguing. It is as much to say, that seeing reason is to judge of the truth of any general proposition therefore, in all cases, reason alone, without regard to that proposition, is to judge separately and independently of each particular proposition implied in, or depending and consequent upon, that general proposition. For, whether any supposed or pretended divine revelation be indeed such, is a general proposition; and the particular truths delivered in and by it, are particular propositions implied in, and consequent on, that general one. Tindal supposes each of these truths must be judged of by themselves, independently of our judging of that general truth, that the revelation that declares them is the word of God; evidently supposing, that if each of these propositions, thus judged of particularly, cannot be found to be agreeable to reason; or if reason alone will not show the truth of them, then, that general proposition on which they depend, viz. That the word which declares them is a divine revelation, is to be rejected: which is most unreasonable, and contrary to all the rules of common sense, and of the proceeding of all mankind, in their reasoning and judging of things in all affairs whatsoever. -- For this is certain, that a proposition may be evidently true, or we may have good reason to receive it as true, though the particular propositions that depend upon it, and follow from it, may be such, that our reason, independent of it, cannot see the truth, or can see it to be true by no other means, than by first establishing that other truth on which it depends. For otherwise, there is an end of all use of our reasoning powers; an end of all arguing one proposition from another; and nothing is to be judged true, but what appears true by looking on it directly and immediately, without the help of another proposition first established, on which the evidence of it depends. -- For therein consists all reasoning or argumentation whatsoever; viz. in discovering the truth of a proposition, whose truth does not appear to our reason immediately, or when we consider it alone, but by the help of some other proposition on which it depends.

§ 2. If this be not allowed, we must believe nothing at all, but self-evident propositions, and then we must have done with all such things as arguments; and all argumentation whatsoever, and all Tindal's argumentations in particular, are absurd. He himself, throughout his whole book, proceeds in that very method which this principle explodes. He argues, and attempts to make evident, one proposition, by another first established. -- There are some general propositions, the truth of which

can be known only by reason, from whence an infinite multitude of other propositions are inferred, and reasonably and justly determined to be true, and rested in as such, on the ground of the truth of that general proposition from which they are inferred by the common consent of all mankind, being led thereto by the common and universal sense of the human mind. And yet not one of those propositions can be known to be true by reason, if reason consider them by themselves, independently of that general proposition.

Thus, for instance, what numberless truths are known only by consequence from that general proposition, that the testimony of our senses may be depended on! The truth of numberless particular propositions, cannot be known by reason, considered independently of the testimony of our senses, and without an implicit faith in that testimony. That general truth, that the testimony of our memories is worthy of credit, can be proved only by reason; and yet, what numberless truths are there, which we know no other way, and cannot be known to be true by reason, considering the truths in themselves, or any otherwise than by testimony of our memory, and an implicit faith in this testimony! That the agreed testimony of all we see, and converse with continually, is to be credited, is a general proposition, the truth of which can be known only by reason. And yet, how infinitely numerous propositions do men receive as truth, that cannot be known to be true by reason, viewing them separately from such testimony; even all occurrences, and matters of fact, persons, things, actions, works, events, and circumstances, that we are told of in our neigbbourhood, in our own country, or in any other part of the world that we have not seen ourselves!

§ 3. That the testimony of history and tradition is to be depended on, when attended with such and such credible circumstances, is a general proposition, whose truth can be known only by reason. And yet, how numberless are the particular truths concerning what has been before the present age, that cannot be known by reason, considered in themselves, and separately from this testimony, which yet are truths on which all mankind do, ever did, and ever will rely? That the experience of mankind is to be depended on; or, that those things which the world finds to be true by experience, are worthy to be judged true; is a general proposition, of which none doubt. By what the world finds true by experience can be meant nothing else, than, what is known to be true by one or other of those forementioned kinds of testimony viz. the testimony of history and tradition; the testimony of those we see and converse with; the testimony of our memories; and the testimony of our senses. I say, all that is known by the experience of mankind, is known only by one or more of these testimonies; excepting only the existence of that idea, or those few ideas, which are at this moment present in our minds, or are the immediate objects of present consciousness. And yet, how unreasonable would it be to say, that we must first know those things to be true by reason, before we give credit to our experience of the truth of them? Not only are there innumerable truths, that are reasonably received as following from such general propositions as have been mentioned, which cannot be known by reason, if they are considered by themselves, or otherwise than as inferred from these general propositions; but also, many truths are reasonably received, and are received by the common consent of the reason of all rational persons, as undoubted truths, whose truth not only would not otherwise be discoverable by reason, but when they are discovered by their consequence from that general proposition, appear in themselves not easy, and reconcilable to reason, but difficult, incomprehensible, and their agreement with reason not understood. So that men, at least most men, are not able to explain or

conceive of the manner in which they are agreeable to reason.

§ 4. Thus, for instance, it is a truth, which depends on that general proposition, that credit is to be given to the that the testimony of our senses, that our souls and bodies are so united, that they act on each other. But it is a truth which reason otherwise cannot discover, and, now that it is revealed by the testimony of our senses, reason cannot comprehend, that what is immaterial, and not solid nor extended, can act upon matter. Or, if any choose to say, that the soul is material, then other difficulties arise as great. For reason cannot imagine any way, that a solid mass of matter, whether at rest or in motion, should have perception, should understand, and should exert thought and volition, love, hatred, &c. And if it be said that spirit acts on matter, and matter on spirit, by an established law of the Creator, which is no other than a fixed method of his producing effects; still the manner how it is possible to be, will be inconceivable. We can have no conception of any way or manner, in which God, who is a pure Spirit, can act upon matter, and impel it.

There are several things in mechanics and hydrostatics, that by the testimony of our senses are true in fact, not only that reason never first discovered before the testimony of sense declared them, but, now they are declared, are very great paradoxes, and, if proposed, would seem contrary to reason, at least to the reason of the generality of mankind, and such as are not either mathematicians, or of more than common penetration, and what they cannot reconcile to their reason. But God has given reason to the common people, to be as much their guide and rule, as he has to mathematicians and philosophers.

§ 5. Even the very existence of a sensible world, which we receive for certain from the testimony of our senses, is attended with difficulties and seeming inconsistencies with reason, which are insuperable to the reason at least of most men. For, if there be a sensible world, that world exists either in the mind only, or out of the mind, independent of its imagination or perception. If the latter, then that sensible world is some material substance, altogether diverse from the ideas we have by any of our senses -- as colour, or visible extension and figure, which is nothing but the quantity of colour and its various limitation, which are sensible qualities that we have by sight; and solidity, which is an idea we have by feeling; and extension and figure, which is only the quantity and limitation of these; and so of all other qualities. -- But that there should be any substance entirely distinct from any or all of these, is utterly inconceivable. For, if we exclude all colour, solidity, or conceivable extension, dimension, and figure, what is there left, that we can conceive of? Is there not a removal in our minds of all existence, and a perfect emptiness of every thing? But if it be said, that the sensible world has no existence, but only in the mind, then the sensories themselves, or the organs of sense, by which sensible ideas are let into the mind, have no existence but only in the mind; and those organs of sense have no existence, but what is conveyed into the mind by themselves; for they are a part of the sensible world. And then it will follow, that the organs of sense owe their existence to the organs of sense, and so are prior to themselves, being the causes or occasions of their own existence; which is a seeming inconsistence with reason, that, I imagine, the reason of all men cannot explain and remove.

§ 6. There are innumerable propositions, that we reasonably receive from the testimony of experience, all depending on the truth of that general proposition, "that experience is to be relied on," (what is meant by experience has been already explained,) that yet are altogether above reason. They are paradoxes attended with such seeming inconsistencies, that reason cannot

clearly remove, nor fully explain, the in mystery. By experience we know that there is such a thing as thought, love, hatred, &c. But yet this is attended with inexplicable difficulties. If there be such a thing as thought and affection, where are they? If they exist, they exist in some place or no place. That they should exist, and exist in no place, is above our comprehension. It seems a contradiction, to say they exist, and yet exist nowhere. And, if they exist in some place, then they are not in other places, or in all places; and therefore must be confined, at one time, to one place, and that place must have certain limits; from whence it will follow, that thought, love, &c. have some figure, either round, or square, or triangular; which seems quite disagreeable to reason, and utterly inconsonant to the nature of such things as thought and the affections of the mind.

§ 7. It is evident, by experience, that something now is. But this proposition is attended with things that reason cannot comprehend, paradoxes that seem contrary to reason. For, if something now is, then either something was from all eternity; or, something began to be, without any cause or reason of its existence. The last seems wholly inconsistent with natural sense: and the other, viz. That some thing has been from all eternity, implies, that there has been a duration past, which is without any beginning, which is an infinite duration: which is perfectly inconceivable, and is attended with difficulties that seem contrary to reason. For we cannot conceive how an infinite duration can be made greater, any more than how a line of infinite length can be made longer. But yet we see that past duration is continually added to. If there were a duration past without beginning a thousand years ago, then that past-infinite duration has now a thousand years added to it: and if so, it is greater than it was before by a thousand years; because the whole is greater than a part. Now the past duration consists of two parts, viz. that which was before the last thousand years, and that which is since. Thus here are seeming contradictions involved in this supposition of an infinite duration past. And moreover, if something has been from eternity, it is either -- an endless succession of causes and effects, as for instance, an endless succession of fathers and sons, or something equivalent; but the supposition is attended with manifold apparent contradictions: or, there must have been some eternal self-existent being, having the reasons of his existence within himself; or, he must have existed from eternity without reason of his existence; both which are inconceivable. That a thing should exist from eternity without any reason why it should be so, rather than otherwise, is altogether inconceivable, and seems quite repugnant to reason. And why a being should be self-existent, and have the reason of his existence within himself, seems also inconceivable, and never, as I apprehend, has yet been explained. If there has been any thing from eternity, then that past eternity is either an endless duration of successive parts, as successive hours, minutes, &c. or it is an eternal duration without succession. -- The latter seems repugnant to reason, and incompatible with any faculty of understanding that we enjoy; and the other, an infinite number of successive parts, involves the very same contradictions with the supposition of an eternal succession of fathers and sons. That the world has existed from eternity without a cause seems wholly inconsistent with reason. In the first place, it is inconsistent with reason that it should exist without a cause. For it is evident that it is not a thing, the nature and manner of which is necessary in itself; and therefore it requires a cause or reason out of itself, why it is so, and not otherwise. And in the next place, if it exists from eternity, then succession has been from eternity; which involves the forementioned contradictions. But if it be without a cause, and does not exist from eternity, then it has been created out of nothing; which is altogether inconceivable, and what reason cannot show to be possible; and many of the greatest philosophers have supposed it plainly inconsistent with reason. -- Many other difficulties might be

mentioned as following from that proposition, "that something now is," that are insuperable to reason.

§ 8. It is evident by experience that great evil, both moral and natural, abounds in the world. It is manifest that great injustice, violence, treachery, perfidiousness, and extreme cruelty to the innocent, abound in the world; as well as innumerable extreme sufferings, issuing finally in destruction and death, are general all over the world in all ages. -- But this could not otherwise have been known by reason; and even now is attended with difficulties which the reason of many, yea, most, of the learned men and greatest philosophers that have been in the world, have not been able to surmount. That it should be so ordered or permitted in a world absolutely and perfectly under the care and government of an infinitely holy and good God, discovers a seeming repugnancy to reason, that few, if any, have been able fully to remove.

§ 9. That men are to be blamed for their good or evil voluntary actions, is a general proposition received with good reason, by the dictates of the natural, common, and universal moral sense of mankind in all nations and ages: which moral sense is included in what Tindal means by reason and the law of nature. And yet many things attend this truth that appear difficulties and seeming repugnancies to reason, which have proved altogether insuperable to the reason of many of the greatest and most learned men in the world.

§ 10. I observe further, that when any general proposition is recommended to us to be true, by any testimony or evidence, that considered by itself seems sufficient, without contrary testimony or evidence to countervail it; and difficulties attend that proposition; if these difficulties are no greater, and of no other sort, than what might reasonably be expected to attend true propositions of that kind, then these difficulties are not only no valid or sufficient objection against that proposition, but they are no objection at all.

Thus there are many things that I am told concerning the effects of electricity, magnetism, &c. and many things that are recorded in the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society, which I have never seen, and are very mysterious; but being well attested, their mysteriousness is no manner of objection against my belief of the accounts; because from what I have observed and do know, such a mysteriousness is no other than is to be expected in a particular exact observation of nature, and a critical tracing of its operations. It is to be expected, that the farther it is traced the more mysteries will appear. To apply this to the case in hand: if the difficulties which attend that which is recommended by good proof or testimony to our reception, as a divine revelation, are no greater, nor of any other nature, than such as, all things considered, might reasonably be expected to attend a revelation of such a sort, of things of such a nature, and given for such ends and purposes, and under such circumstances; these difficulties not only are not of weight sufficient to balance the testimony or proof that recommends it, but they are of no weight at all as objections against the revelation. They are not reasonably to be looked upon as of the nature of arguments against it; but on the contrary, may, with good reason, be looked upon as confirmations, and of the nature of arguments in its favour.

§ 11. This is very evident, and the reason of it very plain. For certainly, whatever is reasonably expected to be found in a truth when we are seeking it, cannot be an objection against that truth, when we have found it. If it be reasonably expected in truth beforehand, then reason unites it with truth as one property of that sort of truth: and if so, then reason unites it with the truth after it is

found. Whatever reason determines to be a property of any kind of truth, that is properly looked upon in some degree as a mark of truths of that sort, or as belonging to the marks and evidences of it; for things are known by their properties. Reason determines truth by things which reason determines to be the properties of truth. And if we do not find such things belonging to supposed truth, that were before reasonably expected in truth of that kind, this is an objection against it, rather than the finding of them. The disappointment of reason is rather an objection with reason, than something to induce its acceptance and acquiescence. If the expectation be reasonable, then the not answering of it must so far appear unreasonable, or against reason, and so an objection in the way of reason.

Thus if any one that is in search for things of a certain kind reasonably expects beforehand, that if he be successful in finding the thing of the kind and quality that he is in search of, he shall find it possessed of certain properties; when he hath actually found something with all those properties and circumstances that he expected, he receives it, and rests in it so much the more entirely, as the very thing that he was inquest of. And surely it would be no argument with him that his invention is right, that some things that he reasonably expected are wanting; but on the contrary, this would rather be an objection with his reason.

§ 12. In order to judge what sort of difficulties are to be expected in a revelation made to mankind by God, such as Christians suppose the Scriptures to be, we must remember that it is a revelation of what God knows to be the very truth concerning his own nature: of the acts and operations of his mind with respect to his creatures; of the grand scheme of infinite wisdom in his works, especially with respect to the intelligent and moral world; a revelation of the spiritual and invisible world; a revelation of that invisible world which men shall belong to after this life; a revelation of the greatest works of God, the manner of his creating the world, and of his governing of it, especially with regard to the higher and more important parts of it; a revelation delivered in ancient languages.

Difficulties and incomprehensible mysteries are reasonably to be expected in a declaration from God, of the precise truth as he knows it, in matters of a spiritual nature; as we see things that are invisible, and not the objects of any of the external senses, are very mysterious, involved much more in darkness; attended with more mystery and difficulty to the understanding, than others; as many things concerning even the nature of our own souls themselves, that are the nearest to us, and the most intimately present with us, and so most in our view of any spiritual things whatsoever. The further things are from the nature of what language is chiefly formed to express, viz. things appertaining to the common business and vulgar affairs or life -- things obvious to sense and men’s direct view and most vulgar observation, without speculation, reflection, and abstraction, the more difficult it is clearly to express them in words. Our expressions concerning them, will be attended with greater abstruseness, difficulty, and seeming inconsistence; language not being well fitted to express these things; words and phrases not being prepared for that end. Such a reference to sensible and vulgar things, is unavoidably introduced, that naturally confounds the mind, and involves it in darkness.

§ 13. If God gives a revelation of religious things, it must be mainly concerning the affairs of the moral and intelligent universe: which is the grand system of spirits: it must be chiefly about himself and intelligent creatures. It may well be supposed, that a revelation concerning another and an

invisible world, a future state that we are to be in when separated from the body, should be attended with much mystery. It may well be supposed, that the things of such a world, are of an exceeding different nature from the things of this world, the things of sense, and all the objects and affairs which earthly language was made to express; and that they are not agreeable to such notions, imaginations, and ways of thinking that grow up with us, and are connatural to us, as we are from our infancy formed to an agreeableness to the things which we are conversant with in this world. We could not conceive of the things of sense, if we had never had these external senses. And if we had only some of these senses and not others; as, for instance, if we had only a sense of feeling, without the senses of seeing and hearing, how mysterious would a declaration of things of these last senses be! Or, if we had feeling and hearing, but had been born without eyes or optic nerves, the things of light, even when declared to us, would many of them be involved in mystery, and would appear exceedingly strange to us.

§ 14. Thus, persons without the sense of seeing, but who had the other senses, might be informed by all about them, that they can perceive things at a distance, and perceive as plainly, and in some respects more plainly, than by touching them; yea, that they could perceive things at so great a distance, that it would take up many ages to travel to them. They might be informed of many things concerning colours, that would all be perfectly incomprehensible, and yet might be believed; and it could not be said that nothing at all is proposed to their belief, because they have no idea of colour.

They might be told that they perceive an extension, a length and breadth of colour, and terminations and limits, and so, a figure of this kind of extension; and yet, that it is nothing that can be felt. This would be perfectly mysterious to them, and would seem an inconsistence, as they have no ideas of any such things as length, breadth, and limits, and figure of extension, but only certain ideas they have by touch. They might be informed, that they could perceive at once the extent and shape of a thing so great and multiform as a tree, without touch: this would seem very strange and impossible. -- They might be told that, to those who see, some things appear a thousand times great as some others, which would be very mysterious, and seem quite inconsistent with reason. -- These, and many other things, would be attended with unsearchable mystery to them, concerning objects of sight; and, concerning which, they could never fully see how they can be reconciled to reason; at least, not without very long, particular, gradual, and elaborate instruction; and which, after all, they would not fully comprehend, so as clearly to see how the ideas connected in these propositions do agree. -- And yet I suppose, in such a case, the most rational persons would give full credit to things that they know not by reason, but only by the revelation of the word of those that see. I suppose, a person born blind in the manner described, would nevertheless give full credit to the united testimony of the seeing world, in things which they said about light and colours, and would entirely rest on their testimony.

§ 15. If God give us a revelation of the truth, not only about spiritual beings, in an unseen state; but also concerning a spiritual being or beings of a superior kind, (and so of an unexperienced nature,) entirely diverse from any thing we now experience in our present state -- and from any thing that we can be conscious of in any state whatsoever - then, especially, may mysteries be expected in such revelation. The truth concerning any kind of percipient being, of different nature from our own, though of a kind inferior, might well be supposed to be attended with difficulty, by reason of its diversity from what we are conscious of in ourselves; but much more so, when the nature and

kind is superior. For a superior perceptive nature may well be supposed, in some respects, to include and comprehend what belongs to an inferior, as the greater comprehends the less, and the whole includes a part; and therefore, what the superior experiences may give him advantage to conceive of concerning the nature of the inferior. But, on the contrary, an inferior nature does not include what belongs to a superior. When one of an inferior nature considers what concerns beings of a nature entirely above his own, there is something belonging to it that is over and above all that the inferior nature is conscious of. A very great superiority, even in beings of the same nature with ourselves, sets them so much above our reach, that many of their affairs become incomprehensible, and attended with inexplicable intricacies. Thus many of the affairs of adult persons are incomprehensible, and appear inexplicably strange, to the understandings of little children: and many of the affairs of learned men, and great philosophers and mathematicians, things with which they are conversant, and well acquainted, are far above the reach of the vulgar, and appear to them not only unintelligible, but absurd and impossible, and full of inconsistences. But much more may this be expected, when the superiority is not only in the degree of improvement of faculties and properties of the same kind of beings, but also in the nature itself. So that if there be a kind of creative perceptive beings in their nature vastly superior to the human, which none will deny to be possible, and a revelation should be given us concerning the nature, acts, and operations of this kind of creatures; it would be no wonder, if such a revelation should contain some things very much out of our reach, attended with great difficulty to our reason, being things of such a kind, that no improvement of our minds, that we are capable of, will bring us to an experience of any thing like them. But, above all, if a revelation be made to us concerning that Being who is uncreated and self-existent, who is infinitely diverse from and above all others, in his nature, and so infinitely above all that any advancement of our nature can give us any consciousness of; in such a revelation, it would be very strange indeed, if there should not be some great mysteries, quite beyond our comprehension, and attended with difficulties which it is impossible for us fully to solve and explain.

§ 16. It may well be expected, that a revelation of truth concerning an infinite Being, should be attended with mystery. We find that the reasonings and conclusions of the best metaphysicians and mathematicians, concerning infinites, are attended with paradoxes and seeming mconsistences. Thus it is concerning infinite lines, surfaces, and solids, which are things external. But much more may this be expected in infinite spiritual things; such as, infinite thought, infinite apprehension, infinite reason, infinite will, love, and joy, infinite spiritual power, agency, &c.

Nothing is more certain, than that there must be an unmade and unlimited being; and yet, the very notion of such a being is all mystery, involving nothing but incomprehensible paradoxes, and seeming inconsistences. It involves the notion of a being self-existent and without any cause, which is utterly inconceivable, and seems repugnant to all our ways of conception. An infinite spiritual being, or infinite understanding and will and spiritual power, must be omnipresent, without extension; which is nothing but mystery and seeming inconsistence. The notion of an infinite eternal, implies absolute immutability. That which is in all respects infinite, absolutely perfect to the utmost degree, and at all times, cannot be in any respect variable. And this immutability being constant from eternity, implies duration without succession, and is wholly a mystery and seeming inconsistence. It seems as much as to say, an infinitely great or long duration all at once, or all in a moment: which seems to be saying, an infinitely great in an infinitely little; or an infinitely long line

in a point without any length.

§ 17. Infinite Understanding, which implies an understanding of all things past, present, and future; and of all truth, and all reason, and argument, implies infinite thought and reason. But how this can be absolutely without mutation, or succession of acts, seems mysterious and absurd. We can conceive of no such thing as thinking, without successive acting of the mind about ideas. Perfect knowledge of all things, even of all the things of external sense, without any sensation, or any reception of ideas from without, is an inconceivable mystery. Infinite knowledge, implies a perfect comprehensive view of a whole future eternity; which seems utterly impossible. For how can there be any reaching of the whole of this, to comprehend it, without reaching to the utmost limits of it? But this cannot be, where there is no such thing as utmost limits. And again, if God perfectly views an eternal succession or chain of events, then he perfectly sees every individual part of that chain, and there is no one link of it hid from his sight. And yet there is no one link that has not innumerable links beyond it; from which it would seem to follow, that there is a link beyond all the links that he sees, and consequently, that there is one link, yea, innumerable links, that he sees not; inasmuch as there are innumerable links beyond every one that he sees. And many other such seeming contradictions might be mentioned, which attend the supposition of God's omniscience.

If there be an absolute immutability in God, then there never arises any new act in God, or new exertion of himself; and yet there arise new effects: which seems an utter inconsistence. And so innumerable other such like mysteries and paradoxes are involved in the notion of an infinite and eternal intelligent being. Insomuch, that if there had never been any revelation, by which God had made known himself by his word to mankind; the most speculative persons would, without doubt, have for ever been exceedingly at a loss concerning the nature of the Supreme Being and First Cause of the universe. And that some of the ancient philosophers and wiser heathens had so good notions of God as they had, seems to be much more owing to tradition, which originated from divine revelation, than from their own invention; though human reason served to keep those traditions alive in the world, and led the more considerate to embrace and retain the imperfect traditions which were to be found in any parts remaining, as they appeared, when once suggested and delivered, agreeable to reason.

§ 18. If a revelation be made of the principal scheme of the supreme and infinitely wise Ruler, respecting his moral kingdom, wherein his all-sufficient wisdom is displayed, in the case of its greatest trial; ordering and regulating the said moral kingdom to its great ends, when in the most difficult circumstances; extricating it out of the most extreme calamities, in which it had been involved by the malice and subtlety of the chief and most crafty of all God's enemies, should we expect no mysteries? If it be the principal of all the effects of the wisdom of Him, the depth of whose wisdom is unsearchable and absolutely infinite; his deepest scheme, by which mainly the grand design of the universal, incomprehensibly complicated system of all his operations, and the infinite series of his administrations, is most happily, completely, and gloriously attained; the scheme in which God's wisdom is mainly exercised and displayed: it may reasonably be expected, that such a revelation will contain many mysteries.

We see that to be the case, even as to many works of human wisdom and art. They appear strange, paradoxical, and incomprehensible, by those that are vastly inferior in sagacity, or are

entirely destitute of that skill or art. How are many of the effects of human art attended with many things that appear strange and altogether incomprehensible by children, and many others seeming to be beyond and against nature; and, in many cases, the effect produced not only seems to be beyond the power of any visible it means, but inconsistent with it, being an effect contrary to what would be expected: the means seem inconsistent with the end.

§ 19. If God reveal the exact truth in those things which, in the language of the heathen sages, are matters of philosophy, especially things concerning the nature of the Deity, and the nature of man as related to the Deity, &c. it may most reasonably be expected, that such a revelation should contain many mysteries and paradoxes, considering how many mysteries the doctrines of the greatest and best philosophers, in all ages, concerning these things, have contained; or, at least, how very mysterious, and seemingly repugnant, they are to the reason of the vulgar, and persons of less understanding; and considering how mysterious the principles of philosophers, even concerning matters far inferior to these, would have appeared in any former age, if they had been revealed to be true, which however are now received as the most undoubted truths.

If God gives mankind his word in a large book, consisting of a vast variety of parts, many books, histories, prophecies, prayers, songs, parables, proverbs, doctrines, promises, sermons, epistles, and discourses of very many kinds, all connected together, all united in one grand drift and design; and one part having a various and manifold respect to others; so as to become one great work of God, and one grand system; as is the system of the universe, with its vast variety of parts, connected in one grand work of God: it may well be expected that there should be mysteries, things incomprehensible and exceeding difficult to our understanding; analogous to the mysteries that are found in all the other works of God, as the works of creation and providence: and particularly such as are analogous to the mysteries that are observable in the system of the natural world, and the frame of man's own nature.

§ 20. If it be still objected, that it is peculiarly unreasonable that mysteries should be supposed in a revelation given to mankind; because, if there be such a revelation, the direct and principal design of it must be, to teach mankind, and to inform their understandings, which is inconsistent with its delivering things to man which he cannot understand; and which do not inform, but only puzzle and confound his understanding: I answer,

1st, Men are capable of understanding as much as is pretended to be revealed; though they cannot understand all that belongs to the things revealed. For instance, God may reveal, that there are three who have the same nature of the Deity, whom it is most proper for us to look upon as three persons; though the particular manner of' their distinction, or how they differ, may not be revealed. He may reveal that the Godhead was united to man, so as to be properly looked upon as the same person; and yet not reveal how it was effected.

2d, No allowance is made in the objection, for what may be understood of the word of God in future ages, which is not now understood. And it is to be considered, that divine revelation is not given only for the present or past ages.

3d, The seeming force of this objection, lies wholly in this, that we must suppose whatever God does, tends to answer the end for which he does it; but that those parts of a revelation which we cannot understand, do not answer the end, inasmuch as informing our understandings is the very

end of a revelation, if there be any such thing.

§ 21. But this objection is no other, than just equivalent to an objection which may be made against many parts of the creation, particularly of this lower world. It is apparent, the most direct and principal end of this lower world was, to be for the habitation, use, and benefit of mankind, the head of this lower world. But there are some parts of it that seem to be of no use to man, but are rather inconvenient and prejudicial to him; as, the innumerable stones and rocks that overspread so great a part of the earth, which, as to any thing known, are altogether useless, and oftentimes are rather an inconvenience than benefit.

Thus, it is reasonable to expect, that, in such a revelation, there should be many things plain and easy to be understood; and that the revelation should be most intelligible, wherein it is most necessary for us to understand it, in order to our guidance and direction in the way to our happiness; but that there should also be many incomprehensible mysteries in it, many things understood in part, but yet that room should be left for vast improvement in the knowledge of them, to the end of the world. It is reasonable to expect, that the case should actually be the same as concerning the works of nature; that many things which were formerly great and insuperable difficulties, unintelligible mysteries, should now, by further study and improvement, be well cleared up, and cease longer to remain difficulties; and that other difficulties should be considerably diminished, though not yet fully cleared up.

It may be expected that, as in the system of nature so in the system of revelation, there should be many parts whose use is but little understood, and many that should seem wholly useless, yea, and some that should seem rather to do hurt than good. I might further observe, that if we have a revelation given in ancient languages, used among a people whose customs and phraseology are but very imperfectly understood, many difficulties will arise from hence. And, in a very concise history, in which only some particular facts and circumstances that concern the special purposes of that revelation, are mentioned -- and innumerable others are omitted that would be proper to be mentioned, if the main design were to give a full, clear, connected, continued history of such a people, or such affairs as the history mentions -- it is no wonder that many doubts and difficulties arise.

§ 22. Tindal’s main argument against the need of any revelation, is, that the law of nature is absolutely perfect. But how weak and impertinent is this arguing, that because the law of nature (which is no other than natural rectitude and obligation) is perfect, therefore the light of nature is sufficient. To say that the law of nature is perfect, yea, absolutely perfect, is no more to say that is naturally fit and right in itself, is indeed right; and that what is in itself, or in its own nature right, perfectly and absolutely right, is absolutely right. But this is an empty, insipid kind of doctrine. It is an idle way of spending time, ink, and paper, to spend them in proving, that what is in its own nature perfectly true, is perfectly true; and what is in its nature perfectly good, is perfectly good; or that what is, is, and is as it is. But this is all that can be meant by the law of nature being perfect. And how far is this from having any reference to that question, whether we have by mere nature, without instruction, all that light and advantage that we need, clearly and fully to know what is right, and all that is needful for us to be and to do, in our circumstances as sinners, &c. in order to the forgiveness of sin, the favour of God, and our own happiness! What, according to the nature of things, is fittest and best, may be most perfect; and yet our natural knowledge of this may be most

imperfect.

If Tindal, or any other deist, would assert, and urge it upon mankind as an assertion that they ought to believe, that the light of nature is so sufficient to teach all mankind what they ought, or in any respect need, to be, and believe and practise for their good, that any additional instruction is needless; and useless: then, all instruction in families and schools is needless and useless; all instruction of parents, tutors, and philosophers; all that has been said to promote any such knowledge as tends to make men good and happy by word of mouth, or by writing and books; all that is written by ancient and modern philosophers and learned men. And then, also, all the pains the deists take in talking and writing to enlighten mankind, is wholly needless and vain.

§ 23. When it is asserted that the light of nature, or the means and advantages which all mankind have by pure nature, to know the way of their duty and happiness, are absolutely sufficient, without any additional means and advantages; one of these two things must be meant by it, if it has any meaning: either that they are sufficient in order to a mere possibility of obtaining all needful and useful knowledge in these important concerns; or that these natural means have a sufficient tendency actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or at least in a prevailing degree, according as the state of mankind may be.

If the former of these be meant, viz. that the means of understanding these things, which all mankind have by mere nature, is sufficient, in order to a bare possibility of obtaining this knowledge; even that, should it be allowed, will not at all prove, that farther light is not extremely needed by mankind. A bare possibility may be; and yet there may be no tendency or probability that ever the effect (however necessary, and however dreadful the consequence of its failing) will be reached, in one single instance, in the whole world of mankind, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, though it should stand millions of ages. But if by the sufficiency of these natural means be meant, a sufficiency of tendency actually to reach the effect -- either universally, or in a prevailing degree, considering all things belonging to the state and circumstances of mankind -- it is the very same thing as to say, that it actually does obtain the effect. For if the tendency, all things considered, be sufficient actually to obtain the effect, doubtless it does actually obtain it. For what should hinder a cause from actually obtaining the effect that it has a sufficient tendency to obtain, all things considered? So that here, what we have to inquire, is, whether that effect be actually obtained in the world? whether the world of mankind be actually brought to all necessary or very important knowledge of these things, merely by the means they have by nature? History, observation, and experience, are the things which must determine the question.

§ 24. In order the more clearly to judge of this matter, of the sufficiency of the light of nature to know what is necessary to be known of religion in order to man’s happiness, we must consider what are the things that must be known in order to this; which are these two: 1st, The religion of nature, or the religion proper and needful, considering the state and relations we stand in as creatures: 2d, The religion of a sinner, or the religion and duties proper and necessary for us, considering our state as depraved and guilty creatures, having incurred the displeasure of our Creator. As to the former, it is manifest from fact, that nature alone is not sufficient for the discovery of the religion of nature, in the latter sense of sufficiency: that is, no means we have by mere nature, without instruction, bring inert to the knowledge of the nature of God, and our natural relation to and dependence on him, and the consequent relations we stand in to our

fellow-creatures, and the duties becoming these relations, sufficient actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or in any prevailing degree. No; nor does it appear to have proved sufficient in so much as in a single instance. A sufficiency to see the reasonableness of these things, when pointed out, is not the same thing as a sufficiency to find them out. None but either mere dunces, or those who are incorrigibly wilful, will deny that there is a vast difference. And as to the latter, viz. the religion of a sinner, or the duties proper and necessary for us as depraved, guilty, and offending creatures; it is most evident, the light of nature cannot be sufficient for our information, by any means, or in any sense whatsoever. No, nor is the law of nature sufficient either to prescribe or establish this religion. The light of nature is, in no sense whatsoever, sufficient to discover this religion. It has no sufficient tendency to it; nor, indeed, any tendency at all to discover it to any one single person in any age. And it not only has no tendency to obtaining of this knowledge, by mere natural means, but it affords no possibility of it. -- Not only is the light of nature insufficient to discover this religion, but the law of nature is not sufficient to establish it, or to give any room for it.

04.08. On the medium of moral government -- particularly Conversation

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§ 1. BY conversation, I mean intelligent beings expressing their minds one to another, in words, or other signs pressing intentionally directed to us for our notice, whose immediate and main design is to be significations of the mind of him who gives them. Those signs are evidences distinguished from works done by any, from which we may argue their minds. The first and most immediate design of the work, is something else than a mere signification to us of the mind of the efficient. Thus, I distinguish God’s communicating his mind to us by word or conversation, from his giving us opportunity to learn it by philosophical reasoning; or by God’s works which we observe in the natural world.

§ 2. There is a great difference between God’s moral government of his creatures, that have understanding and will, and his general government of providential disposal. -- The nature, design, and ends of the latter, by no means require that it should be declared and made visible by a revelation of the methods, rules, particular views, designs, and ends of it; these are secret things that belong to God; in which men’s understandings and wills are no way concerned. There is no application to these facilities in it; nor are these facilities any otherwise concerned, than the qualities or properties of inanimate and senseless things. But it is quite otherwise with respect to God’s moral government of a kingdom or society of intelligent and willing creatures; to which society he is united as its head, ruling for its good. The nature of that requires, that it should be declared, open, and visible. How can any moral government be properly and sufficiently established and, maintained in a kingdom of intelligent agents, consisting in exhibiting, prescribing, and enforcing methods, rules, and ends of their own intelligent voluntary actions, without declaring, and particularly promulgating to their understandings, those methods, rules, and enforcements? The moral government of a society, in the very nature of it, implies, and consists in, an application to their understandings, in directing the intelligent will, and in enforcing the direction by the declaration made.

§ 3. It is needful, in order to a proper moral government, that the ruler should enforce the rules of the society by threatening just punishments, and promising the most suitable and wise rewards. But, without word or voluntary declaration, there is no threatening or promising in the case, in a proper sense. To leave the subject to find out what reward would be wise, if there appear in the state of things room for every subject to guess at it in some degree, would be a different thing from promising it. And to leave men to their own reason, to find out what would be a just, deserved, and, all things considered, a wise punishment, though we should suppose some sufficiency in every one’s reason for this, would be a different thing from threatening of it.

It is needful in a moral kingdom, not in a ruined and deserted state -- the union between the head and members remaining -- that there should be conversation between the governors, and

governed. It is requisite that the former should have intercourse with the latter in a way agreeable to their nature; that is, by way of voluntary signification of their mind to the governed, as the governed signify their minds voluntarily one to another. There should be something equivalent to conversation between the rulers and ruled; and thus the rulers should make themselves visible. The designs and ends of government should be made known; it should be visible what is aimed at, and what grand ends or events are in view, and the mind of the rulers should be declared as to the rules, measures, and methods, to be observed by the society. If the rulers are sovereign, absolute disposers, it is necessary their will should be particularly declared, as to the good and evil consequence of obedience or disobedience, which they intend as moral enforcement; of the rules and laws, to persuade the will to a compliance. For they can reach the will, or affect it at all, no further than they are made known. -- It is requisite something should be known, particularly, of the nature, weight, and degree of the rewards and punishments, and of their time, place, and duration.

§ 4. Thus, it is requisite that it should be declared what is the end for which God has made us, and made the world; supports it, provides for it, and orders its events. For what end mankind are made in particular; what is intended to be their main employment; what they should chief1y aim at in what they do in the world: how far God, the Creator, is man's end; and what man is to aim at with respect to God, who stands in no need of us, and cannot be in the least dependent on us: how far, and in what respect, we are to make God our highest end; and how we are to make ourselves, or our fellow-creatures, our end: what benefits man will have by complying with his end; what evils he shall be subject to by refusing, or failing to comply, in a greater or lesser degree. If we have offended, and deserved punishment, it must be known on what terms (if at all) we may be forgiven and restored to favour; and what benefits we shall receive, if we are reconciled.

It is apparent, that there would be no hope that these things would ever be determined among mankind, in their present darkness and disadvantage, without a revelation. Without a revelation -- now extant, or once extant, having some remaining influence by tradition -- men would undoubtedly for ever be at a loss, what God expects from us, and what we may expect from him; what we are to depend upon as to our concern with God, and what ground we are to go upon in our conduct and proceedings that relate to him; what end we are to aim at; what rule we are to be directed by; and what good, and what harm, is to be expected from a right or wrong conduct. Yea, without a revelation, men would be greatly at a loss concerning God; what he is; what manner of being; whether properly intelligent and willing; a being that has will and design, maintaining a proper, intelligent, voluntary dominion over the world. Notions of the first being, like those of Hobbes and Spinosa, would prevail. Especially would they be at a loss concerning those prefections of God, which he exercises as a moral governor. For we find that some of the deists, though they, from revelation, have been taught these; yet, having cast off revelation, apparently doubt of them all. Lord Bolingbroke, in particular, insists that we have no evidence of them.

§ 5. And though, with regard to many, when they have a revelation fully setting forth the perfections of God -- giving a rational account of them, and pointing forth their consistence -- their reason may rest satisfied in them; this is no evidence that it is not exceeding needful that God should tell us of them. It is very needful that God should declare to mankind what manner of being he is. For, though reason be sufficient to confirm such a declaration after it is given, and enable us to see its consistence, harmony, and rationality, in many respects; yet reason may be utterly insufficient first to discover these things.

Yea, notwithstanding the clear and infinitely abundant evidences of his being, we need that God should tell us that there is a great being, who understands, who wills, and who has made and governs the world. It is of unspeakable advantage, as to the knowledge of this, that God has told us of it; and there is much reason to think, that the notion mankind in general have entertained in all ages concerning a Deity, has been very much originally owing to revelation. On the supposition, that God has a moral kingdom in the world, that he is the head of a moral society, consisting either of some part of mankind, or of the whole; in what darkness must the affairs of this moral kingdom be carried on, without a communication between the head and the body; the ruler never making himself known to the society by any word, or other equivalent expression whatsoever, either by himself, or by any mediators, or messengers!

§ 6. So far as we see, all moral agents are conversible agents. It seems to be agreeable to the nature of moral agents, and their state in the universal system, that we observe none without it; and there are no beings that have even the semblance of intelligence and will, but possess the faculty of conversation; as in all kinds of birds, beasts, and even insects. So far as there is any appearance of something like a mind, so far they give significations of their minds one to another, in something like conversation among rational creatures. And, as we rise higher in the scale of beings, we do not see that an increase of perfection diminishes the need or propriety of communication and intercourse of this kind, but augments it. And accordingly, we see most of it among the most perfect beings. So we see conversation by voluntary immediate significations of each other's minds, more fully, properly, and variously, between mankind, than any other animals here below. And if there are creatures superior to mankind united in society, doubtless still voluntary converse is more full and perfect.

Especially do we find conversation proper and requisite between intelligent creatures concerning moral affairs, which are most important; affairs wherein especially moral agents are concerned, as joined in society, and having union and communion one with another. As to other concerns that are merely personal and natural, wherein we are concerned more separately, and by ourselves, and not as members of society, in them there is not equal need of conversation.

§ 7. Moral agents are social agents; affairs of morality are affairs of society. It is concerning moral agents as united in society in a commonwealth or kingdom, that we have been speaking. Particular moral agents so united, need conversation. The affairs of their social union cannot well be maintained without conversation. And if so, what reason can be given, why there should be no need of conversation with the head of the society? The head of the society, so far as it is united with it on a moral ground, is a social head. The head belongs to the society, as the natural head belongs to the body. And the union of the members with the head is greater, stricter, and more important, than one with another. And if their union with other members of the society require conversation, much more their greater union with the head. By all that we see and experience, the moral world, and the conversible world, are the same thing; and it never was intended, that the affairs of society, in any that are united in society among intelligent creatures, should be upheld and carried on without conversation.

There is no more reason to deny God any conversation with his moral kingdom, in giving laws, and enforcing them with promises and threatenings, than to deny him any conversation with them in another world, when judging them. But, can any that believe a future state, rationally imagine, that

when men go into another world to be judged by their Supreme Governor, nothing will pass or be effected through the immediate interposition of the Judge, but all things be left wholly to go on according to laws of nature established from the beginning of the world; and that souls pass into another state by a law of nature, as a stone, when shaken off from a building, falls down by gravity, without any miraculous signification from God? But there is as much reason to suppose this, as to deny any miraculous interposition in giving and establishing the laws of the moral society. If judgement and execution by law, be by immediate interposition and declaration, why not legislation?

§ 8. The ground of moral behaviour, and all moral government and regulation, is society, or mutual intercourse and social regards. The special medium of union and communication of the members of the society, and the being of society as such, is conversation; and the well-being and happiness of society is friendship. It is the highest happiness of all moral agents, but friendship, above all other things that belongs to society requires conversation. It is what friendship most naturally and directly desires. By conversation, not only is friendship maintained and nourished, but the felicity of friendship is tasted and enjoyed. The happiness of God's moral kingdom consists, in an inferior degree, in the members' enjoyment of each other's friendship; but infinitely more in the enjoyment of their Head. Therefore, here especially, and above all, is conversation requisite.

§ 9. Conversation between God and mankind in this world, is maintained by God's word on his part, and by prayer on ours. By the former, he speaks and expresses his mind to us; by the latter, we speak and express our minds to him. Sincere friendship towards God, in all who believe him to be properly an intelligent, willing being, does most apparently, directly, and strongly incline to prayer; and it no less disposes the heart strongly to desire to have our infinitely glorious and gracious Friend expressing his mind to us by his word, that we may know it. The same light which has directed the nations of the world in general to prayer, has directed them to suppose, that God, or the gods, have revealed themselves to men. And we see, that the same infidelity that disposes men to deny any divine revelation, disposes them to reject as absurd the duty of prayer.

§ 10. If God's moral kingdom, or the society of his friends and willing subjects, shall be in a most happy state in another world -- in the most complete friendship and in perfect union with God their Head, as some of the deists pretend to believe -- is it reasonable to suppose any other, than that they will fully enjoy the sweets of their friendship one with another, in the most perfect conversation, either by words, or some more perfect medium of expressing their minds? And shall they have, at the same time, no conversation at all with their glorious Head, the fountain of all the perfection and felicity of the society, in friendship with whom their happiness chiefly consists? That friendship, and the happiness they have in it, is begun in this world; and this is the state wherein they are trained up for that more perfect state: and shall the nevertheless live here wholly without any intercourse with God of this sort; though their union with him, as their moral Head, and their great Friend, begins here; and though their happiness, as consisting in friendship to him, and also the enjoyment of that subordinate happiness of holding a virtuous and holy conversation one with another, be begun here? The need of conversation in order properly to support and carry on the concerns of society, may well appear, by considering the need of it for answering all the purposes of friendship, which is one of the main concerns of society, in some respects the main social concern, and the end of all the rest.

Let us suppose, that some friend, above all others dear to us, in whose friendship consisted the main comfort of our life, should leave us in possession of something he had contrived and accomplished, some manifold complicated effect that he had produced which we might have always in our view. Suppose also that this work should be a ver y great and manifold evidence of the excellencies of our friend's mind, of his great, fixed, and firm benevolence to us; and that he should withdraw for ever, and never have any conversation with us; that no word should ever pass, or any thing of that nature; and that no word should he left behind in writing, nor any word ever spoken left in the memory: would this sufficiently and completely answer the purposes of this great friendship, and satisfy its ends and desires, or be a proper support of this great end of society? I cannot but think, every sober, considerate person will at once determine, that it would be very far from it, for such reasons as these, -- that it would not give us those views of things, pertaining to the support and enjoyment of friendship, suitable to the nature of intelligent, volitive, and conversible beings; not giving the direct and immediate view, nor at all tending, in so great a degree and so agreeable a manner, to affect and impress the mind. And as, for these reasons, this alone would not answer the ends and purposes of society in this respect; so, for the same reasons, it would not answer other purposes of society.

§ 11. As we may suppose, that God will govern mankind in that moral kingdom which he hath mercifully set up among them, in a manner agreeable to their nature; so, it is reasonable to suppose, that He would make his moral government, with respect to them, visible, not only in declaring the general ends, methods, and rules of his government, but also by making known the chief of his more particular aims and designs. As, in human kingdoms, in order to the wisdom, righteousness, and goodness of the administration be properly visible -- so far as is requisite for encouraging and animating of the subject, and in order to the suitable convenience, satisfaction, and benefit of the whole society of intelligent agents -- it is needful, not only that the general end, viz. the public good, should be known, but also, the particular design of many of the principal parts of the administration, among which we many reckon the main negociations, treaties, and changes of affairs, the cause and end of wars engaged in, the ground of treaties of peace and commerce, the design of general revolutions in the state of the kingdom, &c. Otherwise the society is not governed in a manner becoming their rational and active nature; but affairs are carried on in the dark, and the members have no opportunity to consent or concur, to approve or disapprove, to rejoice in the goodness, wisdom, and benefit of the administration, and to pay proper regards to those in whose hands the government is, &c. These things are necessary for the establishment and confirmation of the government. God's moral government over his moral kingdom on earth, cannot, in such like respects, be carried on in a visible manner, and in a way suitable to our nature, without divine history and prophecy. Without divine history, we cannot properly see the grounds and foundation of divine administrations, the first formation or erection of God's moral kingdom, the nature and manner of the main revolutions to which it has been subject, which are the ground of future designs, and to which future events and intended revolutions have a relation. It is also necessary, that those past events should be known, in order that the reason, wisdom, and benefit of the present state of the kingdom, and of God's present dispensations towards it, may be known. And prophecy is needful to reveal the future designs and aims of government, and what good things are to be expected.

These things are necessary, in order to the proper establishment, health, and prosperity, of God's moral, intelligent kingdom. Without them, the government of an infinitely wise and good Head, is not sensible. There is no opportunity to see the effects and success of the administration. There is no opportunity to find it by experience. Neither the designs of government, nor the accomplishment of those designs, are sensible; and the government itself, with respects to fact, is not made visible.

§ 12. If it be said, that reason, and the light of nature, without revelation, are sufficient to show us, that the end of God's government, in his moral kingdom, must be, to promote these two things among mankind, viz. their virtue, and their happiness: In reply, I would ask, What satisfaction can men without revelation have, with respect to the design, wisdom, and success of God's government, as to these ends, when wickedness so generally prevails and reigns, through all ages hitherto, in the far greatest part of the world; and the world, at all times, is so full of calamities, miseries, and death, having no prophecies of a better state of things in which all is to issue at last, in the latter ages of the world; or assuring us that all these miserable changes and great confusion are guided by Infinite Wisdom to that great final issue, and without any revelation of a future state of happiness to the city of God in another world?

§ 13. Object. God does maintain a moral government over all mankind; but we see, in fact, that many are not governed by revelation, since the greater part of the world have been destitute of divine relation: which shows that God does not look upon conversation as necessary in order to his moral government of mankind, as God judges for himself, and acts according to his own judgement.

Ans. 1. What I have been speaking of, is God's moral government over a society of moral agents, which are his kingdom, or a society that have God for their King, united to them as the Head of the society, as it is with earthly kings with respect to their own kingdoms, where the union between king and subjects is not broken and dissolved; and not of a society or country of rebels, who have forsaken their lawful sovereign, withdrawn themselves from subjection to him, and cast off his government: though they may still be under the king's power, and moral dominion, in some sense, as he may have it in his power and design, to conquer, subdue, judge, and punish them for their rebellion. But yet the sense in which such a nation is under the moral government of this king, and may be said to be his kingdom or people, is surely extremely diverse from that of a kingdom remaining in union with their king. In the case of a people broken off from their king, the maintaining of intercourse by conversation is in no wise in like manner requisite. The reason for such intercourse, which take place in the other case, do not take place in this. In this case, society ceases; i.e. that union ceases between God and man, by which they should be of one society. And where society ceases, there the argument for conversation ceases. If a particular member of the society were wholly cut off, and ceases to be of the society -- the union being entirely broken -- the argument for conversation, the great medium of social concerns, ceases. So, if the body be cut off from the head, or be entirely disunited from it, intercourse ceases. Moral government in a society is a social affair; wherein consists the intercourse between superior and inferior constituents, between that which is original, and that which is dependent, directing and directed in the society. It is proper, in this case, that the rebel people should have sufficient means of knowing the end of their rebellion, and that it is their duty to be subject to their king, to seek reconciliation with him, and to inquire after his will. But while they remain obstinate in their rebellion, and the king has not

received them into favour, the state of things does not require that he should particularly declare his intentions with respect to them, or should open to them the designs and methods of his administration. It is not necessary that he should publish among them the way and terms of reconciliation; make revelations of his goodness and wisdom, and the great benefits of his government; converse with them as their friend, and so open the way for their being happy in so great a friend; or that he should so particularly and immediately publish among them particular statutes and rules for their good, as a society of moral agents, &c. Conversation, in this sense, when there is an utter breach of the union, is not to be expected, nor is it requisite, though judging and condemning may be.

Ans. 2. So far as the union between God and the heathen world has not been utterly broken, so far they have not been left utterly destitute of all benefit of divine revelation. They are not so entirely and absolutely cast off, but that there is a possibility of their being reconciled; and God has so ordered the case, that there is an equal possibility of their receiving the benefit of divine revelation.

If the heathen world, or any parts of it, have not only enjoyed a mere possibility of being restored to favour, but have had some advantages for it; so, a great part, yea, mostly the greater part, of the heathen world have not been left merely to the light of nature. They have had many things, especially in the times of the Old Testament, that were delivered to mankind in the primitive ages of the world by revelation, handed down from their ancestors by tradition; and many things borrowed from the Jews. And, during those ages, by many wonderful dispensations towards the Jews -- wherein God did, in a most public and striking manner, display himself, and show his hand -- the world had, from time to time, notices sufficient to convince them, that there was a divine revelation extant, and sufficient to induce them to seek after it. And things sufficient to make revelation public, to spread it abroad -- to extend the frame of it and its effects to the utmost end of the earth, and to draw men’s attention to it -- have been vastly more and greater in later times, the in the primitive ages.

Ans. 3. The nations that are separated from the true God, and live in an open and obstinate full rejection of him as their supreme moral Governor, reject all friendly intercourse while their state is such. They are open enemies; and, so far as God treats them as such, he does not exercise any friendly moral government over them. And they have light sufficient, without revelation, for any other exercise of moral government and intercourse, besides those that are friendly, viz. in judging and condemning them. They have light sufficient for that judgment and condemnation, of which they shall be the subjects. For their condemnation shall proceed no farther, than proportioned to their light. They shall be condemned for the violation of the law of nature and nations; and the degree of their condemnation shall be only answerable to the degree of the means and advantages they have had for information of the duties of this law, and of their obligations to perform them.

Ans. 4. What has appeared in those parts of the world which have been destitute of revelation, is so far from being any evidence that revelation is not necessary, that in those nations and ages which have been most destitute of revelation, the necessity of it has most evidently and remarkably appeared, by the extreme blindness and delusion which have prevailed and reigned, without any remedy, or any ability in those nations to extricate themselves from their darkness.

§ 14. I think, a little sober reflection on those opinions which appear among the deists, weighing them together with the nature of things, may convince us, that a general renunciation of divine revelation, after nations have enjoyed it, would soon bring those nations to be more absurd, brutish, and monstrous in their notions and practices, than the heathens were before the gospel came among them. For, (1.) Those nations had many things among them derived originally from revelation, by, tradition from their ancestors, the ancient founders of nations, or from the Jews, which led them to embrace many truths contained in the Scripture; and they valued such tradition. It was not, in general, their humour to despise such an original of doctrines, or to contemn them because they had their first foundation in divine revelation, but they valued them the more highly on this account; and had no notion of setting them aside, in order to the drawing of every thing from the fountain of their own reason. By this means, they had a great deal more of truth in matters of religion and morality, than ever human reason would have discovered without helps. But now, the humour of the deists is, to reject every thing that they have had from supposed revelation, or any tradition whatsoever, and to receive nothing but what they can clearly see, and demonstrate from the fountain of their own inassisted reason. (2.) The heathens, by tradition, received and believed many great truths, of vast importance, that were incomprehensible; and it was no objection with them against receiving them, that they were above their comprehension. But now, it is a maxim with the freethinkers, that nothing is to be believed but what can be comprehended; and this leads them to reject all the principles of natural religion (as it is called) as well as revealed. For there is nothing pertaining to any doctrine of natural religion, not any perfection of God, nor his very existence from eternity, without many things attending it that are incomprehensible. (3.) The heathens of old, in their reasonings, did not proceed in that exceeding haughtiness and dependence on their own mere singular understanding, disdaining all dependence on teaching, as our deists do; which tends to lead one to reject almost all important truths, out of an affectation of thinking freely, independently, and singularly. Some of the heathens professed their great need of teaching, and of divine teaching. (4.) The heathens did not proceed with that enmity against moral and divine truth, not having been so irritated by it. They were willing to pick up some scraps of this truth which came from revelation, which our deists reject all in the lump.

§ 15. If we suppose that God never speaks to, or converses at all with, mankind, and has never, from the beginning of the world, said any thing to them, but has perfectly let them alone as to any voluntary, immediate, and direct signification of his mind to them, in any respect teaching, commanding, promising, threatening, counselling or answering them; such a notion, if established, would tend exceedingly to atheism. It would naturally tend to the supposition, that there is no being that made and governs the world. And if it should nevertheless be supposed, that there is some being who is, in some respect, the original of all other beings; yet, this notion would naturally lead to doubt of his being properly an intelligent, volitive being; and to doubt of all duties to him implying intercourse, such as prayer, praise, or any address to him, external or internal, or any respect to him at all analogous to that which we exercise towards rulers or friends, or any intelligent beings we here see and know; and so it would tend to overthrow every doctrine and duty of natural religion. Now, in this respect, deism has a tendency to a vastly greater degree of error and brutishness with regard to matters of religion and morality, than the ancient heathenism. For the heathens in general had no such notion that the Deity never at all conversed with mankind in the ways above mentioned; but received many traditions, rules, and laws, as supposing they came from God, or the gods, by revelation.

§ 16. Many of the freethinkers of late deceive themselves, through the ambiguity or equivocal use of the word reason. They argue, that we must make our reason the highest rule by which to judge of all things, even of the doctrines of revelation; because reason is that by which we must judge of revelation itself. It is the rule on which our judgment of the truth of a revelation depends, and therefore undoubtedly must be that, by which particular doctrines of it must be judged: not considering that the word reason is here used in two senses. In the former, viz. in our judging of the divinity, of a supposed revelation, the word means the faculty of reason taken in the whole extent of its exercise; in the latter, it is the opinion of our reason, or some particular opinions that have appeared rational to us. Now there is a great difference between these two. It is true, the faculty of reason is that by which we are to judge of every thing, as it is the eye by which we see all truth. And, after we have received revelation, still, by the faculty of reason, we receive the particular doctrines of revelation, yea, even those that are most difficult to our comprehension. For, by the faculty of reason we determine this principle, that God knows better than us; and whatever God declares is true. But this is an exceedingly different thing from making an opinion, which we first establish without revelation, by reason only, as our rule to judge of particular doctrines which revelation declares. It may be illustrated by this: if there be a man with whom we have the most thorough acquaintance, and have long known to be a person of the soundest judgment and greatest integrity, who goes a journey or voyage to a place where we never were; and, when he returns, gives an account of some strange phenomena or occurrences that he was an eye-witness of there, which we should not have otherwise believed; but we believe them now to be true, because we rely on his testimony. Here, it would be ridiculous for a man to say that it is unreasonable to believe him, because what he says is not agreeable to reason; (meaning, by reason, that particular opinion we should have had, independent on his testimony;) and urging that reason must be our highest rule, and not his testimony, because it is by our reason that we judge of the testimony, and credibility of the man that testifies; meaning, in this case, the faculty of reason. This would be as unreasonable, as for a man to say, that he never will rely on any representation made by the best microscope or telescope that is different from the representation which he has by the naked eye; because his eye is the rule by which he sees even the optic glass itself, and by which he judges whether it be regularly made, tending to give a true representation of objects; urging that his eye must be the highest rule for him to determine by, because it is by the eye he determines the goodness and sufficiency of the glass itself; and therefore he will credit no representation made by the glass, wherein the glass differs from his eye; and so will not believe that the blood consists partly of red particles, and partly of a limpid liquor, because it appears all red to the naked eye: not considering the different sense in which he uses the word eye. In the former case, viz. with respect to judging of the goodness of the optic glass, he means the sense of seeing, or the organ of sight. In the latter, when he says he will not believe the representation of the glass, wherein it differs from his eye, because his eye is the highest rule; by the eye, he means the particular representation he has by his eye, separately, and without the glass.

§ 17. Again: They blunder exceedingly, through not making a distinction between reason and a rule of reason. They say, that reason is our highest rule by which to judge, of all things, and therefore they must judge of the doctrines of revelation by it: whereas, they seem not to consider what they mean by reason being the highest rule. It is true, our reason or understanding is the only judging faculty by which we determine truth and falsehood. But it is not properly our highest rule of judging of truth and falsehood, nor any rule at all. The judge, and the rule by which he judges, are

diverse. A power of discerning truth, and a rule to regulate and determine the use of that power, are quite different things. The rule may be divine revelation, especially in matters of religion. As it is with the faculty or organ of sight, the organ is not properly the highest means, but only the immediate means we have of discerning the objects of sight. But if men were talking of rules how to use their eyes to the best advantage, so as to see most certainly and clearly -- to see the most distant or the minutest objects, so as to have the most certain and full information -- it would be ridiculous for any one to say that his eye was the highest rule to regulate his sight.

§ 18. Sometimes, by the word reason, is intended the same as argument or evidence, which the faculty of reason makes use of in judging of truth: as when we say, we should believe nothing without or contrary to reason; that is, we should not give the assent of our judgments without or against evidence, or something that appears which argues the thing to be true. But if this be meant by them who assert reason to be a rule superior to revelation, it is absurd in them thus to speak of reason as contradistinguished from revelation. To say, that argument or evidence is a higher rule than revelation, is to make evidence and divine revelation entirely distinct; implying, that divine revelation is not of the nature of evidence or argument . They ought to explain themselves, who assert that evidence is superior to the evidence we have by divine revelation. It is true, divine testimony is not the same thing as argument or evidence in general; because it is a particular sort of evidence. There are other particular sorts of evidence; and persons might speak as intelligibly, if they single out any other kind of evidence, and assert that reason or evidence was superior to that sort of evidence. As, for instance, one sort of evidence is human testimony of credible eye-witnesses; another is credible history; another is memory; another is present experience; another is geometrical mensuration; another is arithmetical calculation; another is strict metaphysical distinction and comparison. Now, would it not be an improper and unintelligible way of speaking, to ask, whether evidence was not above experience? or, whether argument was not above mensuration or calculation? If they who plead that reason is a rule to judge of truth superior to revelation, mean by reason, that evidence which is worthy to influence the faculty of reason; it seems not to be considered by them, that such evidence, when spoken of in general, comprehends divine testimony, as well as other sorts of evidence; unless they would entirely set aside divine revelation, as carrying in it no evidence at all. If this be their meaning, they are deceitful; for this is not what they pretend; since it would entirely change the point in dispute, and alter the whole controversy. Or if, when they say reason is a higher rule than revelation, they mean reason exclusive of revelation, or that such arguments of truth as we have without revelation, are better than divine testimony; that is as much as to say, all other arguments are better than divine testimony. For reason or argument, without divine testimony, comprehends all other arguments that are without divine testimony: and then, this is as much as to say, that divine testimony is the very least and lowest of all possible arguments, that ever can occur to the mind of man, in any measure to influence his judgement; which meaning they will hardly own. On the whole, it is manifest, that, let us turn the expressions which way we will, all the boasted proof of their assertion is owing wholly to confusion, and an ambiguous use of terms; it is talking without ideas, and making sounds without fixing any distinct meaning.

§ 19. Here, if any, in disdain of such an imputation, shall say, "I see no necessity of supposing this assertion to be so unreasonable and unintelligible. By reason, we mean that evidence which is seen by reason simply considered; reason itself, without dependence on the dictates of another;

viewing things as they are in themselves:" such an objector is mistaken, if he thinks he has got clear of the difficulty. All evidence whatsoever, even that by divine revelation, is included in his description of reason. It is by viewing things as they are in themselves, and judging by our own reason, and not by the reason of another, that we judge there is a divine revelation, and that we judge divine revelation must be agreeable to truth. Reason judges by viewing things as they are in themselves, not the less because it makes use of a medium of judgment: and when reason makes use of divine testimony as an evidence or medium of judgment, it judges as much by viewing things as they are in themselves, as when it makes use of any other medium of judgment; as, for instance, a measuring-rod in judging of distances, a compass in judging of directions and courses, and figures and characters in calculating and determining numbers.

If any should say, that reason, in our inquiries after truth, is to be regarded as a rule superior to experience, this -- according to what would be most naturally suggested to the mind by such a saying, and might generally be supposed to be intended by it according to the more usual acceptation of words -- would be a foolish assertion. For by the comparison which takes place in the proposition between reason and experience, reason would be understood in such a sense as that it might properly be set in opposition to experiences or taken in contradiction to it; and therefore the proposition must be understood thus, viz. That our highest rule is what our reason would suggest to us independent of experience, in the same things that are matters of experience. Or, what our reason would lead us to suppose before experience, is what we must regard as our highest rule, even in those matters that afterwards are tried by experience. Certainly, he that should proceed in this manner in his inquiries after truth, would not be thought wise by considerate persons.

§ 20. Yet it is really true, in some sense, that our reason is our highest rule; and that by which we are to try and judge of all things: even our experience and senses themselves must be tried by it. For we have no other faculty but our reason, by which we can determine of truth or falsehood, by any argument or medium whatsoever. Let the argument be testimony or experience, or what it will, we must judge of the goodness or strength of the argument by reason. And thus it is we actually determine, that experience is so good and sure a medium of proof. We consider the nature of it; and our reason soon shows us the necessary connexion of this medium with truth. So we judge of the degree of dependence that is to be had on our senses by reason; by viewing the agreement of one sense with another, and by comparing, in innumerable instances, the agreement of the testimonies of the senses with other criteria of truth, and so rationally estimating the value of these testimonies. But if this is what is meant by saying, that our reason is a surer rule than experience, it is an improper way of speaking, and an abuse of language. For, take reason thus; and so reason and experience are not properly set in contradiction, or put in comparison one with another; for the former includes the latter, as the genus includes the species, or as a whole includes the several particular sorts comprehended in that whole. For, judging by experience is one way of judging by reason; or rather, experience is one sort of argument which reason makes use of in judging. And to say that reason is a more sure rule than experience, is to say, that. arguing is a more sure rule than a particular way of arguing; or to say that argument (in general) is a more sure rule than that particular son of argument, viz. experience. Or if, by reason, is meant the faculty of reason, or that power or ability of the mind, whereby it can see the force of arguments; then such an assertion will appear still more nonsensical. For then, it is as much as to say, that the mind’s ability to see the

force of arguments, is a surer rule by which to judge of truth, than that particular argument, viz. experience; which is the same as to say, an ability to judge of arguments is a surer argument than that sort of argument, experience; or that a man's understanding is a better rule to understand by, than such a particular means or rule of understanding.

These observations concerning reason and experience, when these two are compared as rules by which to judge of truth, may be applied to reason and revelation, or divine testimony, when in like manner compared as distinct rules of truth. To insist, that men's own reason is a rule superior to divine revelation, under a pretence, that it is by reason that we must judge even of the authority of revelation; that all pretended revelations must be brought to the test of reason; and that reason is the judge whether they are authentic or not, &c. is as foolish as it would be to assert, for the like reasons, that man's own reason is a test of truth superior to experience. There is just the same fallacy in the arguments that are brought to support one and the other of these foolish assertions; and both are, for reasons equally forcible, very false, or very nonsensical.

§ 21. If the assertion of those who say, that men's own reason is a higher test of truth than divine revelation, has any sense in it, it must imply a comparison of different sorts of arguments or evidences of truth; and so the meaning of it must be, that those evidences of truth, which men find before they have the help of divine revelation, are a better criterion of truth, than any discovery they have by revelation. And their great argument to prove it is this, that the faculty of reason, by which the mind is able to discern the force of truth, is the only faculty by which we are able to judge of the value and force of revelation itself. It is just such a sort of arguing, as if a person should go about to demonstrate, that a man could more certainly discover the form and various parts of the planets with the naked eye, than with a telescope; because the eye is that by which we see all visible things, yea, by which we see and discern how to use and to judge of the goodness of telescopes themselves. In the argument these men use, to prove that reason is a better test of truth than revelation, they wretchedly deceive themselves, by sliding off from the meaning which they give to the word reason in the premises, into another meaning of it exceedingly diverse in the conclusion. In the premises, wherein they assert, that reason is that by which we judge of all things, even of revelation itself, they mean either the power of discerning evidence, or the act of reasoning in general. The consequence they draw is, Therefore reason is a higher test of truth than revelation. Here, if they retained the same sense of the word as in the premises, the conclusion would be perfect nonsense. For then, the conclusion would be thus: The power or the act of discerning evidence, is a better evidence of truth than divine revelation. But this is not what is intended to he understood. What is intended in the conclusion, is, that the evidence we have before we have revelation, or independently of it, is better and more certain than revelation itself.

§ 22. The outward provision which God makes through the ages of the world for the temporal benefit and comfort of mankind, in causing his sun to shine and his rain to descend upon them, and in numberless other things, is a great argument that God was not determined to be their everlasting irreconcilable enemy. And if God be reconcilable, it will follow, that he must make a revelation to mankind, to make known to them the terms and methods of reconciliation. For God, who is offended, alone can tell us on what terms he is willing to be reconciled; and how he will be at peace with us, and receive us to favour. And there surely is nothing which can be pretended to be any revelation of this kind, if the Holy Scripture is not.

§ 23. Objection: The Scriptures are communicated to but few of mankind; so that, if a revelation of the method of reconciliation be necessary, a very great part of those who enjoy these external benefits and bounties of Divine Providence, still have no opportunity to obtain reconciliation with God, not having the benefit of that revelation. So that, notwithstanding these seeming testimonies of favour and placableness, it is all one to them as if God was irreconcilable. For still, for want of the knowledge of the method of reconciliation, it is all one to them as though there were no such method, and as though no reconciliation were possible -- To this I answer

1st, The case of mankind is not just the same as if there were no such thing as reconciliation for mankind, or as though reconciliation were utterly impossible. For although the circumstances of a great part of the world be such that their reconciliation be very improbable, yet it is not utterly impossible. There is a way of reconciliation, and it is publicly known in the world; and God has ever afforded opportunity to the generality of the habitable world, that if the minds of men had been as much engaged in the search of divine truth as they ought to have been, they might have felt after God, and found him; and might probably have come to an acquaintance with divine revelation.

2d, If there have been some parts of mankind, in some ages, for whom it was next to impossible that they should ever come to know that revelation which God has made, yet that hinders not the force of the argument for God's placableness to sinners, and the existence or a revealed method of reconciliation. The common favours of Providence may be a proof, that God intends favour to some among mankind, but yet be no proof that he intends that all shall actually have the benefits of his favour. None will deny, but that those outward blessings of God's goodness were intended for the temporal benefit of mankind; and yet there are numbers who never actually receive any temporal benefit by many of them. None will doubt, but that God aimed at men's outward good, in providing grain, and grapes, and other fruits which the earth produces for man's subsistence and comfort in the world; as also the most useful animals. But yet a very great part of the world were for a long time wholly destitute of the most useful of these. All the innumerable nations that dwelt on this American side of the globe, were from age to age, till the Europeans came hither, wholly destitute of wheat, rye, barley, pease, wine, horses, neat cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, and many other useful animals and fruits, which abounded in the other continent. And it is probable, that some of those gifts of nature and Providence, which are most useful to mankind, were what all men remained without the benefit of, for many ages; as metals, wine, and many things used for food, clothing, and habitations. The loadstone, with regard to its polar direction, was doubtless intended for the use of mankind; but yet it is but lately that any of them have had any benefit of it. Glass is a great gift of Providence, and yet but lately bestowed; and also some of the most useful medicines. And with regard to those things which are most universally useful, some have the benefit of them in vastly lesser degrees than others; as the heat of the sun, vegetation, &c.

§ 24. If it should be further objected, That if God's true aim in these outward benefits of providence, which have the appearances of favour, be real favours to mankind, and so that the true happiness of mankind should be the consequence; one would think it would have the same effect in all places where those blessings are bestowed.

I answer, that it will not follow. God may grant things, in all parts of the world, the main design of which may evidently be the benefit of mankind, and yet not have that effect in all places where

they are given. As the main design of Him who orders the existence of rain in the world, is making the earth fruitful; yet it does not follow that he designed this should actually be the effect in all parts of the globe where the rain falls. For it falls on the sea as well as the dry land, which is more than one half of the globe: but yet there it cannot answer this intention.

§ 25. Reason alone cannot certainly determine, that God will not insist on some satisfaction for injuries he receives. If we consider what have in fact been the general notions of mankind, we shall see cause to think, that the dictates of men's minds, who have been without revelation, have been contrariwise, viz. that the Deity will insist on some satisfaction. Repentance makes some satisfaction for many injuries that men are guilty of one towards another; because it bears some proportion to the degree of injury. But reason will not certainly determine, that it is proper for God to accept of repentance as some satisfaction for an offence, when that repentance is infinitely disproportionate to the heinousness of the offence, or the degree of injuriousness that is offered. And reason will not certainly determine, that the offence of forsaking and renouncing God in heart, and treating him with such indignity and contempt, as to set him below the meanest and vilest things, is not immensely greater, and more heinous, than any injury offered to men; and that therefore all our repentance and sorrow fall infinitely short of proportion in measure and degree. If it be said that we may reasonably conclude, and be fully satisfied in it, that a good God will forgive our sin on repentance; I ask, what can be meant by repentance in the case of them that have no love nor true gratitude to God in their hearts, but who discover such an habitual disregard and contempt of God in their conduct, as to treat created things, of the lowest value, with greater respect than him? If it be said, that thereby is meant being sorry for the offence; I ask, whether that sorrow is worthy to be accepted as true repentance, that does not arise from any change of heart, or from a better mind, a mind more disposed to love God, and honour him, being now so changed as to have less disregard and contempt? whether or not the sorrow which arises only from fear and self-love, with a heart still in rebellion against God, be such as we can be certain will be accepted? If not, how shall a man, who at present has no better heart, but yet is greatly concerned for himself through fear, know how to obtain a better heart? How does it appear, that he, if he tries only from fear and self-love, can make himself better, and make himself love God? what proper tendency can there be in the heart to make itself better, until it sincerely repents of its present badness? and how can the heart have sincerity of repentance of its present badness, until it begins to be better, and so begins to forsake its badness, by truly disapproving it, from a good disposition, or a better tendency arising in it? If the disposition remain just the same, then no sincere disapprobation arises; but the reigning disposition, instead of destroying, on the contrary approves and confirms itself. The heart can have no tendency to make itself better, until it begins to have a better tendency: for therein consists its badness, viz. having no good tendency or inclination. And to begin to have a good tendency, or, which is the same thing, to begin to have a sincere inclination to be better, is the same thing as to begin already to be better. So that it seems, that they that are now under the reigning power of an evil heart, can have no ability to help themselves, how sensible soever they may be of their misery, and concerned through fear and self-love to be delivered: but they need this from God, as part of their salvation, viz. that God should give them sincere repentance, as well as pardon and deliverance from the evil consequences of sin. And how shall they know, without revelation, that God will give sinners a better heart, to enable them truly to repent; or in what way they can have any hope to obtain it of him? And if men could obtain some sincere repentance of their being wholly without that love of

God that they ought to have; yet how can reason determine, that God will forgive their sin, until they wholly forsake it? or until their repentance is perfect? until they relinquish all their sinful contempt, ingratitude, and regardlessness of God? or, which is the same thing, until they fully return to their duty, i. e. to that degree of love, honour, gratitude, and devotedness to God, that is their duty? If they have robbed God, who can certainly say that God will forgive them, until they restore all that they have robbed him of, and give him the whole that he claims by the most absolute right? But where is any man that repents with such a perfect repentance? and if there be ever any instances of it in this world, who will say, that it is in every man's power to obtain it? or that there certainly are no lower terms of forgiveness? and if there are, who can tell certainly where to set the bounds, and say precisely to what degree a man must repent? How great must his sorrow be in proportion to his offences, &c.? Or, who can say, how long a man's day of probation shall last? Will reason alone certainly determine, that if a man goes on for a long time presumptuously in his contempt, rebellion, and affronts, presuming on God's goodness, depending that though he does thus abuse his grace as long as he pleases, yet if he repents at any time, God will forgive him, and receive him to favour, forgiving all his presumptuous aggravated rebellion, ingratitude, and provocation, and will receive him into the arms of his love? Will reason alone fully satisfy the mind, that God stands ready to pardon and receive to favour such a sinner, after long continuance in such horrid presumption and most vile ingratitude? Or, will reason fully determine for a certainty, that God will do it, if men thus presumptuously spend their youth, the best part of their lives, in obstinate and ungrateful wickedness, depending that God will stand ready to pardon afterwards? And, in short, how can reason alone be sufficient to set the bounds, and say how long God will bear with and wait upon presumptuous sinners? how many acts of such ingratitude and presumption he will be ready to forgive, and on what terms, &c.? I say, how can reason fix these limits, with any clear evidence that shall give the mind a fixed establishment and satisfaction?

Therefore, if there be any such thing as the forgiveness and salvation of sinful men; new relations of God to men, and concerns of God with men, and a new dependence of men on God, will arise, no less, probably much more, important, than those which are between God as man's Creator, and the Author of his natural goodness. And as God must manifest his perfections in a new work of redemption or salvation, contrived and ordered by his infinite wisdom, and executed by his power -- in a perfect consistence with his justice and holiness, and a greater manifestation of his goodness, than is made in his works as the Author of nature -- so these things must be the foundation of new regards to God, new duties, and a new religion, founded on those displays of his perfections in the work of salvation, and on the new relations God sustains towards men, and the new dependence of men on God, and new obligations laid on men in that work, which may be called revealed religion, different from that natural religion which is founded on the works of God, as the Creator and the Author of nature, and our concerns with God in that work; though not at all contrary to it. The light of nature teaches that religion which is necessary to continue in the favour of the God that made us; but it cannot teach us that religion which is necessary to our being restored to the favour of God, after we have forfeited it.

Chapter 50

04.09. Mahometanism compared with Christianity -- particularly with respect to their propagation

9: Mahometanism compared with Christianity -- particularly with respect to their propagation

§ 1. IN what respect the propagation of Mahometanism is far from being parallel with the propagation of Christianity, will appear by these observations. -- The revolution that was brought to pass in the world, by the propagation of Mahometanism, was not so great as that which happened by the propagation of Christianity; yea, in this respect, was by no means worthy to be compared to it. Consider the state the world was in before Christianity was propagated; how dark, ignorant, barbarous, and wicked; how strongly these things were established by long universal immemorial custom; how fixed in men’s hearts; how established by all human authority, and power, and inclination; and how vast the alteration, when Christianity was introduced and established; how vast the overthrow of that which had been built up before, and stood from age to age; how great, how strong the building; how absolute its destruction; and also, how great the building that was erected in its room; and of how different and opposite a nature from that which had stood on the same ground before.

§ 2. But as to the revolution brought to pass in the world by Mahometanism, it consisted either in the change made among the heathen -- barbarous nations, which had their original from Arabia or Scythia -- or among professing Christians. But with respect to neither of these, was the revolution comparably so great as the other. As to the change made among those heathens, they long had entertained some obscure notions of the true God; and many of the great truths of what is called natural religion, they had obtained by those glimmerings of the light of the gospel which had been diffused over great part of the world; even that part of it that had not fully embraced Christianity. But Mahometanism carried them very little farther in these things; and was an occasion of but small advance of light and knowledge. As to the change made among Christians, there was no advance at all made in knowledge, or in anything that was good. And as to the change made among them as to religious customs, they had so degenerated before, and were become so superstitious, that the alteration was not very perceptible.

§ 3. The difference of the two revolutions was immensely great as to goodness. The change made in the world by the propagation of Christianity, was a great change indeed, with regard to light and knowledge. It was a change from great darkness to glorious and marvellous light. By the preaching of the gospel in the world, the day-spring from on high visited the earth, and the sun arose after a long night of the grossest darkness. But as to the change made in Christendom by the propagation of Mahometanism, there was no increase of light by it, but on the contrary, it was evidently a change from light to darkness. It was a propagation of ignorance, and not of knowledge. As to the change made among the heathens, as we observed before, there was but a small degree of increased light; and all that was added, was borrowed from Christianity. Any increase of knowledge that arose, proceeded only from Mahomet and his followers communicating what had before been communicated to them by Christian teaching. There can be no pretence of the least

degree of addition in anything, beyond what they had before received from the gospel. And as to rules and precepts, examples, promises, or incitements to virtue of any kind, no addition at all was made. What alteration there existed, was only for the worse; those examples, histories, representations, and promises of the new Mahometan religion, only tended exceedingly to debase, debauch, and corrupt the minds of such as received it.

§ 4. The revolution that was occasioned by the propagation of Christianity, was an infinitely greater and more wonderful effect, if we consider the opposition that was overcome in bringing it to pass. Christianity was propagated against all the opposition that could be made by man's carnal dispositions, strengthened by inveterate general custom, principles, habits, and practice, prevailing like a mighty flood. Mahometanism was propagated, not in opposition to those inclinations, but by complying with them, and gratifying them, in examples, precepts, and promises, as Stapferus observes, (Theol. Polern. tom. iii. p.292.) Speaking of Mahomet's laws, he says, "The law, which he published was, above all others, accommodated not only to the opinions of men, but also to the depraved nature, manners, and innate vices of those nations, among whom he propagated it; nor did it require much more than external exercises, which, to a carnal man, are much more easy to be performed, than those spiritual exercises which the sacred pages prescribe. He allowed of revenge for injuries; of discarding wives for the slightest causes; of the addition of wives to wives, which must have served only as so many new provocatives to lust. At the same time he indulged himself in the greatest excess of promiscuous and base lasciviousness. He placed the true worship of God in such external ceremonies, as have no tendency to promote true piety. In fine., the whole of that religion which he instituted, was adapted to no other end, than the shedding of human blood."

§ 5. This religion is particularly adapted to the luxurious and sensual disposition. Christianity was extremely contrary to the most established and darling notions of the world; whereas Mahomet accommodated his doctrines to all such notions as were most pleasing at that time, among the heathen, Arabians, Jews, and the several most prevailing sects of Christians; as Stapferus observes:

"Mahomet retained many of the opinions of the ancient Arabians; he mixed his doctrine with the fables of the Jews, and retained many of the ceremonies of the other religions prevalent at that time. The religion of Mahomet favoured the prejudices of the Jews and of the heathens; and was suited to the desires of the flesh, and to the allurements of the world. But the religion which Christ taught, did not, in the least instance, favour the depraved affections of men, and the indulgence of the flesh; but was diametrically opposed to them: nor was it suited to the prejudices of either Jews or Gentiles; but it was plainly contrary to the preconceived opinions of men. Whence the apostles, in preaching this religion, immediately opposed both the religion of the Jews and the Gentiles." (Ibid. p.340.) Christianity was propagated under the most violent, universal, and cruel persecution of all the powers of the world. Mahometanism was not so; it never made its way any where, in any remarkable degree, against persecution.

§ 6. The difference will appear great, if we consider the time when each of these were propagated. Christianity was propagated at a time when human learning and science was at its greatest height in the world. But Mahometanism was broached and propagated in ages of great darkness, after learning had exceedingly decayed, and was almost extinguished in the world.

§ 7. The difference will farther appear, if we consider the places front whence these religions were propagated. -- Christianity was first begun in a place of great light, the greatest light with regard to religious knowledge then known, and in a very public part of the globe; whither resorted innumerable multitudes of people three times every year, from almost all parts of the then known world. And beside the vast resort of Jews and proselytes thither, it was a country that was at that time under the inspection and government of the Romans, where they had a governor, and other public officers, constantly residing. It was propagated especially from Jerusalem, the chief city in that country, and one of the greatest and most public cities in the world; and, indeed, all things considered, was next to Rome itself, nay, in some respects, even far beyond Rome. And the nations among whom it was first propagated after the Jews, were -- not the more ignorant and barbarous, but -- the most knowing and learned in the world; as particularly the Greeks and Romans. And the cities where it was very early received, and from whence it was promulgated to other parts, were the greatest, most public, and polite; such as Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, Corinth, Athens, and Rome: and some of these were the greatest seats of learning and philosophy on earth. -- Whereas Mahometanism was broached in a dark corner of the earth, Arabia; and the people among whom it first gained strength, who sent out armies to propagate it to the rest of the world, were an ignorant and barbarous sort of people; such as the Saracens and Turks, who originated from Scythia.

§ 8. The difference appears in the means and method of propagation. Christianity was propagated by light, instruction and knowledge, reasoning and inquiry. These things were encouraged by the gospel; and by these means the gospel prevailed. But Mahometanism, was not propagated by light and instruction, but by darkness; not by encouraging reasoning and search, but by discouraging knowledge and learning; by shutting out those things, and forbidding inquiry; and so, in short, by blinding, the eyes of mankind. -- It was propagated by the power of the sword also; by potent sultans, absolute tyrants, and mighty armies. Christianity was propagated by the weakest of men, unarmed with anything but meekness, humility, love, miracles, clear evidence, most virtuous, holy, and amiable examples, and the power and favour of eminent virtue, joined with assured belief of the truth, with self-denial and suffering for truth and holiness. By such weapons as these was it propagated against the power, authority, wealth, and armour of the world: against the greatest potentates, most absolute and cruel tyrants, their most crafty counsels, and greatest strength, utmost rage and cruelty, and determined resolutions to put a stop to it. It was propagated against all the strength of the strongest empire that ever was in the world.

§ 9. One principal way wherein the propagation of Christianity is a proof of its truth, consists in its being an evidence of the facts that are the foundation of it. Christianity is built on certain great and wonderful visible facts; such as, Christ’s resurrection from the dead, and the great and innumerable miracles wrought by him and his apostles, and other his followers, in Judea and many parts of the world. -- These facts were always referred to, as the foundation of the whole; and Christianity always pretended to be built on them. That Christianity, which, in effect, is no other than the belief of these facts, should be extensively propagated in and near the places and time when the facts were said to be wrought; when and where there was so much opportunity and advantage to know the truth of the matter; is a great, standing, everlasting evidence of the truth of the facts. But as to Mahometanism, it pretends to no facts for its proof and foundation, but only Mahomet’s pretences to intercourse with heaven, and his success in rapine, murder, and violence.

-- Belief of sensible miracles, or public attestations of heaven to Mahomet's authority and doctrines, was no part of his religion -- and was not employed in its propagation.

§ 10. If we consider the propagation of Christianity as a doctrine or belief of wonderful divine facts, Mahometanism is not set up in opposition to it; because the Mahometan religion itself acknowledges the principal facts of Christianity, though it has no facts of its own to urge. And so Mahometanism rather confirms than weakens Christianity; and the propagation of Mahometanism itself may be considered as one thing belonging to the propagation of Christianity, and as a part of that propagation, in as far as it consists in a propagation of a professed belief of those facts. It is so far an instance of the propagation of that which is the foundation of Christianity, that it proves all the rest. The Alcoran owns Jesus to be a great prophet; "the messenger of God," (Surat. v. 84.) that he wrought miracles, healing a man blind from his birth, and the leprous, (Surat. v. 119.) also raising the dead; and that Jesus as born of Mary was himself a miracle, (Surat. xxiii. 52.) He often speaks of Jesus as the servant and messenger of God; (Surat. iv. 158. iii. 152. iv. 169, 170. v. 84.) Now, owning this, is in effect owning the whole. This is the foundation of the whole, and proves all the rest. It owns that Jesus was miraculously conceived and born; (Surat. iii. 47. xix. 20, 21.) and without sin. (Surat. iii. 36. xix. 19.) -- Mahomet owns Jesus, and ascribes the conception of Christ alone to the power of God, and the inflation of his Spirit. -- In Surat. xxi. 19. are these words, as the words of God: "And Mary was a chaste virgin, and We inspired her with Our Spirit, and set up her and her son as a miracle to all ages." -- He owned Jesus to be the Messiah foretold in the law and the prophets; Surat. iii. 45. "When the angels said, O Mary, certainly God declares to thee his own word; his name shall be Jesus Christ, the son of Mary:" Surat. xix. 29. Surat. iv. "Certainly Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, is the ambassador of God and his word." He owned Christ's ascension into heaven. "God raised him (Christ) to himself;" Surat. iv. 157. Concerning Christ's miracles, Mahomet says, Surat. iii. 45 v. 119. "God says, O Jesus, the son of Mary, I have strengthened thee by the Spirit of holiness; and thou shalt, by my leave, heal a man blind from his birth; and by my leave thou shalt raise the dead from their graves."

§ 11. In this respect the great propagation of the Mahometan religion is a confirmation of revealed religion -- and so of the Christian in particular, which alone can have any pretext to be a religion revealed by God -- as this is a great demonstration of the extreme darkness, blindness, weakness, childishness, folly, and madness of mankind in matters of religion, and shows how greatly they stand in need of a divine guide, and divine grace and strength for their help, such as the gospel reveals. And that this gross delusion has continued so long to so great an extent, shows how helpless mankind are, under ignorance and delusion in matters of religion; and what absolute need they have of extraordinary divine interposition for their relief. And besides, such a miserable, blind, helpless state of mankind, is also exactly agreeable to the representation made in the Christian revelation.

04.10. The Jewish nation have, from their very beginning, been a remarkable standing evidence

10: The Jewish nation have, from their very beginning, been a remarkable standing evidence of the truth of revealed religion

§ 1. WHEN every other nation under heaven had forsaken the true God, and was overwhelmed in heathenish darkness, the Jews had among them the knowledge and worship of the true God, and rational and true notions of his being, attributes, and works; of his relation to mankind, our dependence upon him, and the worship and regards due him. This was upheld among them alone, for so many ages, to the coming of Christ; while they were surrounded on every side with nations vastly differing from them, and the worst of idolaters. The whole world beside themselves had forgotten the true God, and forsaken his worship, and were all the while involved in gross heathenism. They lived in the midst of the most frequented and most populous parts of the world. They did not live separated from the rest of the world, as in an island or a peninsula; nor yet as divided from others by vast deserts, or impassable mountains; but on the continent, in the midst of the habitable world, with populous countries adjoining to them almost on every side. Those nations, who were their next neighbours on every side, were steadfastly gross pagans, and some of the most barbarous idolaters.

§ 2. They were not a nation that studied philosophy; they had no schools among them under the care of philosophers, who instructed their pupils in human science; yet they had most apparently far better, more sublime, and purer, notions of God and religion, of man’s duty, and of divine things in general, than the best of the heathen philosophers. Nor do they seem to have been a people any way remarkably distinguished from other nations, by their genius and natural abilities. They were a comparatively small people, not a great empire; not a vast and potent commonwealth.

§ 3. Such changes and revolutions frequently came to pass in their nation, and such was their peculiar state from time to time, that they were exceedingly liable to be corrupted and overrun with heathenish notions, and the customs of idolatrous nations, and to grow into a conformity to the rest of the world in that respect. They were above two hundred years in Egypt, which may be looked upon as the second nation, if not the first, for being the fountain of idolatry. -- And they lived there under circumstances tending the most to their being corrupted with idolatry, and brought to a conformity with the Egyptians in that respect, of any that can be imagined; especially on these accounts: -- they were there in the beginning and rise of their nation. There the nation had its birth. It grew from one family of about seventy persons, with the father of the whole family at the head of it, to be more than a million of people, yea probably (reckoning male and female) about two millions. An they lived there, not separate and distinct from the Egyptians; but had continual intercourse with them. Yea, they dwelt there as inferiors, in subjection to the Egyptians; their slaves: and the Egyptians who had daily concern with them, were their masters.

§ 4. After they came into the land of Canaan, they for several ages dwelt there with the remains of the ancient heathen inhabitants, who were so numerous and strong, as sometimes to overcome and keep them long in subjection; which also, from time to time, their idolatrous neighbours did. -- And after they had lived long in the land ten of their tribes were carried away into final captivity, and heathen inhabitants planted in their stead: by which the religion of the remaining two tribes was the more exposed. At last these remaining two tribes, with the Levites, and all that were left of the ten tribes who had mixed with them, were carried away into Babylon, the chief city of Chaldea, the country that above all in the world (at least, excepting Egypt) was the fountain of idolatry; there they dwelt during the time of one generation. So that before any of them returned, the body of the people were a new generation, born and brought up in that land of darkness, amongst idolaters, their superiors and masters, and most of them the most honorable men that were then in the world; and a great part, perhaps the greater part, of the nation never returned but continued dispersed in heathen countries till Christ's coming. As to the nation in general, those in Canaan and those out of it were in subjection to the three successive heathen monarchies, the Persian, Grecian, and Roman; and heathen people belonging to each of those empires, often swarmed in their country

§ 5. The people seemed to be, from their very beginning till the Babylonish captivity, exceedingly prone to idolatry; were fond, in that respect, of the customs of those heathen neighbours, and were apt to think it honourable to be like the rest of the nations, and a disgrace to be singular. This appears in that they actually oftentimes apostatized to idolatry, embraced the worship of the heathen gods, and neglected the worship of the true God; and continued sometimes for a long time in their conformity to their heathen neighbours. Yet they were wonderfully reclaimed from time to time; so that they were never suffered finally to apostatize, as all other nations in the world had done, nor were left in their apostacy for so long a space of time.

§ 6. All is the more remarkable, in that not only the true God and his spiritual worship are so infinitely diverse from the gods and religion of the heathens; but the external institutions and rites of worship observed among the Jews, and the law of their worship and religion, were remarkably diverse and repugnant to the religious rites of their heathen neighbours. They were exceedingly opposite to the rights of the Egyptians, among whom they lived so long, and among whom they first became a nation. So were they also to the rites of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, of the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites &c.

§ 7. The Jews may be considered as a remarkable evidence of the truth of revealed religion, in that they were preserved so long a time a distinct nation from all others, even since their father Jacob's time, till this day; being neither destroyed, nor abolished, nor lost by mixing with other nations. Jacob himself was exposed to be destroyed by his brother Esau, before he was married. His family were greatly exposed to destruction, at least as to any permanent distinction from other people, when Laban pursued after him, with a design probably to kill him, and to bring back his wives and children into Padan-aram, and to keep them there; or, at least, by some means to carry back his family, and to prevent their ever going to Canaan. He and his family were in imminent danger of being destroyed when Esau came out against him with four hundred men. His family were greatly exposed to danger by the inhabitants of Canaan, when provoked by his sons destroying the Shechemites. A series of wonderful and miraculous providences respecting Joseph, were the means of preserving the family, without which they would probably either have

perished by the famine, or, in the time of that famine, have wandered away from Canaan, in such obscurity, and under such disadvantages, that they would likely have never returned any more to Canaan; and so the family would have been broken up.

§ 8. In Egypt they were greatly exposed to be destroyed, when Pharaoh set himself to effect their destruction by drowning all the males. When they had continued so long in Egypt, under such abject circumstances; it could be owing to nothing but a series of the greatest miracles, that ever they were separated from that people and land, so as to return again to dwell by themselves, to be kept a distinct nation. They were in imminent danger of being swallowed up by Pharaoh and his host at the Red sea; or of receiving such a blow, as wholly to break up the design of their proceeding to Canaan to live there. They were exposed to suffer that which would have prevented their proceeding, when the Amalekites met them, and fought with them.

§ 9. Nothing but a course of most astonishing miracles for forty years could have prevented their perishing in the wilderness, or being obliged to go back again into Egypt, and suffering captivity, dispersion, and ruin by the nations that dwelt around that wilderness. -- They were greatly exposed to be ruined as a people, by the opposition of the Moabites, Midianites, Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan. -- That ever they got the possession of Canaan, which was then held by many nations greater and stronger than they, was owing to a course of great miracles, without the intervention of which they must have perished as a people.

§ 10. After they had obtained the possession of the land, they were often greatly exposed to be utterly ruined in the time of the judges, when their enemies in those parts, who seemed to have an exceeding great hatred of them, prevailed against and had the mastery of them. It could be owing to nothing but the special providence of God, that those enemies did not improve the advantages they had in their hands, utterly to destroy them, or at least to drive or carry them captive out of that land; particularly the provoked Canaanites, before the deliverance by Deborah and Barak; the Midianites and the people of the East, before the deliverance by Gideon; and after them the Philistines.

§ 11. Afterwards, in the time of the kings, there were many efforts of the enemies of Israel utterly to destroy the whole nation, to cut them off from being a people, and to blot out their very name from under heaven, agreeably to Psalms 83:3-8. "They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent. They are confederate against thee. The tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmalites, of Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre: Assur also is joined with them; they have holpen the children of Lot." -- In David’s time there was such a mighty combination of enemies against them, and so great a force was raised, that, one would think, might have been sufficient to swallow up the nation. -- After Solomon’s time, the nation was greatly weakened, and so much the more exposed to ruin, by their division into two kingdoms, often contending, and seldom in amity the one with the other. -- The nation was greatly exposed in Rehoboam’s time to he swallowed up by Shishak king of Egypt; in Asa’s time, by the vast army of the Ethiopians; and again, by the mighty army of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, in Jehoshaphat’s time, 2 Chronicles 20:1-37. When the kings of Assyria overran and utterly destroyed the ten tribes, it was a wonder that the two tribes were

spared, and the people were greatly exposed to be finally ruined by Sennacherib's army, who intended nothing else.

§ 12. When the people were carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and the whole land laid utterly waste; it was a wonder that this did not prove an entire end to them as a people. It was a wonder they were kept distinct in their captivity; that then they were delivered; and that after they had been in captivity so long, till those that had formerly lived in Canaan were generally dead, and a new generation born in Chaldea was risen up, they should be brought back, and again settled in their own land, and established as a people there. It was a wonder that the land was vacant for them; and a wonder that they were not hindered in their design of resettling there, by the mighty opposition made to it by the Samaritans.

§ 13. The people were marvellously preserved from being blotted out from under heaven by Haman, in the time of Esther and Mordecai. They were wonderfully preserved in Antiochus's time, who was earnestly set on their utter destruction as a people; and it may be observed in general concerning them, during the time of the Old Testament, that there was no nation whatsoever against whom the nations in general were at such enmity, as the nation of the Jews; and they were, on this account, much more likely to be destroyed than any other nation.

§ 14. They lived in a part of the world where they were more exposed to be overrun by other nations, and so to be by them either trodden down, or torn away and scattered abroad in the earth, than had they dwelt in any other part; living as it were in the midst of the earth, betwixt three great continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Their land lay in the very road or thoroughfare between Asia and Africa; between Egypt and the great Eastern and Northern kingdoms, which for many ages were the greatest, in most potent, and active kingdoms in the world. It seems those other nations thereabout were all destroyed from being a people, before Christ's time: as the Midianites, the Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, the seven nations of Canaan, and the Philistines.

§ 15. It is remarkable, concerning a great part of the time of the Old Testament, viz. from the Babylonish captivity till Christ, that a great part of the Jews lived dispersed amongst other nations: and both those who were thus dispersed, and those that lived in their own land, were all that time in the power of the heathen nations of the four monarchies.

§ 16. With respect to the time since Christ, their preservation as a distinct nation has, in many respects, been still more remarkable. It is wonderful, that what happened in the time of Titus Vespasian, when the greater part of the nation was destroyed, and the rest dispersed all over the world in such wretched circumstances, did not prove their utter destruction as a people. And the calamities that happened to the remnant soon afterwards, made their continuance as a distinct people yet more surprising. For within half a century after their destruction by Titus, in the reign of Trajan and Adrian, the nation in general every where rose in rebellion against the Romans; and were finally every where beaten; so that in these wars the Jews had a thousand cities and fortresses destroyed, with the slaughter of about five hundred and eighty thousand men. What are left of this people have ever since remained in a total dispersion over all the world, mixed every where with other people, without any thing like a government or civil community of their own, and often extremely harassed by other nations; though still they remain a clear and perfectly distinct nation from all other people.

Chapter 52

04.11. Subject II: Observations Concerning the Mysteries of Scripture

Subject II: Observations Concerning the Mysteries of Scripture

§ 1. WHEN we seek for any thing in the dark by so low a faculty of discerning as the sense of feeling, or by the sense of seeing with a dim light, sometimes we cannot find it; though it be there, it seems to us to be impossible that it should be. But yet, when a clear light comes to shine into the place, and we discern by a better faculty, or the same faculty in a clearer manner, the thing appears very plain to us. So, doubtless, many truths will hereafter appear plain, when we come to look on them by the bright light of heaven, that now are involved in mystery and darkness.

§ 2. How are we ready to trust to the determinations of one, universally reputed a man of great genius, of vast penetration and insight into things, if he be positive in any thing that appears to us very mysterious, and is quite contrary to what we thought ourselves clear and certain in before! How are we ready in such a case to suspect ourselves; especially if it be a matter wherein he has been very much versed; has had much more occasion to look into it than we; and has been under greater advantages to know the truth! How much more still, if one should be positive in it, as a thing he had clearly and undoubtedly seen to be true, if he were still of ten times greater genius, and of a more penetrating insight into things, than any that ever have appeared? And, in matters of fact, if some person whom we had long known, one of great judgment and discretion, justice, integrity, and fidelity, and had always been universally so reputed by others, should declare to us, that he had seen and known that to be true which appeared to us very strange and mysterious, and concerning which we could not see how it was possible; how, in such a case, should we be ready almost to suspect our own faculties, and to give credit to such a testimony, in that which, if he had not positively asserted it, and persisted in it, we should have looked upon as perfectly incredible, and absurd to be supposed!

§: 3. From that text, John 3:12. "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" several things are manifest concerning mysteries in religion. (1.) That there are things contained in those doctrines which Christ came into the world to teach, which are not only so far above human comprehension, that men cannot easily apprehend all that is to be understood concerning them; but which are difficult to be received by the judgment or belief; "How shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" difficult, upon the same account that the doctrine of the new birth was difficult to Nicodemus, because it was so strange, and seemingly impossible. (2.) We may from the words infer, that the more persons are in themselves, and in their own nature, above us; the more the doctrines or truths concerning them are mysterious to us, above our comprehension, and difficult to our belief; the more do those things that are really true concerning them, contain seeming inconsistencies and impossibilities. For Christ, in the preceding verses, had been speaking of something that is true concerning man, being of the same nature, an inhabitant of the same world, with ourselves; which, therefore, Christ calls an earthly thing. And this seemed very mysterious and impossible, and to contain great

seeming inconsistencies. "How can a man be born when he is old?" This seemed to be a contradiction. And after Christ had somewhat explained himself, still the doctrine seemed strange and impossible; John 3:9. "How can these things be?" Nicodemus still looked upon it as incredible, and, on that account, did not believe it at that time, as is implied in these words of Christ; "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not." But Christ here plainly signifies, that he had other truths to teach that were not about man, an earthly inhabitant, but about a person vastly above men, even about himself who is from heaven, and in heaven, as in the next verse: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; even the Son of man which is in heaven." Which, therefore, it would be much more difficult to men's understanding and judgment, seeming to contain greater impossibilities and inconsistencies; as he then proceeds immediately to declare him a heavenly thing, as he calls it, viz. that Christ, a heavenly and divine person should die; John 3:14-15. Such mysterious doctrine, so strange and seemingly inconsistent and impossible, that a divine person should die, is more strange than that men should be born again. Hence, when divines argue, from the mysterious nature of many things here below with which we are daily conversant, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose but that there should be things concerning God which are much more mysterious; and that, therefore, it is unreasonable to object against the truth of the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.; they argue justly, because they argue as Christ argued.

§: 4. The wiser heathens were sensible that the things of the gods are so high above us, that what appertains to them should appear exceedingly mysterious and wonderful to us; and that it is therefore unreasonable to disbelieve what we are taught concerning them on that account. Ibis is fully expressed by Pythagoras; viz. "Concerning the gods, disbelieve nothing wonderful, nor yet concerning divine things. This, says Jamblicus, declareth the superlative excellency of God instructing us, and puts us in mind, that we ought not to estimate the divine power by our own judgment. The Pythagoreans stretched this rule beyond the line of divine revelation, to the belief of every oriental tradition." Gale's Court of the Gentiles, p. 2. b. 2. c. 8. 190.

§: 5. It is not necessary that persons should have clear ideas of the subject of a proposition, in order to be rationally convinced of the truth of the proposition. There are many truths, of which mathematicians are convinced by strict demonstration, concerning many kinds of quantities, as, surd quantities and fluxions; but concerning which they have no clear ideas.

§: 6. Supposing that mankind in general were a species of far less capacity than they are; so much less, that, when men are come to full ripeness of judgment and capacity, they arrived no higher than that degree to which children generally arrive at seven years of age; and supposing a revelation to be made to mankind, in such a state and degree of capacity, of many such propositions in philosophy as are now looked upon as undoubted truths; and let us suppose, at the same time, the same degree of pride and self-confidence as there is now; what cavilling and objecting would there be! Or, supposing a revelation of these philosophical truths had been made to mankind, with their present degree of natural capacity, in some ancient generation -- suppose that which was in Joshua's time -- in that degreed of acquired knowledge and learning which the world had arrived at then, how incredible those truths have seemed!

§: 7. If things, which fact and experience make certain such as the miseries infants are sometimes the subjects of in this world, had been exhibited only in a revelation of things in an unseen state,

they would be as much disputed as the Trinity and other mysteries revealed in the Bible.

§: 8. There is nothing impossible or absurd in the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ. If God can join a body and a rational soul together, which are of natures so heterogeneous and opposite, that they cannot, of themselves, act one upon another; may he not be able to join two spirits together, which are of natures more similar? And, if so, he may, for ought we know to the contrary, join the soul or spirit of a man to himself. Had reason been so clear in it, that God cannot be incarnate, as many pretend, it could never have such a notion to gain ground and possess the minds of so many nations: nay, and of Julian himself, who says, that "Jupiter begat Esculapius out of his own proper substance and sent him down to Epidauraus, to heal the distempers of mankind." Reason did not hinder Spinosa, Blount, and many other modern philosophers, from asserting that God may have a body; or rather, that the universe, or the matter of the universe, is God. Many nations believed the incarnation of Jupiter himself. Reason, instead of being, utterly averse to the notion of a divine incarnation, hath easily enough admitted that notion, and suffered it to pass, almost without contradiction, among the most philosophical nations of the world.

§: 9. "In thinking of God’s raising so many myriads of spirits, and such prodigious masses of matter, out of nothing, we are lost and astonished, as much as in the contemplation of the Trinity. We can follow God but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and matter of amazement to us. How, then, shall we comprehend himself? How shall we understand his nature, or account for his actions? In that he contains what is infinitely more inconceivable than all the wonders of his creation put together." Deism Revealed, edit. 2. vol. ii. p. 93, 94.

Those who deny the Trinity, because of its mysteriousness and seeming inconsistence, yet, generally, own God’s certain prescience of men’s free actions, which they suppose to be free in such a sense, as not to be necessary. So we may do, or may not do, that which God certainly foresees. "They also hold, that such a freedom without necessity, is necessary to morality; and that virtue and goodness consists in any one’s doing good when he might do evil. And yet they suppose, that God acts by the eternal law of nature and reason, and that it is impossible that he should transgress that law, and do evil; because that would be a contradiction to his own nature, which is infinitely and unchangeably virtuous. Now this seems a flat contradiction. To say that the infinite goodness of God’s nature makes it utterly impossible for God to do evil, is exactly the same as to say, he is under a natural necessity not to do evil. And to say he is morally free, is to say that he may do evil. Therefore the necessity and freedom in this case being both moral, the contradiction is flat and plain; and amounts to this, that God, in respect to good and evil actions, is both a necessary and free agent. Dr. Clark, in his treatise on the Attributes, labours to get clear of this contradiction upon the principles of liberty, but without success; and leaves it just where all men, who hold the same principles, must be forced to leave it. Therefore, they hold such mysteries, in respect to Deity, that are even harder to be conceived of, or properly expressed and explained, than the doctrine of the Trinity.

"When we talk of God, who is infinite and incomprehensible, it is natural to run into notions and terms which it is impossible for us to reconcile. And in lower matters, that are more within our knowledge and comprehension, we shall not be able to keep ourselves clear of them. To say that a curve line, setting out from a point within a hair’s breadth of a right line, shall run towards that

right line as swift as thought, and yet never be able to touch it, seems contrary to common sense, and were it not clearly demonstrated in the conchoid of Nicomedes, could never be believed. Matter is infinitely divisible; and therefore, a cubical inch of gold may be divided into an infinity of parts; and there can be no number greater than that which contains an infinity. Yet another cubical inch of gold may be infinitely divided also; and therefore, the parts of both cubes must be more numerous than the parts of one only. Here is a palpable contrariety of ideas, and a flat contradiction of terms. We are confounded and lost in the consideration of infinites; and surely, most of all, in the consideration of that Infinite of infinites. We justly admire that saying of the philosopher, that God is a Being whose centre is every where, and circumference nowhere, as one of the noblest and most exalted flights of human understanding; and yet, not only the terms are absurd and contradictory, but the very ideas that constitute it, when considered attentively, are repugnant to one another. Space and duration are mysterious abysses, in which our thoughts are confounded with demonstrable propositions, to all sense and reason flatly contradictory to one another. Any two points of time, though never so distant, are exactly in the middle of eternity. The remotest points of space that can be imagined or supposed, are each of them precisely in the centre of infinite space." Deism Revealed, vol. ii. p. 109-111.

Here might have been added the mysteries of God’s eternal duration, it being without succession, present, before and after, all at once: Vitae interminabilis tota simul et perfecta possessio.

§: 10. To reject every thing but what can we can first see to be agreeable to our reason; tends, by degrees, to bring every thing relating not only to revealed religion, but even to natural religion, into doubt; to make all its doctrines appear with dim evidence, like a shadow, or the ideas of a dream, till they are all neglected as worthy of no regard. It tends to make men doubt of the several attributes of God, and so, in every respect, to doubt what kind of being God is; and to make men doubt about the forgiveness of sin, and about the duties of religion, prayer and giving thanks, social worship, &c. It will tend, at last, to make men esteem the science of religion as of no value, and so totally neglect it; and from step to step it will lead to scepticism, atheism, and at length to barbarity.

§: 11. Concerning common sense, it is to be observed, that common inclination, or the common dictates of inclination, are often called common sense. When any thing is shocking to the common dispositions or inclinations of men, that is called a contradicting of common sense. So, the doctrine of the extreme and everlasting torments of hell, being contrary to men’s common folly and stupidity, is often called contrary to common sense. Men, through stupidity, are insensible of the great evil of sin; and so the punishment of sin threatened in the word of God disagrees with this insensibility, and it is said to be contradictory to common sense. In this case, that turn of mind which arises from a wicked disposition, goes for common sense.

"We ought never to deny, because we cannot conceive. If this were not so, then a man born blind would reason right, when he forms this syllogism, ’We know the figure of bodies only by handling them; but it is impossible to handle them at a great distance; therefore, it is impossible to know the figure of far distant bodies.’ To undeceive the blind man, we may prove to him that this is so, from the concurrent testimony of all who surround him. But we can never make him perceive how this is so. It is therefore a fundamental maxim in all true philosophy, that many things may be incomprehensible, and yet demonstrable; that though seeing clearly be a sufficient reason for

affirming, yet, not seeing at all, can never be a reason for denying." Ramsay's Philosophical Principles of Religion, vol. i. p. 22, 23.

§: 12. One method used to explode every thing in religion that is in the least difficult to the understanding, is to ridicule all distinctions in religion. The unreasonableness of this may appear from what Mr. Locke observes concerning judgment. Hum. Underst. book ii. chap. 2. "Accurately discriminating ideas one from another, is of that consequence to the other knowledge of the mind, that, so far as this faculty is in itself dull, or not rightly made use of, for distinguishing one thing from another, so far our notions are confused, and our reason and judgment disturbed or misled. If in having ideas in the memory ready at hand, consists quickness of parts; in this, of having them unconfused, and being able nicely to distinguish one thing from another, where there is but the least difference, consists in a great measure the exactness of judgment, and clearness of reason, which is to be observed in one man above another. Judgment lies in separating carefully one from another ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another." So Dr. Turnbull, in his Principles of Moral Philosophy, part i. chap. 3. p. 94. "Judgment is rightly said to lie in nicely distinguishing the disagreements and variances or differences of ideas; those especially which lie more remote from common observation, and are not generally adverted to. The man of judgment or discretion (for so discretion properly signifies) may be defined to be one who has a particular aptitude to descry differences of all kinds between objects, even the most hidden and remote from vulgar eyes."

§: 13. If any respect to the Divine Being is of importance, then speculative points are of importance; for the only way whereby we know what he is, is by speculation. -- If our doctrines concerning him are not right, it will not be that Being, but some other, that we have respect for. So it may be said concerning our respect for Christ. If our doctrines concerning him, concerning his divinity, for instance, are false, we have not respect for the Christ of whom the Scriptures speak, but for an imaginary person, infinitely diverse. When it is said by some, that the only fundamental article of faith is, that Jesus is the Messiah; if thereby be meant, that a person called by that name, or that lived at such a time or place, was the Messiah, that name not implying any properties or qualities of his person, the doctrine is exceedingly unreasonable; for surely the name and the place are not of so great importance as some other things essential in his person, and have not so great concern in the identity of the object of our ideas and respect, as the person the gospel reveals. It is one great reason why speculative points are thought to be of so little importance, that the modern religion consists so little in respect to the Divine Being, and almost wholly in benevolence to men.

§: 14. Concerning what is often said by some, that all things necessary to salvation are plain and clear, let us consider how, and in what sense, this is true, and in what sense it is not true. 1st, It is true, that all things necessary to salvation are clearly and plainly revealed. But it does not follow, that they shall appear to be plainly revealed to all men. No divine thing can have evidence sufficient to appear evident to all men, however great their prejudices, and however perverse their dispositions. 2dly, If thereby is meant, that all things necessary to be believed are easily comprehended, there is no reason in such an assertion, nor is it true.

Some late writers insist, that, for a thing to be revealed, and yet remain mysterious, is a contradiction; that it is as much to say, a thing is revealed, and yet hid. I answer: The thing

revealed is the truth of the doctrine; so that the truth of it no longer remains hid, though many things concerning the manner may be so. Yet many things concerning the nature of the things revealed may be clear, though many other things concerning their nature may remain hid. God requires us to understand no more than is intelligibly revealed. That which is not distinctly revealed, we are not required distinctly to understand. It may be necessary for us to know a thing in part, and yet not necessary to know it perfectly.

§: 15. The importance of all Christian doctrines whatsoever, will naturally be denied, in consequence of denying that one great doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction to divine justice, and maintaining those doctrines that establish men's own righteousness, as that on which, and for which, they are accepted of God. For that great Christian doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, his vicarious sufferings and righteousness, by which he offered an infinite price to God for our pardon and acceptance to eternal favour and happiness, is that to which all evangelical doctrines, all doctrines beside the truths of natural religion, have relation; and they are of little importance, comparatively, any other way, than as they have respect to that. This is, as it were, the centre and hinge of all doctrines of pure revelation.

§: 16. Indeed, the papists, who are very far from having such a notion of that evangelical faith, which is the special condition of salvation in opposition to works, and have forsaken the evangelical notion of true saving religion, yet with fiery zeal, insist on the profession of a great number of doctrines, and several of the doctrines of pure revelation, as the Trinity, &c. But this in them flows not from any regard to their influence in internal saving religion, but from quite another view, i. e. to uphold their tyranny. These are the doctrines which have been handed down among them by their church from ancient tradition; and, to maintain the credit of the infallibility, and divine authority and dominion, of their hierarchy over men's faith, they must be zealous against any that presume to deny Christ's doctrines, because they look upon it as an infringement on the high authority they claim. And some protestants have a zeal for doctrines from like views; doctrines indeed for which they have no great value, in themselves considered.

§: 17. That it is not alone sufficient to believe this one article, that a person of the name of Jesus came from God to reveal his will to man, without knowing or determining what he was, or concerning his nature and qualities, is evident from this, that it is often spoken of as necessary to know Christ. It is said, "This is eternal life, to know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

§: 18. There are two things especially that make modern fashionable divines look on doctrines of revealed religion of little importance. One is, their mistake about the conditions of salvation; another is, their mistake about the nature of true virtue, placing it chiefly, and most essentially, in benevolence to men, and so little in respect to God and Christ. If Christian virtue consists very much in a proper respect to Christ, then certainty it is of great importance to know what sort of person he is, at least, as to that particular wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists, which is surely his divinity, if he be a divine person. Another thing on which a proper respect to him depends, is his relation to us, and our dependence upon him; which surely chiefly depends on his satisfaction and merits for us, if he has satisfied and merited for us. The reasons of grounds of the love and honour to Christ required of us, consist chiefly in two things: (1.) In what he is: and, (2.) In what he has done for us. -- Therefore, with regard to the latter, it concerns us greatly to know, at least as to the principal things, what they are. And if he has satisfied for our sins; if he has suffered

in our stead; if he has truly purchased eternal life and happiness for us; if he has redeemed us from an extremely sinful, miserable, helpless state, a state wherein we deserved no mercy, but eternal misery; then these are principal things.

Another reason why doctrines are thought to be of little importance, is a notion of sincerity wherein true virtue consists, as what may be prior to any means of it that God grants; as if it was what every man had in his power, antecedently to all means; and so the means are looked upon as of little importance. But the absurdity of this may be easily manifested. If it be independent of all means, then it may be independent of natural information, or of the truths of the light of nature, as well as of revealed religion; and men may sincerely regard and honour they know not what. The truths of natural religion, wherein Christians differ from the most ignorant, birutish idolaters, the most savage and cruel of the heathen nations, may be of little importance. And the reason why they have this notion of sincerity antecedent to means, and so independent on means, is, that they have a notion that sincerity is independent on God, any otherwise than as they depend on him for their creation. They conceive it to be independent on his sovereign will and pleasure. If they were sensible that they depend on God to give it according to his pleasure, it would be easy and natural to acknowledge, that God gives it in his own way, and by his own means.

§: 19. If any article of faith at all concerning Jesus Christ be of importance, it must be of importance to know or believe something concerning his person; what sort of a person or being he was. And if a thing concerning him be of importance to be known and believed, it must be something wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists; for nothing can be of importance to be known or believed about him, but in order to some regard or respect of heart. But most certainly, if any thing of his excellency and dignity be of importance to be known or believed, it must be of importance at least to know so much about him, as to know whether he be God or a mere creature; for herein lies the greatest difference, as to dignity, that can possibly be. This difference is infinite. If it be of importance to know how worthy he is, then it doubtless is of importance that we should not be ignorant of, and deny, as it were, all his dignity, or so much of it, that what remains shall be absolutely as nothing to that which is denied. It is of importance that we love Christ, or have respect to him as one that is excellent, and worthy of esteem and love. The apostle says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha." And doubtless, true love to Christ is in some respect suitable to the worthiness and excellency of his person. -- Therefore it is of importance to believe, and not to deny, those doctrines which exhibit his worthiness. It is of importance that we do not in effect deny the whole of his worthiness.

§: 20. How many things were believed by the ancient philosophers about divine matters, even the most rational of them, more mysterious than the doctrine of the Trinity, chiefly because such things were handed to them by the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Chaldeans, or Persians, or on the authority of some great master! Yet these things were imbibed without much difficulty, the incomprehensibleness of the doctrines being no objection to their receiving them.

§: 21. There are things evidently true concerning the nature of our own souls, that seem strange paradoxes, and are seeming contradictions; as, that our souls are in no place, and yet have a being; or, if they are supposed to be in a place, that yet they are not confined to place, and limited to certain space; or, if they be, that they are not of a certain figure; or, if they are figurative, that their properties, faculties, and acts, should or should not be so too.

§: 22. If many things we all see and know of the mortality of mankind, the extreme sufferings of infants, and other things innumerable in the state of the world of mankind, were only matter of doctrine which we had no notice of any other way than by revelation, and not by fact and experience; have we not reason to think, from what we see of the temper of this age, that they would be exceedingly quarrelled with, objected mightily against, as inconsistent with God's moral perfections, not tending to amiable ideas of the Godhead, &c.?

§: 23. The definition of a mystery, according to Stapferus, Theol. Polem. p. 263, and 858. is this: A mystery is a religious doctrine, which must be made known by immediate revelation, and cannot be known and demonstrated from the principles of reason, but is above reason, and which in this whole universe has nothing like itself, but differs from all those truths which we discover in this system of the world. -- (Ibid. p. 859.) It appears from this definition, that whatever is known by divine revelation, and is not certain from the principles of reason, is a mystery; otherwise it could not be said to be revealed. Mysteries are the first things which we conceive concerning revelation; for no revelation can be conceived without mysteries, and therefore they constitute the sum and essence of revelation.

§: 24. It is to be observed, that we ought to distinguish between those things which were written in the sacred books by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and those which were only committed to writing by the direction of the Holy Spirit. To the former class belong all the mysteries of salvation, or all those things which respect the means of our deliverance taught in the gospel, which could not be known from the principles of reason, and therefore must be revealed. But to the other class those things belong, which either are already known from natural religion, but are of service to inculcate duty on man, and to demonstrate the necessity of revealed means of salvation; or are histories, useful to illustrate and to assure us of the doctrines revealed, and which point out the various degrees of revelation, the different dispensations of salvation, and the various modes of governing the church of God; all which are necessary to be known in the further explanation of mysteries.

§: 25. Mysteries constitute the criterion of divine revelation: so absurdly do they act, who allow a revelation, and deny mysteries; or deny revelation for this reason, that it contains mysteries. What the sum and essence of revealed religion are, is plain from the end of it, which is to point out to sinful man the means of obtaining salvation, and of recovering the divine favour. But this is, that Jesus Christ is the only and most perfect cause of salvation, to be received by a true faith. This doctrine, however, is a mystery of godliness manifestly great; 1 Timothy 3:16. And thus that great mystery constitutes the sum and essence of revelation. The essence of revealed religion consists in this, that men by a true faith receive this doctrine, which the apostle calls a mystery manifestly great. Therefore, the knowledge of the greatest mystery belongs to the very essence of the religion of a sinner. How absurd do many of the doctrines of mathematicians and astronomers appear to ignorant men, when they cannot see the reason of those doctrines, although they are most true and evident, so that not the least doubt concerning them can remain in the mind of a thorough mathematician! (Ibid. tom. iii. p. 560.)

§: 26. Since, in religion, there are some primary truths, and others more remote, which are deduced from the former by reasoning, and so are secondary -- and these last may not be known, though the primary are known, but when once they are known they cannot be denied -- it follows,

that those articles which constitute religion, and so are fundamental, are to be distinguished into primary and secondary. The primary are those of which a man cannot be ignorant, consistently with true religion and his own salvation; and they are necessary with a necessity of means. The secondary are those of which a man may be ignorant, consistently with his resting upon the foundation of true religion, and with his own salvation; and those are necessary with a necessity of command. Therefore, to the same man, certain doctrines may be now fundamental, which were not fundamental to him before he knew them. (Ibid. tom. i. p. 524, .525.)

Joh. Chr. Kirchmejerus, in his Dissert. concerning fundamental articles, says, "They may be either reduced to fewer, or extended to more; as often one article may include the rest, and so all may be reduced to that one; and, on the other hand, that one, according to the various truths contained in it, may be divided into several. Therefore, authors do not contradict themselves, who reduce all fundamental articles to one; for they cannot well be determined by their number; because as many fundamental truths are contained in one fundamental truth, as there are essential properties belonging to the truths thus contained. Therefore the Holy Scripture often sums up all fundamental articles in one, as in John 17:3. 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' Sometimes it distinguishes them into several; as in 1 Timothy 1:5. 'Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.'" (Ibid. tom. i. p. 528.)

§: 27. On account of the various degrees of men's capacities, and the various circumstances of the times in which they live, one man may know truths which another cannot know. Whence it follows, that the very same articles are not fundamental to all men; but accordingly as revelation hath been more or less complete, according to the several dispensations under which men have lived, their various natural abilities, and their various modes and circumstances of living, different articles are, and have been, fundamental to different men. This is very plain from the different degrees of knowledge before and since the coming of Christ; for before his coming, many truths lay hid, which are now set in the most clear light: and the instance of the apostles, abundantly shows the truth of what I have now advanced; who, although they were already in a state of grace, and their salvation was secured, yet for some time were ignorant of the necessity of the sufferings and death of Christ and of the true nature of his kingdom. Whereas, he who now does not acknowledge the necessity of Christ's death, is by all means to be considered as in fundamental error. Therefore, as a man hath received of God greater or less natural abilities, so let the number of articles to which he shall give his assent be greater or smaller; and as revelation hath been made, or information hath been given, to a man, more clearly or obscurely, in the same proportion is more or less required of him. Therefore, in our own case, we ought to be cautious of even the smallest errors, and to aim at the highest degree of knowledge in divine truths. In the case of others, we ought to judge concerning them with the greatest prudence, mildness, and benevolence. Hence we see, that a certain precise number of articles, which shall be necessary and fundamental to every man, cannot be determined. (Ibid. p. 531.)

04.12. Subject III: Observations Concerning the Divinity of Christ ...

Subject III: Observations Concerning the Divinity of Christ and the Doctrine of the Trinity

§ 1. IF the temptation to the children of Israel was so great, to idolize the brazen serpent, a lifeless piece of brass, for the temporal salvation which some of their forefathers had by looking on it; how great would be their temptation to idolatry by worshipping Christ, if he were a mere creature, from whom mankind receive so great benefits! If that brazen serpent must be broken in pieces, to remove the temptation to idolatry, 2 Kings 18:4. shall so great a temptation be laid before the world to idolize a mere creature, by setting him forth in the manner that he is set forth in Scripture?

§ 2. Must Moses's body be concealed, lest the children of Israel should worship the remains of him whom God made the instrument of such great things? And shall another mere creature -- whom men, on account of the works he has done, are under infinitely greater temptation to worship -- be most openly and publicly exhibited, as exalted to heaven, seated at God's own right hand, made Head over all things, Ruler of the universe, &c. in the manner that Christ is? Was not this the temptation to all nations to idolatry, viz. That men had been distinguished as great conquerors, deliverers, and the instruments of great benefit? And shall God make a mere creature the instrument of so many greater benefits, and in such a manner as Christ is represented to be in the Scripture, without an infinitely greater temptation to idolatry?

§ 3. When the rich young man called Christ Good Master, not supposing him to be God, did Christ reject it, and reprove him for calling him so? He said, "There is none good but one, that is God;" meaning, that none other was possessed of goodness that was to be trusted. And yet, shall this same Jesus, if indeed not that God who only is to be called good, or trusted in as such, be called in Scripture, He that is holy; He that is true? the Amen, the faithful and true Witness? the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? the blessed and the only Potentate; the King of kings, and Lord of lords? the Lord of life, that has life in himself, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father? the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God? the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end? God, Jehovah; Elohim, the King of glory? Compare Isaiah 42:8; Psalms 77:18. Isaiah 45:20-21; &c. "They pray unto a God that cannot save -- Tell ye and bring them near; let them take counsel together - 'There is no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.'" Yet it is said of Christ, that "He is able to save unto the uttermost." Yea, the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as mighty to save; saving by his own arm, and by the greatness of his strength, Isaiah 13:1-6 compared with Revelation 14:15. And it is evident, that it is his character, in the most eminent manner, to be the Saviour of God's people; and that with respect to what is infinitely the highest and greatest work of salvation; the greatest deliverance from the most dreadful evil, from the greatest, worst, and strongest enemies, and bringing them to the greatest happiness. It follows, Isaiah 45:22. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Here it is spoken of as the great glory of God, and peculiar to him, that he is a universal Saviour, not only of the Jews, but of all nations. And this is the peculiar character of Jesus. He is the Saviour of all nations. The glory of calling and saving the

Gentiles, is represented as peculiarly belonging to him; so that he has this divine prerogative, which is spoken of here as belonging to the one only God, and to none else. And, which is more than all these very things are applied to Christ in the New Testament, Php 2:10-11. "That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and things under the earth." And the thing spoken of in the following verses, as the peculiar prerogative of God, in distinction from all other beings, as the only Saviour, viz. having righteousness, and being justified in him, are every where in the New Testament most eminently ascribed to Christ, as in a most special manner belonging to him.

§ 4. Being the Saviour of God's people, is every where in the Old Testament mentioned as the peculiar work of the Deity. The heathens are reproached for worshipping gods that could not save; and God says to the idolatrous Israelites, "Go to the gods whom ye have served, let them deliver you." See Isaiah 43:3, Isaiah 43:10-15 in which verses we have another clear demonstration of the divinity of Christ. Trusting is abundantly represented as a principal thing in that peculiar respect due to God alone, as of the essence of divine adoration due to no other than God. And yet, how is Christ represented as the peculiar object of the faith and trust of all God's people, of all nations, as having all-sufficiency for them? Trusting in any other is greatly condemned; is a thing, than which nothing is represented as more dangerous, provoking to God, and bringing his curse on man

§ 5. And how often is being the Redeemer of God's people spoken of as the peculiar character of the mighty God of Jacob, the First and Last, the Lord of hosts, the only God, the Holy One of Israel! (So Isaiah 41:14. Isaiah 43:14. Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 44:24. Isaiah 47:4. Isaiah 48:17. Isaiah 49:7, Isaiah 49:26. Isaiah 54:5 and Isaiah 40:16.) And it may be observed, that when God has this title of the Redeemer of Israel ascribed to him in those places it is joined with some other of the peculiar and most exalted names and titles of the most high God: such as, the Holy One of Israel; (Isaiah 41:14. Isaiah 43:14. Isaiah 47:4. Isaiah 48:17 and Isaiah 49:7.) The Mighty One of Jacob, (Isaiah 49:26 and Isaiah 40:16) The Lord of hosts, (Isaiah 47:4. and Isaiah 44:6) The God of the whole earth, (Isaiah 54:5) The First and the Last, besides whom there is no God, (Isaiah 54:6) The Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, (ver. 34.) Yet the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as the Redeemer of God's people in the most eminent manner, (Psalms 43:1-6)

§ 6. God is careful that his people should understand, that their honour and love and praise for the redemption out of Egypt, belongs only to him, and therefore is careful to inform them, that he alone redeemed them out of Egypt and that there was no other God with him; and to make use of that as a principal argument, why they should have no other gods before him. (See Deuteronomy 32:12. Exodus 20:3. Psalms 81:8-10. Hosea 13:4.) The words in that place are remarkable: "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour besides me." If God insisted on that as a good reason why his people should know no God besides him, that he alone was their Saviour to save them out of Egypt; would he afterwards appoint another to be their Saviour in an infinitely greater salvation?

§ 7. The works of creation being ascribed to Christ, most evidently prove his proper divinity. For God declares, that he is Jehovah that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, Isaiah 44:24. (See also the next chapter, Isaiah 45:5-7, Isaiah 45:12.) And not only is the creation of the world ascribed to Christ often in Scripture, but that which in Isaiah is

called the new creation, which is here represented as an immensely greater and more glorious work than the old creation, viz. the work of redemption, as this prophet himself explains it, (Isaiah 65:17-19) is every where, in a most peculiar and distinguishing manner, ascribed to Christ. 2 Peter 1:1. "Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:" evn dikaiosu,nh tou/ qeou h`mwn kai. swthroj VIhsou Cristou. "Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" ou mega,lou qeou kai. swth/roj h`mw/n VIhsou/ Cristou. It is agreeable to the manner of the apostle's expressing himself in both places, to intend one and the same person, viz. Christ, under two titles: as when speaking of God the Father, in Ephesians 1:3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." o` qeou kai. pathr. See Dr. Goodwin's Works, vol. 1. p. 93, 94.

§ 8. That passage in Isaiah 40:13-14 "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?" proves Christ's divinity; for Christ directs the Spirit of the Lord. See John 16:13-15. and many other places. Compare the following texts, set in opposite columns: those in the first column are represented as belonging to God only, which yet, in the second column, are given to Christ. The name GOD.

Isaiah 45:5. John 1:1.

Isaiah 44:8. Hebrews 1:8.

Isaiah 46:9. Romans 9:5. The name JEHOVAH.

Psalms 102:25, &c. Hebrews 1:10.

Zechariah 11:12. Matthew 27:9-10.

Zechariah 12:10. John 19:37.

Isaiah 40:3. Mark 1:3.

Hosea 1:7. Luke 2:11.

Divine Perfections.

1 Kings 8:39. John 2:24 John 16:30. Acts 1:24.

Jeremiah 17:10. Revelation 2:3.

Isaiah 44:6. Revelation 1:17.

Revelation 1:8. Revelation 22:13.

1 Timothy 6:15. Revelation 17:14. and Revelation 19:16.

Isaiah 10:21. Isaiah 9:6.

Romans 10:12. Acts 10:36. Romans 9:5.

Psalms 90:2. Proverbs 8:22, &c.

Divine Works.

Nehemiah 9:6. John 1:3. Colossians 1:16-17.

Genesis 1:1. Hebrews 1:10.

Divine Worship.

Exodus 20:3. Hebrews 1:6.

Matthew 4:10. and Galatians 4:8 John 5:23.

§ 9. If Christ in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, he must be from eternity; for then he is before the beginning by which must be meant the beginning of time; the beginning of that kind of duration which has beginning and following, before and after, belonging to it. The beginning, of created existence, or, the beginning of the creation which God created, as the phrase is, Mark 3:19. In Proverbs 8:22. it is said, "The Lord possessed me before his works of old;" and therefore before those works which in Genesis 1:1. are said to be made in the beginning. God’s eternity is expressed thus, Psalms 90:2. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst created the earth and the world, even from everlasting." So it is said, Proverbs 8:22, &c. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," &c.

§ 10. That the kingdom of the Messiah is so commonly called the kingdom of heaven, is an evidence that the Messiah is God. By the kingdom of heaven is plainly meant a kingdom wherein God doth reign, or is King. The phrase, the kingdom of heaven, seems to be principally taken from Daniel 2:14. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;" where the meaning plainly is, after the heads of those four great monarchies have each one had their turn, and erected kingdoms for themselves in their turn, and the last monarchy shall be divided among ten kings; finally, the God of heaven shall take the dominion from them all, and shall set up a kingdom for himself. He shall take the kingdom, and shall rule for ever. In this book, Daniel 4:26 it is said, "After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule." The words in the foregoing verse express what is meant: "Until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." Therefore, by the kingdom of heaven which shall be set up, is meant the kingdom wherein God himself shall be the king; not as reigning and administering by other kings or judges, as he was king in the time of the judges, and in the time of David and Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah, &c. and as he always doth in the time of good kings: but he shall set up his kingdom, in distinction from all kingdoms or states, wherein the heavens shall rule, or God himself shall be king. And therefore the kingdom of heaven is often called the kingdom of God, in the New Testament. And it is abundantly prophesied in the Old Testament, that in the days of the Messiah, God shall take to himself the kingdom and shall reign as king, in contradistinction to other reigning subordinate beings. And that God himself shall reign on earth, as king among his people, is abundantly manifested from many prophecies. And in this very prophecy of Daniel 7:1-28 where this kingdom, which the Lord of heaven should at last set up, (plainly this same kingdom,) is more fully spoken of, it is manifest, that the Messiah is to be the king in that kingdom, who shall reign as vested with full power, and complete kingly authority.

§ 11. God is several times called in Scripture, the Glory of Israel, or of God’s people; and it is a title peculiar to him, wherein he appears as especially distinguished from false gods. Jeremiah 2:11. "Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit." Psalms 106:20. "Thus they changed their glory into the

similitude of an ox that eateth grass." But we find that Christ in the New Testament is spoken of as "the glory of God's people Israel." Luke 2:23.

§ 12. What is said in Job 19:25-27. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. is a proof of the divinity of Christ. For here, he whom Job calls his Redeemer, his God, is God; "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." But it is very manifest, that Christ is he who is most property and eminently our Redeemer or God: And here Job says, that God shall stand at the latter day, at the general resurrection, on the earth; when he shall see him in his flesh. But the person that shall then stand on the earth, we know, is no other than Jesus Christ. And how often, in other places, both in the Old Testament and the New, is Christ's coming to Judgment spoken of as God's coming to judgment! Christ's appearing, as God's appearing! and our standing before the judgment-seat of Christ, our standing before God's judgment seat!

§ 13. Luke 1:16-17. "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God: and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Here John the Baptist is spoken of as going before the Lord, the God of the children of Israel to prepare his way; agreeably to the prophecies; particularly Malachi 3:1. and Malachi 4:5-6. But who is this person who is called the Lord, the God of Israel, whose forerunner, John the Baptist, is to prepare his way? Nothing is more manifest, than that it is Jesus Christ. See Mark 1:1-3. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," (alluding to two prophecies, viz. Malachi 3:1. and Isaiah 40:3) Here is a distinction of two persons; the one speaking in the first person singular, "Behold, I send my messenger;" the other spoken to in the second person, "before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee;" which makes it evident that the person spoken of, and whose forerunner he was to prepare his way, was Jesus Christ. So Matthew 11:10. Luke 7:27. See also how manifest this is by John 1:19. "And this is the record of John." John 1:23. "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias;" with the following verses, especially John 1:31. "And I know him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel: therefore am I come baptizing with water." So that it is evident that Christ is he that in the 1st of Luke is called the Lord, or, Jehovah the God of Israel, as the phrase is in the original of the Old Testament, in places from whence this phrase is taken. Therefore it is evident, that Christ is one God with the Father; for the Scripture is very express, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is but one Jehovah; as, Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

§ 14. And if we look into those prophecies of the Old Testament referred to in these places of the evangelists, it is manifest, that what they foretell concerns a forerunner to prepare the way for the only true and supreme God as, Isaiah 40:3. "The voice of him that crieth in the wildemess, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah; make straight in the desert a high way for our God." This is evidently the same that is spoken of in the following parts of the chapter; as in Isaiah 40:9, and following verses: "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God; behold, Jehovah God will come. -- He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. -- Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being

his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment? Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? -- Isaiah 40:22. "It is he that sitteth on the circle of the earth, and all the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." -- If the supreme God is not spoken of here, where shall we find the place where he is spoken of? If it be an infinitely inferior being, where is God's distinguishing greatness, and infinitely superior magnificence? It here follows, Isaiah 40:25. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." A created being would not use such language, or make such a challenge. He that is created himself, would not say, as it follows in the next verse, "Lift up your eyes on high; behold, who hath created those things?" So it is evident, that it is the one only God that is spoken of, whose forerunner John was to be. Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before ME. And Jehovah, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into his temple." Luke 1:76. "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, u`yi,stou; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way."

§ 15. It is a great evidence that Christ is one being with the supreme God, that the Spirit of the supreme God is spoken of as his Spirit, proceeding from and sent and directed by him. The Spirit by whom the prophets of old were inspired, is spoken of as the Spirit of Christ: 1 Peter 1:11. "Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify; when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." But it is very manifest, that this was the Spirit of the one only living and true God; so that we must needs understand, that the word written by the prophets, is the word of the supreme God. See 2 Peter 1:21: 2 Timothy 3:16. And that they spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of the supreme God, is manifest from Luke 1:69-70. "And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David; as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." The word Spirit, in the original languages, signifies wind, and sometimes is used to signify breath. Therefore, Christ breathed on his disciples, when he would signify to them that he would give them the Holy Ghost: John 20:22. "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This plainly teaches us that the Holy Ghost was his Spirit, as much as man's breath is his breath.

Again, it is evident, that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, as much as a person's eyes are his own eyes. Revelation 5:6. "And I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Alluding to Zechariah 3:9. "Upon one stone shall be seven eyes." But these seven eyes, in the next chapter, are spoken of as representing the Spirit of God, and the eyes of Jehovah: Zechariah 4:6. "Not by might nor power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." Zechariah 4:10. "And shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, with those seven. They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro though the whole earth."

Christ is spoken of as sending the Holy Ghost, and directing him: John 16:7. "I will send him unto you." John 16:13-15. "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." But it is spoken of as the peculiar prerogative of God to direct his Spirit. Isaiah 40:13. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?"

§ 16. It is true, that creatures are sometimes called god. The kings and judges of God's Israel, the ancient church, are called gods but no otherwise than as types of Christ. And the angels are called gods. Yet it is very remarkable, that in that only place where they are so called by God, they are commanded to worship Christ; and in the same verse, a curse is denounced on all such as are guilty of idolatry. Psalms 97:7. compared with Hebrews 1:6.

§ 17. God so often speaking of himself as a jealous God -- signifying that he will by no means endure any other husband of his church -- affords a clear evidence, that Jesus Christ is the same God with the Father. For Christ is often spoken of as that person who is, in the most eminent and peculiar manner, the Husband and Bridegroom of his church. That God who is the Holy One of Israel, is the Husband of the church, as appears by Isaiah 54:5. "Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Or, as the words are, "Thy Goel, the Holy One of Israel." The goel was the near kinsman, that married the widow who had lost her husband, as appears by Ruth 3:9-12. But this Holy One of Israel is the name of that God who is the Father, as appears by Isaiah 49:7. and Isaiah 55:5. and so is the Lord of hosts, as appears by Isaiah 44:6.

§ 18. Christ is the Lord mentioned in Romans 10:13. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." That it is Christ who is spoken of, is evident from the two foregoing verses; and also from the 14th. But the words are taken from Joel 2:32. where the word translated Lord, is Jehovah. See also 1 Corinthians 1:2.

§ 19. And 1 Corinthians 10:9. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted." By this, it appears, that Christ was that God, that Holy One of Israel, whom they tempted in the wilderness. 1 Corinthians 10:22. "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" It is evident, that by the Lord here, is meant Jesus Christ as appears by the preceding context; and that therefore, he is that being who says, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

§ 20. Revelation 2:23. Christ says, "I am he that trieth the reins and the heart, and will give to every one of you according to his works." This is said by the Son of God, as appears by the 18th verse foregoing. Compare this with other passages of Scripture, where those things are spoken of as the prerogative of the supreme God. Parallel with it is John 21:17. "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

§ 21. It would be unreasonable to suppose, that there is one Being infinitely greater than all other beings -- so that all others are as nothing to him, and infinitely beneath him in power -- and yet, that there is no kind of works or effects of his power, that is peculiar to him, by which he is greatly distinguished from others. He that appeared sitting on the throne above the cherubims and wheels in Ezekiel's visions, (Ezekiel 1:27. and other places,) was undoubtedly Christ; because he

appeared in the shape of a man, which God the Father never did. "No man hath seen God, viz. the Father, at any time:" but the person that there appeared, was undoubtedly God. He is represented as one that has heaven for his throne, and sits as supreme Ruler of the universe. -- This is undoubted1y the same that rides on the heavens in the help of his people, and his excellency on the sky; that rides on the heaven of heavens by his name Jah, or Jehovah. And this is called the appearance of the likeness, or image of the glory of the Lord; Ezekiel 1:28. Ezekiel 3:23 and Ezekiel 8:4. This, while it shows him to be a person truly divine, also shows him to be Christ. For what can this image of the Lord, with an appearance of brightness round about, (Ezekiel 1:27-28) be, but the same which the apostle speaks of, who is "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person?" And this is evidently the same that sat on the throne in the temple, which was called the Chariot of the Cherubims. And this person is called the God of Israel, Ezekiel 10:20. and the whole that this person says to Ezekiel from time to time shows, that he is truly God.

§ 22. It is a great evidence of the divinity of Christ, that the Holy Ghost is so put into subjection to him, as to become his messenger; even the Spirit of God, as the Holy Ghost is often called, or the Spirit of the Father, as he is called, Matthew 10:20. The same that is there called the Spirit of the Father, is in Mark 13:11. called the Holy Ghost. -- Now, certainly, it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Spirit of the supreme God should be put under the direction and disposal of a mere creature, one infinitely below God. The only evasion here, must be this, that the Holy Ghost is also a created Spirit inferior to the Son. For if Christ be a mere creature, it would be unreasonable to suppose that he should have the Spirit of God subjected to him, on any other supposition, whether the Spirit of God be supposed to be only the power and energy of the Most High, or a superior created Spirit. But how does the Holy Ghost, being a creature inferior to the Son, consist with Christ's being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost? and his being honoured by having the Holy Ghost descending upon him? and being anointed with it, and working his greatest miracles by the power of the Holy Ghost? and it being a great honour done to Christ, that the Spirit was given to him not by measure? Besides, the Holy Ghost being a creature, not only infinitely inferior to God, but inferior to the Son, is exceedingly inconsistent with almost every thing said of the Holy Spirit in Scripture: as, his being called the Power of the highest; his searching all things, even the deep things of God, and knowing the things of God in the most distinguishing manner, as the spirit of man within him knows the things of a man; the Scriptures being the word of God, as it is the word of the Holy Ghost; Christians being the temple of the living God, as they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; lying unto the Holy Ghost being called lying unto God; the chief works of God being ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as the works of Creation, and the forming of man in the womb. (Ecclesiastes 11:5. Job 33:4.) Giving the highest sort of wisdom, viz. spiritual understanding; forming the human nature of Christ; being the author of regeneration and sanctification; creating a new heart, and so being the author of the new creation, which is spoken of as vastly greater than the old.

Blasphemy against the Father is pardonable; but not against the Holy Ghost. It is unreasonable to suppose that only the body of Christ was made by the Holy Ghost. It is evident, that the whole human nature, the holy thing that was born of the virgin, was by the Holy Ghost; Luke 1:35. But the Son of the virgin was a holy thing, especially with regard to his soul. The soul of Adam was from the Spirit of God, from God's breathing into him the breath of life. But this breath of life signifies the Spirit of God, as appears by Christ's breathing on his disciples after his resurrection, saying,

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Spirit of God is called the breath of God; Job 33:4. "The Spirit of God hath made me; the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." If God's Spirit gives life to other men, or mankind in general, doubtless he gave life to Adam. And if that Spirit of God which gives life to mankind in general, be, in doing that work, called the breath of God; we may well suppose, that when we find that which gave life and soul to Adam, called God's breath, thereby was meant God's Spirit.

§ 23. How unreasonable must our notions be of the creation of the world, on Arian principles! For it is manifest by the Scripture, that the world was made by the Spirit of God, as well as by the Son of God. But the Son of God is, according to them, a created Spirit; and the Spirit of God must therefore also be a created Spirit inferior to him. -- Therefore, we must suppose, that the Father created the world by the Son, and that the Son did not create the world by himself but by the Spirit of God, as his minister or instrument. So that the Spirit of God herein must act as the instrument of an instrument!

§ 24. It is evident that the same Word, the same Son of God, that made the world, also upholds it in being, and governs it. This is evident, in part, unto reason. For upholding the world in being, and creating it, are not properly distinct works; since it is manifest, that upholding the world in being is the same with a continued creation; and consequently, that creating the world is but the beginning of upholding it, if I may so say -- beginning to give it a supported and dependent existence -- and preservation is only continuing to give it such a supported existence. So that, truly, giving the world a being at first, no more differs from preserving it through all successive moments, than giving a being the last moment, differs from giving a supported being this moment. And the Scripture is as express, that the world is upheld by Christ, as that it was created by him; Colossians 1:16-17. "For by him were all things created, and by him all things consist." Hebrews 1:2-3. "By whom also he made the worlds, and upholding all things by the word of his power." And it is he that shall bring the world to an end. Hebrews 1:10-12. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, &c. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure. As a vesture shalt thou change, them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." But if these things are so, what shall we think of the upholding and government of the world, while Christ was in his humbled state, and while an infant, and when we are told that he was wearied with his journey, and his strength in some measure spent, only with governing the motions of his own body? Who upheld and governed the world at that time? Doubtless it will be said, that God the Father took the world out of the hands of the Son for that time, to uphold and govern it, and returned it into his hands again at his exaltation. But is there any ground to suppose such a mighty change as this, as to the author of the universe, that it should have such different authors of its being, and of all its properties, natural principles, motions, alterations, and events, both in bodies and all created minds, for three or four and thirty years, from what it had ever before or since? Have we any hint of such a thing? or have we any revelation of any thing analogous? Has God ever taken the work of a creature out of its hands, according to the ordinary course of things?

§ 25. The supreme God is doubtless distinguished by some works or other. As he must be infinitely distinguished from all other beings in his nature; so, doubtless, there are some manifestations or other of this vast superiority above all other beings. But we can have no other proper manifestations of the divine nature, but by some effects of it. The invisible things of God are seen by the things that are made. The word of God itself is no demonstration of the superior

distinguishing glory of the supreme God, any otherwise than by his works; and that two ways: 1. As we must have the perfections first proved by his works, in order to know that his word is to be depended on. 2. As the works of God, appealed to and declared in his word, make evident that divine greatness and glory which the word of God declares. There is a difference between declaration and evidence. The word declares; but the works are the proper evidence of what is declared.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the vastly distinguished glory of the supreme God is manifested by some distinguishing peculiar works of his. That the supreme God is distinguished very remarkably and most evidently from all other beings, by some works or other, is certain by the Scripture. It is often represented, that he most plainly and greatly shows his distinguishing majesty, power, and wisdom, and vast superiority to other beings, by his works that are seen, and set in the view of the children of men. So Psalms 81:8. "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, neither are there any works like unto thy works;" see also Psalms 81:10. Psalms 89:5, Psalms 89:8-10. "The heavens shall praise thy wonders: -- for who in heaven can be compared to the Lord? who amongst the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them." Deuteronomy 3:24. "What God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?" Psalms 72:18. "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things." This is often added to the declarations of God's works, "That ye may know that I am the Lord, or that I am Jehovah:" and this, "That ye may know that there is none like unto me," &c. Exodus 8:10, Exodus 8:22. Exodus 9:14, Exodus 9:16 and Exodus 10:2 and innumerable other places.

§ 26. But now, what are these distinguishing works of God? or the works by which his distinguishing dignity and glory are clearly manifested? What works are they that can be named or thought of? Is it CREATING the world? Or is it the creating of the spiritual, intellectual world, which undoubtedly is an unspeakably greater work, than creating the material world? Is it PRESERVING and upholding the world? Or is it GOVERNING the world? Or is it REDEMPTION and salvation; or at least some particular great salvation? Was it the redemption out of Egypt, and carrying the people of Israel through the wilderness, and giving them the possession of Canaan? Or is it the greatest work of redemption, even salvation from spiritual, total, and eternal destruction, and bringing to eternal holiness and glory? Is it conversion, regeneration, restoring a fallen, sinful creature, and making men new creatures, giving them holiness, and the image of God? or giving wisdom to the heart, the truest and greatest wisdom? Is it the conversion of the Gentile world, and renewing the whole world of mankind, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles? Or is it conquering Satan and all the powers of darkness, and overcoming all evil, even the strongest holds of sin and Satan, all God's enemies in their united strength? Is it searching the hearts of the children of men? Is it working any particular kind of great miracles? Is it raising the dead to life, or raising all in general at the last day? Is it judging the world, angels and men, in the last and greatest judgment? Is it bestowing on the favourites of God, both men and angels, their highest, most consummate, and eternal glory? Is it destroying the visible creation, and bringing all to their final period and consummation, and to their most perfect and eternal state? Or, are there any other works greater than these, that can be thought of, which we can find appealed to as clearly manifesting the most peculiar and distinguishing glory of the supreme God, in comparison of whom all other beings

whatsoever are absolutely as nothing? Yet all these are ascribed to Christ.

§ 27. The creation of the world in general is often spoken of as the peculiar work of the supreme God, a work wherein be manifests his glory as supreme, and distinguished from all other beings: Romans 1:19-20. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Doubtless it is the supreme God who is here spoken of. And what godhead is clearly to be seen by the creation of the world, but the supreme Godhead? And what can that invisible glory and power of this God be, but that by which He is distinguished from other beings, and may be known to be what he is? It is said, "that which may be known of God, is clearly manifest by his works." But doubtless, one thing, and infinitely the most important, that may be known of God, is his supreme dignity and glory, that glory which he has as supreme God. But if the creation of the world be not a work peculiar to him, how are these things so clearly manifested by his work? The work of creation is spoken of as one of the great wonders done by him, who is God of gods and Lord of lords, who alone doth great wonders; as in Psalms 136:2-9. "O give thanks unto the God of gods. -- O give thanks to the Lord of lords. -- To him who alone doth great wonders. - To Him that by wisdom made the heavens. -- To him that stretched out the earth over the waters. -- To him that made great lights, -- The sun to rule by day," &c. -- This is the work of the supreme God, which he wrought alone, Job 9:8. "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens." And 2 Kings 19:15. "O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth:" 1 Chronicles 16:24-26. "Declare his glory among the heathen, his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: but the Lord made the heavens." -- Isaiah 40:25-26. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." How plain is it here, that creating the world is spoken of as a work of the supreme God, most evidently showing that none is like him, or to be compared to him? So Isaiah 40:12 compared with Isaiah 40:18. God asserts the creation of the world to be his work, so as to deny any associate or instrument; as in Isaiah 44:24. "Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Isaiah 14:5-7. "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; there is no God besides me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness." Isaiah 14:12. "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I even my hands, have stretched out the heavens." Isaiah 14:18. "Thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it." Isaiah 14:21. "I am Jehovah, and there is no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me." Yet these works are applied to Christ.

§ 28. God’s creating the world, is used as an argument, to show the nations of the world the reasonableness of forsaking all other gods, and worshipping the one true God only. Revelation 14:7. "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (See also Acts 14:15. and Revelation 10:6.) -- The work of creation is spoken of as the distinguishing work of the supreme only living

and true God, showing him to be alone worthy to be worshipped; as in Jeremiah 10:6-12. "Forasmuch as there in none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? For to thee doth it appertain. Jehovah is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King. -- Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power: he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."

§ 29. But the creation of the world is ascribed to JESUS CHRIST, in John 1:3. Colossians 1:16. Hebrews 1:10. It is ascribed to him as being done by his power, as the work of his hands, Hebrews 1:10. And his work in such a manner, as to be a proper manifestation of his greatness and glory; and so as to show him to be God, John 1:1-3. Is the creation of the spiritual, intelligent world, consisting of angels, and the souls of men, and the world of glory, a peculiar work of the supreme God? Doubtless it is so. Nehemiah 9:6. "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host: and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." Psalms 104:4. "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." And the creation of the spiritual and intelligent world, in every part of it, is also ascribed to Christ. For it is said, John 1:3. "The world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." And to him is expressly ascribed the creation of the invisible world, and of the angels in particular, even the very highest and most exalted of them; and all the most glorious things in the invisible heaven, the highest and most glorious part of the creation of God. Colossians 1:16. "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible;" (these include the invisible things on earth, as well as in heaven, even the souls of men;) "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him."

§ 30. Preserving the creation, is spoken of as the work of the one only Jehovah, Nehemiah 9:6. "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; and thou preservest them all." Isaiah 40:26. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might; for that he is strong in power, not one faileth." Job 12:7-10. "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of Jehovah hath made this, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind?" See also Psalms 36:6-7. But the preservation of the creation is also ascribed to Christ; Hebrews 1:3. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." Colossians 1:17. "By him all things consist."

§ 31. Governing the creation, is another thing often spoken of as the peculiar work of God; as in Isaiah 40:21, to the end. There, governing the world is the manifest peculiar work of him to whom none is like and none equal. And, in Isaiah 45:1-13. governing the world, bringing to pass revolutions in nations, &c.; are spoken of as the peculiar works of him who is Jehovah alone. See 2 Chronicles 29:11-12. and Psalms 22:28. Psalms 47:2, &c. But Christ is often, in the New Testament, spoken of as the Governor of the world, is prayed to as such, and spoken of as he whose will disposes all events.

Sitting as king in heaven, having his throne there, and governing the universe for the salvation of his people, are spoken of as peculiar to the supreme God. But, how often and eminently are these things ascribed to Christ! His having his throne in heaven; being exalted far above all heavens; thrones, dominions, &c. being made subject to him; being made head over all things to the church, &c.

§ 32. Judging the world, is another thing spoken of peculiarly and distinguishingly belonging to the supreme God. Psalms 1:1-6. "The mighty God, even Jehovah, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Our God shall come; a fire shall devour before him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people: and the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against thee. I am God, even thy God." Isaiah 50:1-23 begins thus: EL ELOHIM JEHOVAH,, "The God of gods, Jehovah; or, the most mighty God, even JEHOVAH." Who can believe that these three most magnificent names of the Deity are thus united, to signify any other than the supreme God? But it is apparent, that Christ is abundantly spoken of as eminently the Judge of all nations, of all degrees, quick and dead, angels and men. We are particularly and fully instructed, that it is his distinguishing office to judge the world, John 5:22:2 Timothy 4:8. Revelation 19:11. and many other places.

§ 33. Destroying the world at the consummation of all things is spoken of as a peculiar work of God; Psalms 102:1-28 even of Jehovah, Psalms 102:1, Psalms 102:12, Psalms 102:16, Psalms 102:18, Psalms 102:21-22.; the Creator of the world, Psalms 102:24-25, Psalms 102:28. See also Psalms 97:1-6. and Nehemiah 1:4-6. Jeremiah 10:6-7, Jeremiah 10:10. Psalms 46:6. Psalms 104:32. Psalms 144:5. Isaiah 14:1-3. Job 9:4-7. But this is spoken of as the work of the Son of God, Hebrews 1:1-14. latter end.

§ 34. The wonderful alterations made in the natural wor1d, at the coming out of Egypt; the giving of the law, and entrance into Canaan; are often spoken of as the peculiar works of God, greatly manifesting the divine majesty as vastly distinguished from all other gods: such as, dividing the sea; drowning Pharaoh and his hosts there; causing the earth to tremble, the mountains to quake at his presence, the heavens to drop, the hills to skip like rams and lambs; Jordan being driven back; the sun and moon standing still, &c. But these were infinitely small things, in comparison with what shall be accomplished at the end of the world, when the mountains and hills shall be thrown into the midst of the sea; and not only some particular mountains shall quake, but the whole earth, yea, the whole visible world, shall be terribly shaken to pieces. Not only shall mount Sinai be on fire, as if it would melt, but all the mountains, and the whole earth and heavens shall melt with fervent heat; the earth shall be dissolved even to its centre. And not only shall the Red sea and Jordan be dried up for a few hours, in a small part of their channels, but all the seas, and oceans, and rivers through the world shall be dried up for ever. Not only shall the sun and moon be stopped for the space of one day; but they, with all the innumerable mighty globes of the heavens, shall have an everlasting arrest, an eternal stop put to their courses. Instead of drowning Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, the devil and all the wicked shall be plunged into the eternal lake of fire and brimstone, &c. The former kind of effects were but little, faint shadows of the latter. And the former are spoken of as the peculiar, manifest, glorious works of the supreme one only God, evidently manifesting his peculiar majesty and glory. But the latter are the works of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, as is evident by Hebrews 1:10-12. It is here worthy to be remarked, that --

though the Scripture teaches, that Christ's majesty shall at the last day appear to be so great in his coming in power and great glory, yet -- it is said, when these things shall be, God alone should be exalted, in opposition to men and to other gods, Isaiah 2:10, to the end.

§ 35. The work of salvation is often spoken of as peculiar to God. It is said, the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, Psalms 37:39. and that salvation belongeth unto the Lord, Psalms 3:8. Jonah 2:9. God's people acknowledge him to be the God of their salvation, Psalms 25:5. Psalms 27:1. and Isaiah 12:2. Saving effectually is spoken of as his prerogative, Jeremiah 17:14. "Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall I be saved: for thou art my praise." Psalms 68:20. "He that is our God, is the God of salvation, and to the Lord our God belong the issues from death."

Salvation is spoken of as being of God, in opposition to men, and to all creature helps, Jeremiah 3:23. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Psalms 40:11. "Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help (Heb. salvation) of man." Psalms 40:16. "I Jehovah am thy Saviour." Psalms 146:3, Psalms 146:5. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom is no help (or salvation). Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." Salvation in or by any other is denied, Isaiah 59:16. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore, his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him."

It is spoken of as his prerogative to be the rock of salvation, to be trusted in by men. "Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." See Psalms 95:1. Psalms 42:2. "He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence." Psalms 42:5-9. "My soul, wait thou on God alone, for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in him at all times; pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity."

It is said, that there is no other Saviour besides the one only Jehovah; Isaiah 43:3. "I am Jehovah thy God, the Saviour of Israel;" Isaiah 43:11. "I, even I, am Jehovah, and besides me there is no Saviour." See Isaiah 47:4. Isaiah 54:5 and Isaiah 45:15. "O God of Israel, the Saviour." Isaiah 45:21, to the end; "I am Jehovah and there is no God else besides me. -- Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." Here observe, that this is given as a reason why all nations in the world should look to him only for salvation, that he only was God; taking it for granted, and as an universally established point, that none but God could be a Saviour. And here salvation is claimed as the prerogative of the one only God, and therefore exclusively of a secondary and subordinate god. It follows, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength. Even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Hosea 13:4. "Yet I am Jehovah, thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour besides me."

God is so completely the only Saviour of his people, that others are not admitted to partake of this honour, as mediate and subordinate saviours: Hosea 1:7. And therefore, the heavenly hosts, in giving praise to God, ascribe salvation to him, as his peculiar and distinguishing glory; Revelation 19:1. "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God."

§ 36. But nothing is more evident, by the express and abundant doctrine of Scripture, than that Jesus Christ is most eminently and peculiarly the Saviour of God's people, and the Saviour of the world. In John 4:42. his very name is Jesus, Saviour. He is spoken of as the Author of eternal salvation, Hebrews 5:9. And the Captain of the salvation of his people, Hebrews 2:10. a Prince and a Saviour. He is called Zion's salvation, Isaiah 42:11. "Behold, thy salvation cometh." He is spoken of, as saving by his own strength, and able to save to the uttermost; one mighty to save, and therein distinguished from all others; as in Isaiah 43:1. "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Isaiah 43:5. "I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me." What is said in this place, is meant of Christ, as is manifest by comparing Isaiah 43:3 with Revelation 19:15. And the very same things that are said of Jehovah, the only God, as the only Saviour in whom men shall trust for salvation, as in Isaiah 45:21, to the end, are from time to time applied to Christ in the New Testament. And it is expressly said, Acts 4:12. "There is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name given under heaven amongst men, whereby we must be saved." And the heavenly hosts, in their praises, ascribe salvation to Christ in like manner as to God the Father, Revelation 7:10. "Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb." See also Revelation 5:1-14. Christ is a rock sufficiently sure, and perfectly to be trusted, Isaiah 28:16-17: 1 Corinthians 10:4.

§ 37. The redemption from Egypt, and bringing the children of Israel through the wilderness to the possession of Canaan, is often spoken of as a great salvation, which was most evidently the peculiar work of the one only Jehovah, greatly manifesting his distinguished power and majesty -- 2 Samuel 7:22-23. "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like thee; according to all that we have heard with our ears;" meaning what they had heard of his great fame, or the name he had obtained by his wonderful works, in bringing them out of Egypt, &c. as appears by what follows; "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things, and terrible for thy land, before thy people which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?" The same work is mentioned as an evidence, that the doer of it is Jehovah, and that there is none like unto him, and as that which makes known God's name through the earth; Exodus 8:10, Exodus 8:22. Exodus 9:4, Exodus 9:16 and Exodus 10:2 -- See also chap. Exodus 15:6-11. Exodus 18:11 and Exodus 34:10. Deuteronomy 3:24.

§ 38. But it was Jesus Christ that wrought that salvation: Isaiah 43:9-10. "The angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them, and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit." This rebelling and vexing of his Holy Spirit is evidently the same thing with that spoken of, Psalms 95:8-10. "As in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long I was grieved with that generation." But it was evident that he whom they tempted, provoked, and grieved, was that God whose great works they saw, and

therefore was that God who wrought those wonderful works in Egypt and the wilderness: as is evident by the same Psalm, Psalms 95:3. where he is called "Jehovah, a great God, and a great King above all gods." And it is equally clear by that passage in Isa. lxiii. just quoted, that it was the angel of God's presence, and by 1 Corinthians 10:9. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted." And as it is said, Isa. lxiii. that the angel of God's presence saved them, &c. so it is plain by Exodus 23:20-33. that God's angel, a different person from him who acts as first in the affairs of the Deity, brought them into Canaan, &c. And it is plain, that the person that appeared in the bush, who said his name was Jehovah, and I am that I am, was the angel of Jehovah: Exodus 3:2, Exodus 3:14. Exodus 6:3. and Acts 7:30. And nothing is more evident, by the whole history, than that the same person brought them out of Egypt: and also, that it was the same angel which appeared and delivered the ten commandments at mount Sinai, conversed there with Moses, and manifested himself from time to time to the congregation in the wilderness. Acts 7:38. "This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us." That angel doubtless was the same that is called the angel of the covenant; Malachi 3:1. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come into his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts:" and this messenger without doubt was Christ. -- It is plain by Hebrews 12:25-27 that he who spake at mount Sinai was Christ: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," &c.

§ 39. Thus we see, that however the work of salvation be so often spoken of as peculiar to God; yet this salvation out of Egypt, so much celebrated in Scripture, is not peculiar to God the Father; but that the Son wrought this work as well as the Father. And it is true, that the Scriptures abundantly speak of an infinitely greater and more glorious salvation than that out of Egypt; viz. the salvation of men from sin, Satan, eternal death and ruin, and bringing them to the heavenly Canaan, to eternal life and happiness there. This is spoken of as a far greater work than the other. So that, in comparison of it, it is not worthy to be remembered or mentioned. Jeremiah 16:14-15. "It shall no more be said, The Lord liveth," &c. see also Jeremiah 23:6-8. Isaiah 43:18-21. "Remember ye not the former things," &c. But I need not stop to show the reader how this great salvation is in Scripture ascribed in a peculiar manner to Christ as the author.

§ 40. We read in Scripture of two creations: the first, that which Moses gives an account of in the first chapter of Genesis; the other, a spiritual creation, consisted in restoring the moral world, bringing it to its highest perfection, and establishing it in its eternal felicity and glory; and the latter is spoken of as most incomparably the greatest work; Isaiah 65:17-18 and Isaiah 66:22. Now, as creation is so much spoken of as a most peculiar work of the supreme God, one may well determine, that if the first creation be not so, yet the second is, which is so much greater, and evidently the greatest of all God's works. But this new creation, which is the same with the work of redemption, is, in the most especial manner, spoken of as the work of Jesus: for he is ever mentioned as the great Redeemer and restorer. This work is committed to him: for this he has a full commission. It is left in his hands; all things are committed to him; all power in heaven and in earth is given him, that be may accomplish this work, and bring it to its most absolute perfection. To this end are subjected to him, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and he is made head over all things; and to this end, the world to come, that is, all the affairs of that new creation, are put in subjection unto him: and he, with regard to all the transactions belonging to this new

creation, that are written in the book of God, is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Christ built the house; he built all things, especially in this new creation; and therefore is God. These things are plainly asserted in Hebrews 3:3-4. "For this man (rather his person) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man: but he that built all things is God." -- Thus, the work of redemption, which is both the greatest work of salvation, and the greatest work of creation, (the two kinds of works chiefly spoken of in Scripture as divine,) is accomplished by the Son of God."

§41. The giving of spiritual and saving light is one chief part of the new creation, as creating the light was a chief part of the old creation. The causing of this spiritual light is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. 2 Corinthians 4:6. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," &c. But the giving of this light is especially ascribed to Christ, as the author and fountain of it. He is called the Light of the world; the Light of life; the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He is the Sun of righteousness. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, &c.

§ 42. So calling men into Christ's fellowship and kingdom, is also ascribed to God. Romans 8:30. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." Acts 2:39. "As many as the Lord our God shall call." 1 Corinthians 1:9. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Thessalonians 2:12. "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation; whereunto he called you by our gospel." 2 Timothy 1:9. "According to the power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." 1 Peter 5:10. "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory." But this is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Romans 1:6. "Among whom also ye are the called of Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 7:17. "As the Lord hath called every one." John 10:3. "And He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." 1 Corinthians 7:16. "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in; and they shall hear my voice." Ephesians 1:18. "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling."

§ 43. Regeneration, or the changing and renewing of the heart, is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. John 1:13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." James 1:18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."

It is likewise ascribed to Christ. Saints are born of him in their spiritual generation, and therefore are called his seed; Galatians 3:29. It is Christ that baptizes men with the Holy Ghost, which is called the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and a being born of water and of the Spirit. Christ sanctifies and cleanses the souls of men, by the washing of water, by the word; Ephesians 5:26.

§ 44. Justification, washing from sin, delivering from guilt, forgiving sin, admitting to favour and to the glorious benefits of righteousness in the sight of God, are often spoken of as belonging peculiarly to God. Romans 3:26. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:30. "Seeing it is one God that justifieth," &c. Romans 8:30. "Whom he called, he

also justified." Romans 8:33. "It is God that justifieth." Isaiah 43:25. "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." Psalms 51:2-4. "Wash me throughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Therefore the Jews said, Luke 5:21. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" But Christ hath power to forgive sins, as it follows in the last-mentioned place; verse 24. "But that ye may know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," &c. He washes us from our sins in his own blood; Revelation 1:5. And he justifies those that know and believe in him; Isaiah 53:11.

§ 45. Overcoming Satan, and delivering men from him, and giving his people victory over him, are spoken of as the peculiar works of God's glorious power. Isaiah 27:1. "In that day, Jehovah, with his great and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan, that crooked serpent; he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Psalms 8:1-2. "O Jehovah, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who has set thy glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." But it is the special work of Christ to bruise the serpent's head; to destroy the works of the devil; and that by his own strength. For he is represented as conquering him, because he is stronger than the strong man armed, and so overcoming him and taking from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and spoiling his goods. It is he that has spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them. He is the spiritual Samson, that has rent the roaring lion as he would have rent a kid; and the spiritual David, that has delivered the lamb out of his mouth, and has slain that great Goliath. He is that Michael who fights with the dragon and casts him out; and at last will judge Satan, and will utterly destroy him; and will inflict those everlasting torments on him spoken of in Revelation 20:10. In the apprehension of which he now trembles, and trembled for fear that Christ would inflict those torments on him, when he cried out and fell down before him, saying, "Art thou come to torment me before the time?" and, "I beseech thee, torment me not."

§ 46. Should any imagine that those parts of the work of redemption, which are initial, and are wrought in this world, being more imperfect, may be wrought by the Son of God; but that the more glorious perfection of it, which is brought to pass in heaven, is peculiar to God the Father: in opposition to this, it may be observed, it belongs to Christ to take care of the souls of his saints after death; to receive them to the heavenly state; and to give them possession of heaven. Therefore the Scriptures represent, that he redeems his saints to God, and makes them kings and priests. He has the key of David, the key of the palace, and the keys of hades, or the separate state, and of death; and opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens. He is gone to heaven as the forerunner of the saints. He has, in their name, taken possession of that inheritance which he has purchased for them, that he may put them in possession of it in due time. He is gone to prepare a place for them, that he may come and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also; and make them sit with him in his throne. And therefore Stephen, when dying, commended his spirit into Christ's hands.

Or, if any shall say, that the far more glorious salvation which shall be effected at the end of the world; when all things shall be brought to their highest consummation, shall be the peculiar work of God the Father; I answer, It is abundantly manifest from Scripture, that the consummation of all things shall be by Christ. He shall raise the dead by his voice, as one that has power and life in himself. He shall raise up the bodies of his saints in their glorious resurrection, making their bodies

like to his glorious body; John 5:25, John 5:29 and John 6:39-40. He, as the universal and final Judge, shall fully put all things to rights, and bring every thing to its last and most perfect state . He shall bestow that great gift of eternal life, in both soul and body, on the whole church, and every individual member in a state of most consummate glory which is the thing aimed at in all the preceding steps of the great affair of redemption. He shall present his church to himself and to his Father a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; all in a perfect purity, beauty, and glory: and the glory which God hat given him He will give them, in the most perfect manner that they may reign with him for ever and ever. And thus, he will cause the New Jerusalem to appear in its brightest glory, as a bride adorned for her husband; and will perfect the new creation, and cause the new heaven and new earth to shine forth in their consummate and eternal beauty and brightness; when God shall proclaim, It is done; I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Christ is represented as being himself the light and glory that enlightens the New Jerusalem, that fills with brightness and glory the church of God, in its last, consummate, and eternal glory; Revelation 21:23.

§ 47. Concerning, the name JEHOVAH, see Nehemiah 9:6. "Thou art Jehovah alone; thou hast made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth," &c. Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." 2 Samuel 22:32. "Who is God save Jehovah? who is a rock, save our God? So Psalms 18:31 : 1 Kings 18:39. "Jehovah, he is the God; Jehovah, he is the God." When God proclaimed his name in mount Sinai, Exodus 34:5-6. "He passed by and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah." Jeremiah 10:10. "Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King." Exodus 15:11. "Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah?" 1 Chronicles 17:20. "O Jehovah, there is none like unto thee." Psalms 86:8. It might well be expected, that, in that abundant revelation which God has made of himself, he would make himself known by some one name at least, which should be expressly delivered as the peculiar and distinguishing, name of the Most High. And we find it to be so: God has, with great solemnity, declared a certain name as his most peculiar name; which he has expressly and very often spoken of as a name that belongs to him in a most distinguishing manner, and belongs to the Supreme Being only; and hath expressly asserted that it belongs to no other. But, notwithstanding all this, the Arians, to serve their particular purpose, reject this name, as not being the distinguishing name of the supreme God.

§ 48. King of kings and Lord of lords, are titles peculiar to the Supreme Being. Deuteronomy 10:17. "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and the Lord of lords." Psalms 136:3. "O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his mercy endureth for ever." Daniel 2:47. "Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods, and Lord of kings. 1 Timothy 6:14-16. "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen." Revelation 19:11-16. "He whose name is called the Word of God, hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS."

§ 49. Christ’s eternity is abundantly asserted. Psalms 102:24-27. "Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Romans 1:23. "The incorruptible God." 1 Timothy 6:16. "The King eternal, immortal." Revelation 4:9-10. Revelation 5:14. Revelation 10:5-6 and Revelation 15:7.

Hebrews 7:3. "Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life."

§ 50. There must be a vast difference, not only in the degree, but in the kind, of respect and worship due to the supreme God as well as in other things; since there is so infinite a difference between this Being and all others. There is a great difference as to the kind of respect proper for a wife to render to her husband, and that which it is proper for her to render towards other men. So it is with regard to the respect due to God; otherwise there would not be a foundation for that jealousy, which God exercises on occasion of his professing people worshipping other beings. In addition to what has been observed of the works and worship of God, the following sayings of Christ are worthy to be observed. John 5:17. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:19. "What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise." John 5:23. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." It is plain, God is jealous in that respect, that no other being may share with him in honour, that he alone may be exalted. It is expected that other beings should humble themselves, should be brought low, should deny themselves for God, and esteem themselves as nothing before him. And as he requires that they should abase themselves, he would not set up others to exalt them to a rivalship with himself. If men may pray to Christ, may adore him, give themselves up to him, trust in him, praise him, and serve him; what kind of worship is due to the Father, entirely distinct from all this in nature and kind? When Satan tempted Christ to fall down and worship him, as one that had power to dispose of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; Christ replies, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." But the Arians must suppose, that we are required to worship and serve some other being than this Lord God which Christ speaks of, as the disposer not only of the kingdoms of this world, but of the kingdom of heaven and the glory thereof. On the supposition of Christ's being merely a creature, he would much more properly be ranked with creatures exclusively, and never with God (as being called by his name and titles, having ascribed to him his attributes, dominions, &c.). However great a creature he might be, he would be infinitely below God.

§ 51. Concerning the grand objection from that text, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, nor the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father:" I would observe that even the Arians themselves, with regard to some things said of Christ, must make the distinction between his power or knowledge, as to his inferior and superior nature; or, if they do not allow two natures, then, at least, as to his humbled state, and his state both before and after his humiliation: as Mark 7:24. "And would have no man know it, but he could not be hid." This cannot mean that the person who created the whole world, visible and invisible, &c. and by whom all things consist and are governed, had not power to order things so, that he might be hid.

§ 52. It is observable, that Christ is frequently called God absolutely, qeou/v and o` qeo,j; by which name even the heathens themselves always understood the supreme God. Dr. Cudworth, in his "Intellectual System," abundantly shows, that the heathens generally worshipped but one supreme, eternal, universal, uncreated Deity; but that their best philosophers maintained, that this Deity subsisted in three hypostases: though they had many created gods. And in page 627, he says, "It now appears, from what we have declared, that as to the ancient and genuine Platonists and Pythagoreans, none of their trinity of gods, or divine hypostases, were independent; so, neither were they creature-gods, but uncreated, they being all of them not only eternal, and necessarily existent and immutable, but also universal, i.e. infinite and omnipotent causes,

principles, and creators of the whole world. From whence it follows, that these Platonists could not justly be taxed with idolatry, in giving religious worship to each hypostasis of their trinity. And one grand design of Christianity being to abolish the pagan idolatry or creature worship, it cannot justly be charged therewith, from that religious worship given to our Saviour Christ and the Holy Ghost, they being none of them, according to the true and orthodox Christianity, creatures, however the Arian hypothesis made them such. And this was indeed the grand reason why the ancient fathers so zealously opposed Arianism. We shall cite a remarkable passage out of Athanasius, fourth oration against the Arians, to this purpose, as follows:

"Why therefore, do not these Arians, holding this, reckon themselves amongst the pagans or Gentiles, since they do, in like manner, worship the creature besides the Creator? -- th/| kti,sei la,treusan para. to.n kti,santa(." Athanasius's meaning here, could not well be, that they worshipped the creature more than the Creator; forasmuch as the Arians constantly declared that they gave less worship to the Son than to the Father.

"For though the pagans worship one uncreated and many created gods; but these Arians only one uncreated, and one created, to wit, the Son, or Word of God; yet will not this make any real difference betwixt them; because the Arians' one created god, is one of those many pagan gods; and these many gods of the pagans or Gentiles have the same nature with this one, they being alike creatures."

§ 53. It is remarkable, that in so many places, both in the Old Testament and New, when Christ is spoken of, his glory and prerogatives represented, and the respect due to him that the vanity of idols in the same places should be represented, and idolatry warned against. See Psalms 16:4. It is manifest, that it is the Messiah that there speaks. -- See also many prophecies of Isaiah and other prophets. 1 John 5:20-21 : 1 Corinthians 10:19-22.

"There is not the least intimation, where Christ is styled God, either in the texts themselves, or contexts, that this is to be understood of his office, and not of his person; as in the case where magistrates are styled gods, where the very next words explain it, and tell us what is to be understood by it. And when Moses and angels are called gods, no one who attends to the whole discourse, could easily mistake the meaning, and not see that this term God was there used in an inferior and metaphorical sense." Letter to the Dedicator of Mr. Emlyn's Inquiry, &c. p. 7, 8. Matthew 19:17. "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." "Mr. Emlyn affirms it to be evident, that Christ here distinguishes himself from God, and denies of himself what he affirms of God. But the truth of his interpretation entireely depends upon the opinion which the young man had of Christ, who received this answer from him." Ibid. p. 17, 18.

§ 54. That Christ had divine omniscience, appears from his own words; Revelation 2:23. "And all the churches shalt know that I am he which searcheth the hearts and the reins." Now Solomon declares, 1 Kings 8:39. "Thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." And Jeremiah 17:10. God says, "I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins." And Christ does not say, The churches shall know that I search the reins and the heart; but that "I am HE," &c. which, if words have any force in them, yea, if the expression is not altogether unintelligible, implies, "I am he who is distinguished by this character; or the churches shall know that I am the God who searcheth," &c. Ibid. p. 43, 44.

§ 55. That the eternal Logos should be subordinate to the Father, though not inferior in nature; yea, that Christ, in his office, should be subject to the Father, and less than he, though in his higher nature not inferior, is not strange. It is proper, among mankind, that a son should be subordinate to his father, yea, subject in many respects, though of the same human nature; yea, though in no respect inferior in any natural qualification. It was proper that Solomon should be under David his father, and be appointed king by him, and receive charges and directions from him, though, even then, in his youth, probably not inferior to his father. The disciples of Christ, or those that trusted in him, when here on earth,, applied to him as trusting in his ability, not only to heal all diseases of the body, and to raise the dead; but as leaving their souls in his hands, and being able to beat the diseases of their minds; as being the author and fountain of virtue. So Luke 17:5. ""The apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith." So the father of the demoniac, Mark 9:24. "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

§ 56. It is a good argument for Christ's divinity, that he is to be the author of the resurrection. The atoms and particles in one little finger, are capable of so many removes, and such dispersions, that I believe it would surpass any finite understanding, at two or three thousand years' end, to tell what distinct particles of the universe belonged to it. It would require a vast strength and subtlety of mind, to trace but one atom so nicely, as to know that individual atom in the universe, after so long a time; after it had been a particle of air, water, oil, or animal spirit, &c. and had been transported with prodigious swiftness from place to place, backwards and forwards, millions of times, amongst innumerable others of the same kind. Especially, would it be exceeding difficult, so narrowly to watch two of such at once. If so, what would it be, to follow every atom in a man's body; yea, of all the bodies that ever have died, or shall die? And, at the same time, to have the mind exercised with full vigour upon innumerable other matters, that require an equal strength of understanding? and all this with such ease, that it shall be no labour to the mind?

§ 57. God would not have given us any person to be our redeemer, unless he was of divine and absolutely supreme dignity and excellency, or was the supreme God; lest we should be under temptation to pay him too great respect; lest, if he were not the supreme God, we should be under temptation to pay him that respect which is due only to the supreme, and which God, who is a jealous God, will by no means allow to be paid to an inferior being. Men are very liable to be tempted to rate those too highly, from whom they have received great benefits. They are prone to give them that respect and honour, that belongs to God only. Thus, the Gentile world deified and adored such of their kings as did great things for them, and others from whom they received great benefits. So Cornelius was tempted to give too great respect to Peter, he being the person that God had marked out to be his teacher and guide in things pertaining to eternal salvation. So the apostle John could scarce avoid adoring the angel that showed him those visions: he fell down to worship him once and again. Though the first time he had been strictly warned against it; yet the temptation was so great, that he did it again: Revelation 19:10. Revelation 22:8. This being a temptation they were so liable to, was greatly disallowed of by God. When Cornelius fell down before Peter, he took him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." So, when the people at Lystra were about to offer divine worship to Paul and Barnabas, when they heard of it, they rent their clothes, and ran in among them, crying out, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein;" Acts

xiv. And when John was about to adore the angel, how strictly was he warned against it! "See thou do it not," says he; "for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, that have the testimony of Jesus Christ: worship God." And God has always been so careful to guard against it, that he hid the body of Moses, that it might be no temptation to idolatry. But if any thing can be a temptation to give supreme respect and honour to one that is not the Supreme Being, this would be a temptation, viz. to have a person that is not the Supreme Being, to be our redeemer; to have such an one endure such great sufferings out of love to us, and thereby to deliver us from such extreme and eternal misery, and to purchase for us so great and eternal happiness. God therefore, in wisdom, has a pointed such a person to be our redeemer, that is of absolutely supreme glory and excellency, that we may be in no danger of loving and adoring him too much; that we may prize him, exalt him for the great things that he has done for us, as much as we will, nay, so far as his love to us, his sufferings for us, and the benefits we receive by him, can tempt us to, without danger of exceeding. Christ has done as great things for us as ever the Father did. His mercy and love have been as great and wonderful; and we receive as much benefit by them as we do by the love and mercy of the Father. The Father never did greater things for us than to redeem us from hell, and bring us to eternal life. But if Christ had not been a person equal with the Father, and worthy of our equal respect, God would not have so ordered it, that the temptation to love and respect the Son, which results from the favours that we have by kindness received, should be equal with the inducements we have to love and respect the Father.

§ 58. I shall offer some reasons against Dr. Watts's notion of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul. If the pre-existing soul of Christ created the world, then, doubtless, he upholds and governs it. The same Son of God that did one, does the other. He created all things, and by him all things consist. And if so, how was his dominion confined to the Jewish nation, before his incarnation, but extends to all nations since? Besides, there are many things ascribed in the Old Testament to the Son of God, in those very places, which Dr. Watts himself supposes to speak of him, that imply his government of the whole world, and all nations. The same person that is spoken of as King of Israel, is represented as the Governor of the world.

According to this scheme, the greatest of the works of the Son in his created nature, implying the greatest exaltation, was his first work of all; viz. His creating all things, all worlds, all things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: and this before ever he had any trial at all of his obedience, &c. At least, this work seems much greater than judging the world at the last day; which the Scripture often speaks of as one of the highest parts of his exaltation, which he has in reward for his obedience and sufferings: and Dr. Watts himself supposes his honours, since his humiliation, to be much greater than before.

§ 59. On this scheme it will follow, that the covenant of redemption was made with a person that was not sui juris, and not at liberty to act his own mere good pleasure, with respect to undertaking to die for sinners; but was obliged to comply, on the first intimation that it would be well pleasing to God, and a thing that he chose.

§ 60. According to that scheme, the man Christ Jesus was not properly the son of the virgin, and so the son of man. To be the son of a woman, is to receive being in both soul and body, in consequence of a conception in her womb. The soul is the principal part of the man, and sonship implies derivation of the soul as well as the body, by conception. Though the soul is no part of the

mother, and be immediately, given by God, yet that hinders not its being derived by conception; it being consequent on it, according to a law of nature. It is agreeable to a law of nature, that where a perfect human body is conceived in the womb of a woman, and properly nourished and increased, a human soul should come into being: and conception may as properly be the cause whence it is derived, as many other natural effects are derived from natural causes or antecedents. For it is the power of God which produces these effects, though it be according to an established law. The soul being so much the principal part of man, a derivation of the soul by conception, is the chief thing implied in a man's being the son of a woman.

According to what seems to be Dr. Watts's scheme, the Son of God is no distinct divine person from the Father. So far as he is a divine person, he is the same person with the Father. So that in the covenant of redemption, the Father covenants with himself, and he takes satisfaction of himself, &c. Unless you will say, that one nature covenanted with the other; the two natures in the same person covenanted together, and one nature in the same person took satisfaction of the other nature in the same person. But how does this confound our minds, instead of helping our ideas, or making them more easy and intelligible!

§ 61. The Son of God, as a distinct person, was from eternity. It is said, Micah 5:2. "His goings forth were of old; from everlasting." So Proverbs 8:23. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." So he is called, Isaiah 9:6. "The everlasting Father." I know of no expressions used in Scripture, more strong, to signify the eternity of the Father himself.

Dr. Watts supposes the world to be made by the preexistent soul of Christ; and thinks it may properly be so said, though the knowledge and power of this pre-existent soul could not extend to the most minute parts, every atom, &c. -- But it is evidently the design of the Scripture to assure us that Christ made all things whatever, in the absolute universality, John 1:33. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." Colossians 1:16-17. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Now, if we suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it will follow, that let his wisdom and power be as great as they will, if finite, but a few of those individual things that are made, were the effects of his power and wisdom: yea, that the number of the things that were made by him, are so few, that they bear no proportion to others, that did not immediately fall under his notice; or that of the things that are made there are ten thousand times, yea infinitely more, not made by him, than are made by him: -- And so, but infinitely few of their circumstances are ordered by his wisdom.

It is said, Hebrews 2:8. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him." Here it is represented, that God the Father has put every individual thing under the power and government of another person, distinct from himself. But this cannot be true of the human soul of Christ, as it must be according to Dr. Watts's scheme, let the powers of that be never so great, if they are not infinite. For things and circumstances, and dependencies and consequences of things in the world, are infinite in number; and therefore a finite understanding and power cannot extend to them: yea, it can extend to but an infinitely small part of the whole number of individuals, and their circumstances and consequences. Indeed, in order to the disposal of a few things, in their motions and successive

changes, to a certain precise issue, there is need of infinite exactness, and so need of infinite power and wisdom.

§ 62. The work of creation, and so the work of upholding all things in being, can, in no sense, be property said to be the work of any created nature. If the created nature gives forth the word, as Joshua did, when be said, "Sun, stand thou still;" yet it is not that created nature that does it. That being that depends himself on creating power, does not properly do any thing towards creation, as Joshua did nothing towards stopping the sun in his course. So that it cannot he true in Dr. Watts's scheme, that that Son of God, who is a distinct person from God the Father, did at all, in any manner of propriety, create the world, nor does he uphold it or govern it. Nor can those things that Christ often says of himself be true: as "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." -- "Whatsoever the Father doth, those doth the Son likewise," John 5:17, John 5:19; it being very evident, that the works of creating and upholding and governing the world are ascribed to the Son, as a distinct person from the Father.

§ 63. Not only is the word Elohim in the plural number, but it is joined to a verb of the plural number, in Genesis 20:13. When God caused me to wander from my Father's house. The word hightnu, caused to wander, is in the plural number. This is agreeable to the use of plural verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, in Genesis 1:26. Genesis 3:22. Genesis 11:7. See other instances in Genesis 35:7. Exodus 32:24 compared with Nehemiah 9:18. Isaiah 16:6. The very frequent joining of the word Elohim, a word in the plural number, with the word Jehovah, a word in the singular number, (as may be seen in places referred to in the English concordance, under the words, Lord God, Lord his God, Lord my God, Lord our God, Lord their God, Lord thy God, Lord your God,) seems to be a significant indication of the union of several divine persons in one essence. The word Jehovah signifies as much as the word Essence, and is the proper name of God with regard to his self-existent, eternal, all-sufficient, perfect, and immutable Essence. Moses seems to have regard to something remarkable in thus calling Elohim, the plural, so often by the singular name, Jehovah; especially in that remark which he makes for the special observation of God's people Israel, in Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." In the original, it is Jehovah Elohenu Jehovah Ehadh; the more proper translation of which is, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. The verb is understood, and properly inserted between Jehovah Elohenu and Jehovah Ehadh, thus, Jehovah Elohenu is Jehovah Ehadh; which, if most literally translated, is thus, Jehovah Our Divine Persons is one Jehovah; as though Moses, in this remark, had a particular reference to the word Elohim being in the plural number, and would guard the people against imagining from thence that there was a plurality of essences or beings, among whom they were to divide their affections and respect. A further confirmation, that the name Elohim, when used as the name of the True God, signifies some plurality, is, that this same name is commonly, all over the Hebrew Bible, used to signify the gods of the heathens, when many gods are spoken of. See those places in the Hebrew Bible, which are referred to in the English concordance, under the word gods. In Exodus 20:2-3. when it is said in the third verse, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The word is the same as in the foregoing verse, where it is said, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." It is Elohim; in both verses: I am the Jehovah, thy Elohim: Thou shalt have no other Elohim. Yet the latter Elohim is joined with an adjective of the plural number; which seems naturally to lead the children of Israel, to whom God spake these words, to suppose a plurality in the Elohim which brought them out of Egypt, implied in the name

Jehovah. Psalms 58:11. "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth; Elohim Shophetim:" which literally is, Elohim, judges (in the plural number). See the evident distinction made between Jehovah sending, and Jehovah sent to the people, and dwelling in the midst of them, in Zechariah 2:8-11 and Zechariah 4:8-9, Zechariah 4:11. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye." "For behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me." "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee." "Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof?" Joshua 24:19. "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for be is a holy God, Elohim Kedhoshim." He is the holy Gods. Not only is the word Elohim properly plural, the very same that is used, Joshua 24:15. the gods which your fathers served, &c. -- but the adjective holy is plural. A plural substantive and adjective are used here concerning the True God, just in the same manner as in 1 Samuel 4:8. "Who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods." And in Daniel 4:8. "In whom is the Spirit of the holy Gods." So ver. Daniel 9:18 and Daniel 5:11. That the plural number should thus be used with the epithet Holy, agrees well with the doxology of the angels, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts," &c. -- Isaiah 6:1-13 and Revelation 4:1-11.

§ 64. It is an argument, that the Jews of old understood that there were several persons in the Godhead, and particularly, that when the cherubim, in the 6th of Isaiah, cried, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts," they had respect to three persons: that the seventy interpreters, in several places, where the Holy One of Israel is spoken of, use the plural number; as in Isaiah 41:16. "Thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel;"in the LXX is eufranqhsh en gotj agioij Israhl. Isaiah 40:14. "The Zion of the Holy One of Israel;" it is siwu aliwn Iarahl So Jeremiah 51:5. "Filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel;" apw gwn agiwn Iarahl.

05.01.01. Part 1 sec 1

Part 1 sec 1 CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE WILL.

IT may possibly be thought, that there is no great need of going about to define or describe the Will; this word being generally as well understood as any other words we can use to explain it: and so perhaps it would be, not philosophers, metaphysicians, and polemic divines, brought the matter into obscurity by the things they have said of it. But since it is so, I think it may be of some use, and will tend to greater clearness in The following discourse, to say a few things concerning it. And therefore I observe, that the Will (without any metaphysical refining) is, That by which the mind chooses any thing. The faculty of the will, is that power, or principle of mind, by which it is capable of choosing: an act of the will is the same as an act of choosing or choice.

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the will, to say, that it is that by which the soul either chooses or refuse, I am content with it; though I think it enough to say, it is that by which the soul chooses: for in every act of will whatsoever, the mind chooses one thing rather than another; it chooses something rather than the contrary or rather than the want or non-existence of that thing. So in every act of refusal, the mind chooses the absence of the thing refused; the positive and the negative are set before the mind for its choice, and it chooses the negative; and the mind's making its choice in that case is properly the act of the Will: the Will's determining between the two, is a voluntary determination; but that is the same thing as making a choice. So that by whatever names we call the act of the Will, choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, inclining, or being averse, being pleased or displeased with; all may be reduced to this of choosing. For the soul to act voluntarily, is evermore to act electively. Mr. Locke (1) says, " The Will signifies nothing but a power or ability to prefer or choose." And, in the foregoing page, he says, "The word preferring seems best to express the act of volition;" but adds, that "it does it not precisely; for, though a man would prefer flying to walking, yet who can say he ever wills it?" But the instance he mentions, does not prove that there is any thing else in willing, but merely preferring: for it should be considered what is the immediate object of the will, with respect to a man's walking, or any other external action; which is not being removed from one place to another; on the earth or through the air; these are remoter objects of preference; but such or such an immediate exertion of himself. The thing next chosen, or preferred, when a man wills to walk is not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet &c, in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his choosing or preferring such an alteration in his body at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state that the soul preferring or choosing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or choosing, through successive moments that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate

preference, such sensations and motions do actually, instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying; though a man may be said remotely to choose or prefer flying; yet he does not prefer, or desire, under circumstances in view, any immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it; because he has no expectation that he should obtain the desired end by any such exertion and he does not prefer, or incline to, any bodily exertion under this apprehended circumstance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully distinguish the proper objects of the several acts of the will, it will not appear by this, and such like instances, that there is any difference between volition and preference; or that a man's choosing liking best, or being pleased with a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing. Thus an act of the will is commonly expressed by its pleasing a man to do thus or thus ; and a man doing as he wills, and doing as he pleases are in common speech the same thing.

Mr. Locke (2) says, "The Will is perfectly distinguished from desire; which in the very same action may have quite contrary tendency from that which our wills sets us upon. A man, says he, whom I cannot deny, may oblige me to use persuasions to another, which, at the same time I am speaking, I may wish not prevail on him. In this case, it is plain the Will and Desire run counter." I do not suppose, that Will and Desire are words of precisely the same signification: Will seems to be a word of more general signification, extending to things present and absent. Desire respects something absent. I may prefer my present situation and posture, suppose sitting still, or having my eyes open, and so may will it. But yet I cannot think they are so entirely distinct, that they can ever be properly said to run counter. A man never, in any instance, wills any thing contrary to his desires, or desires any thing contrary to his will. The forementioned instance, which Mr. Locke produces, is no proof that ever does. He may, on some consideration or other will to utter speeches which have a tendency to persuade another and still may desire that they may not persuade him; but yet his Will and Desire do not run counter all: the thing which he wills, the very same he desires; and he does not will a thing, and desire the contrary, in any particular. In this instance, it is not carefully observed, what is the thing willed, and what is the thing desired: if it were, it would be found, that Will and Desire do not clash in the least. The thing willed on some consideration, is to utter such words; and certainly, the same consideration so influences him, that he does not desire the contrary; all things considered, he chooses to utter such words, and does not desire not to utter them. And so as to the thing which Mr. Locke speaks of as desired, viz. That the words, though they tend to persuade, should not be effectual to that end, his Will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they should be effectual, but rather wills that they should not, as he desires. In order to prove that the Will and Desire may run counter, it should be shown that they may be contrary one to the other in the same thing, or with respect to the very same object of Will or Desire : but here the objects are two; and in each, taken by themselves, the Will and Desire agree. And it is no wonder that they should not agree in different things, though but little distinguished in their nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Desire agree with Desire, in different things. As in this very instance which Mr. Locke mentions, a person may, on some consideration, desire to use persuasions, and at the same time may desire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will say, that Desire runs counter to Desire; or that this proves that Desire is perfectly a distinct thing from Desire.--The like might be observed of the other instance Mr. Locke produces, of a man's desiring to be eased of pain, &c

But, not to dwell any longer on this, whether Desire and Will, and whether Preference and Volition be precisely the same things, I trust It will he allowed by all, that in every act of Will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference , or a prevailing inclination of the soul, whereby at that instant, it is out of a state of perfect indifference, with respect to the direct object of the volition. So that in every act, or going forth of the Will; there is some preponderation of the mind, one way rather than another; and the soul had rather have or do one thing, than another, or than not to have or do that thing; and that where there is absolutely no preferring or choosing, but a perfect, continuing equilibrium, there is no volition.

05.01.02. Part 1 sec 2

Part 1 sec 2 CONCERNING THE DETERMINATION OF THE WILL. BY determining the Will, if the phrase be used with any meaning, must be intended, causing that the act of the Will or choice should be thus, and not otherwise: and the Will is said to be determined, when, in consequence of some action, or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon a particular object. As when we speak of the determination of motion, we mean causing the motion of the body to be in such a direction, rather than another. The Determination of the Will, supposes an effect, which must have a cause. If the Will be determined, there is a Determiner. This must be supposed to be intended even by them that say, The Will determines itself. If it be so, the Will is both Determiner and determined; it is a cause that acts and produces effects upon itself, and is the object of its own influence and action. With respect to that grand inquiry, "What determines the Will?' it would be very tedious and unnecessary, at present, to examine all the various opinions, which have been advanced concerning this matter; nor is it needful that I should enter into a particular discussion of all points debated in disputes on that other question, "Whether the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding?" It is sufficient to my present purpose to say, It is that motive, which, as it stands in view of the mind, is the strongest, that determines the will. But may be necessary that I should a little explain my meaning. By motive I mean the whole of that which moves, excites, or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing singly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur, and unite their strength, to induce the mind; and when it is so, all together are as one complex motive. And when I speak of the strongest motive, I have respect to the strength of the whole that operates to induce a particular act of volition, whether that be the strength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is objectively a motive, in this sense, must, be something that is extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is some way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is most evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwise than as it is perceived or thought of. And I think it must also be allowed by all, that every thing that is properly called a motive, excitement, or inducement to a perceiving, willing agent, has some sort and degree of tendency, or advantage to move or excite the Will, previous to the effect, or to the act of the will excited. This previous tendency of the motive is what I call the strength of the motive. That motive which has a less degree of previous advantage, or tendency to move the Will, or which appears less inviting, as it stands in the view of the mind, is What I call a weaker motive. On the contrary, that which appears most inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the understanding or apprehension, the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite and induce the choice, is what I call the strongest motive. And in this sense, I suppose the will is always determined by the strongest motive.

Things that exist in the view of the mind have their strength, tendency, or advantage to move, or excite its Will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumstances of the thing viewed,

the nature and circumstances of the mind the mind that views, and the degree and manner of its view; of which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration. But so much I think may be determined in general, without room for controversy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed as good; nor has it any tendency to engage the election of the soul in any further degree than it appears such. For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear, have a tendency, by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them, some other way than by their appearing eligible to it; which is absurd. And therefore it must be true, in some sense, that the will always is, as the greatest apparent good is. But only, for the right understanding of this, two things must be well and distinctly observed.

1. It must be observed in what sense I use the term "good;" namely, as of the same import with "agreeable." To appear good to the mind, as I use the phrase, is the same as to appear agreeable, or seem pleasing to the mind. Certainly, nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, considered as evil or disagreeable; nor indeed, as indifferent, and neither agreeable nor disagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination, and move the Will, it must be under the notion of that which suits the mind. And therefore that must have the greatest tendency to attract and engage it, which as it stands in the mind’s view, suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that sense, is the greatest apparent good: to say otherwise, is little, if any thing, short of a direct and plain contradiction. The word "good," in this sense, includes in its signification, the removal or avoiding of evil, or of that which is disagreeable and uneasy. It is agreeable and pleasing, to avoid what is disagreeable and displeasing, and to have uneasiness removed. So that here is included what Mr. Locke supposes determines the will. For when he speaks of "uneasiness," as determining the will, he must be understood as supposing that the end or aim which governs in the volition or act of preference, is the avoiding or the removal of that uneasiness; and that is the same thing as choosing and seeking what is more easy and agreeable.

2.When I say, that the will is as the greatest apparent good, or, (as I have explained it,) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears most agreeable; it must be carefully observed, to avoid confusion and needless objection, that I speak of the direct and immediate object of the act of volition; and not some object to which the act of will has only an indirect and remote respect. Many acts of volition have some remote relation to an object, that is different from the thing most immediately willed and chosen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to choose whether to drink it, or no; the immediate objects, about which his present volition is conversant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own nets, in drinking the liquor, or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreeable to him. If he chooses to drink it, and not to let it alone, then this action, as it stands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleasing than letting it alone. But the objects to which this act of volition may relate more remotely, and between which his choice may determine more indirectly, are the present pleasure the man expects by drinking, and the future misery which he judges will be the consequence of it: he may judge that this future misery, when it comes, will be more disagreeable and unpleasant, than refraining from drinking now would be. But these two things are not the proper objects that the act of volition spoken of is next conversant about. For the act of Will spoken of, is concerning present drinking, or forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then drinking is the

proper object of the act of his Will; and drinking, on some account or other, now appears most agreeable to him, and suits him best. If he chooses to refrain, then refraining is immediate object of his Will, and is most pleasing to him. If in the choice he makes in the case, he prefers a present pleasure to a future advantage, which he judges will be greater when it comes; then a lesser present pleasure appears more agreeable to him than a greater advantage at a distance. If on the contrary a future advantage is preferred, then that appears most agreeable, and suits him best. And so still, the present volition is, as the greatest apparent good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express myself thus, "that the Will always is as the greatest apparent good," or "as what appears most agreeable," than to say "that the will is determined by the greatest apparent good," or " by what seems most agreeable;" because an appearing most agreeable to the mind, and the mind's preferring, seem scarcely distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more properly be said, that the voluntary action, which is the immediate consequence of the mind's choice, is determined by that which appears most agreeable, than the choice itself; but that volition itself is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which causes it to appear most agreeable. I say, "in or about the mind's view of' the object;" because what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears in the object viewed, but also the manner of the view and the state and circumstances of the mind that views. Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no small difficulty, and might require a treatise by itself, and is not necessary to my present purpose. I shall therefore only mention some things in general.

I. One thing that makes an object proposed to choice agreeable, is the apparent nature and circumstances of the object. And there are various things of this sort, that have influence in rendering the object more or less agreeable; as, 1. That which appears in the object, rendering it beautiful and pleasant, or deformed and irksome to the mind; viewing it as it is in itself.

2. The apparent degree of pleasure or trouble attending the object, or the consequence of it. Such concomitants and consequences being viewed as circumstances of the object, are to be considered as belonging to it; and as it were parts of it, as it stands in the mind's view a proposed object of choice.

3. The apparent state of the pleasure or trouble that appears, with respect to distance of time; being either nearer or farther off. It is a thing in itself agreeable to the mind, to have pleasure speedily; and disagreeable, to have it delayed: so that if there be two equal degrees of pleasure set in the mind's view, and all other things are equal, but one is beheld as near, and the other afar off; the nearer will appear most agreeable, and so will be chosen. Because, though the agreeableness of the objects be exactly equal, as viewed in themselves, yet not as viewed in their circumstances; one of them having the additional agreeableness of the circumstance of nearness.

II. Another thing that contributes to the agreeableness of an object of choice, as it stands in the mind's view, is the manner of view. If the object be something which appears connected with future pleasure, not only will the degree of apparent pleasure have influence, but also the manner of the view, especially in two respects.

1. With respect to the degree of assent, with which the mind judges the pleasure to be future. Because it is more agreeable to have a certain happiness, than an uncertain one; and a pleasure viewed as more probable, all other things being equal, is more agreeable to the mind, than that which is viewed as less probable.

2. With respect to the degree of the idea or apprehension of the future pleasure. With regard to things which are the subject of our thoughts, either past, present, or future, we have much more of an idea or apprehension of some things than others; that is, our idea is much more clear, lively, and strong. Thus the ideas we have of sensible things by immediate sensation, are usually much more lively than those we have by mere imagination, or by contemplation of them when absent. My idea of the sun when I look upon it is more vivid, than when I only think I of it. Our idea of the sweet relish of a delicious fruit is usually stronger when we taste it, than when we only imagine it. And sometimes, the idea we have of things by contemplation, are much stronger and clearer, than at other times. Thus, a man at one time has a much stronger idea of the pleasure which is to be enjoyed in eating some sort of food that he loves, than at another. Now the strength of the idea or the sense that men have of future good or evil, is one thing that has great influence on their minds to excite volition. When two kinds of future pleasure are presented for choice, though both are supposed exactly equal by the judgment, and both equal certain, yet of one the mind has a far more lively sense, than of the other; this last has the greatest advantage by far to affect and attract the mind, and move the will. It is now more agreeable to the mind, to take the pleasure of which it has a strong and lively sense, than that of which it has only a faint idea. The view of the former is attended with the strongest appetite, and the greatest uneasiness attends the want of it; and it is agreeable to the mind to have uneasiness removed, and its appetite gratified. And if several future enjoyments are presented together, as competitors for the choice of the mind, some of them judged to be greater, and others less; the mind also having a more lively idea of the good of some, and of others a less; and some are viewed as of greater certainty or probability than others; and those enjoyments that appear most agreeable in one of these respects, appear least so in others: in this case, all other things being equal, the agreeableness of a proposed object of choice will be in a degree some way compounded of the degree of good supposed by the judgment, the degree of apparent probability or certainty of that good, and the degree of the liveliness of the idea the mind has of that good; because all together concur to constitute the degree in which the object appears at present agreeable; and accordingly will volition be determined.

I might further observe, that the the state of the mind which views a proposed object of choice, is another thing that contributes to the agreeableness or disagreeableness of that object; the particular temper which the mind has by nature, or that has been introduced and established by education, example, custom, or some other means; or the frame or state that the mind is in on a particular occasion. That object which appears agreeable to one, does not so to another. And the same object does not always appear alike agreeable to the same person, at different times. It is most agreeable to some men, to follow their reason; and to others, to follow their appetites: to some men, it is more agreeable to deny a vicious inclination, than to gratify it; others it suits best to gratify the vilest appetites. It is more disagreeable to some men than others, to counteract a former resolution. In these respects, and many others which might be mentioned, different things will be most agreeable to different persons; and not only so, but to the same persons at different times. But possibly it is needless to mention the "state of the mind,' as a ground of the agreeableness of

objects distinct from the other two mentioned before; viz. The apparent nature and circumstances of the objects viewed, and the manner of the view. Perhaps, if we strictly consider the matter, the different temper and state of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableness of objects, any other way, than as it makes the objects themselves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleasure or pain attending them; and, as it occasions the manner of the view to be different, causes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleasure or uneasiness, to be more or less lively. However, I think so much is certain, that volition, in no one instance that can be mentioned, is otherwise than the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has been explained. The choice of the mind never departs from that which, at the time, and with respect to the direct and immediate objects of decision, appears most agreeable and pleasing, all things considered. If the immediate objects of the will are a man's own actions, then those actions which appear most agreeable to him he wills. If it be now most agreeable to him, all things considered, to walk, then he now wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at present appears to him, most agreeable to speak, then he chooses to speak; if it suits him best to keep silence, then he chooses to keep silence. There is scarcely a plainer and more universal dictate of the sense and experience of mankind, than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what suits them best, or what is most agreeable to them. To say, that they do what pleases them, but yet not what is agreeable to them, is the same thing as to say, they do what they please, but do not act their pleasure; and that is to say, that they do what they please and yet do not what they please.

It appears from these things, that in some sense, the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. But then the understanding must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called reason or judgment. If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best, or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most agreeable, all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions in any respect: although that dictate of reason, when it takes place, has concern in the compound influence which moves Will; and should be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the Will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subducted from them. When such dictate of reason concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale ; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, resisting the influence of other things: yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the Will is determined in opposition to it.

These things may serve, I hope, in some measure, illustrate and confirm the position laid down in the beginning of this section, viz. "That the Will is always determined by the strongest motive," or by that view the mind which has the greatest degree of previous tendency to excite volition. But whether I have been so happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein consists the strength of motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the position itself; which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is a point of chief importance to the purpose of the ensuing discourse: And the truth of it, I hope, will appear with great clearness, before I have finished what I have to say on the subject of human liberty.

05.01.03. Part 1 sec 2

Part 1 Sec 3 THE words necessary, impossible, &c. are abundantly used in controversies about Free-Will and Moral Agency ; an therefore the sense in which they are used should clearly understood.

Here I might say, that a thing is then said to be necessary when it must be, and cannot be otherwise. But this would not properly be a definition of Necessity, any more than I explained the word must, by the phrase, there being Necessity. The words must, can, and cannot, need explication as much as the words necessary, and impossible; excepting that the former are words that in earliest life we more commonly use. The word necessary, as used in common speech, is a relative term; and relates to some supposed opposition made to the existence of a thing, which opposition is overcome, or proves insufficient to hinder or alter it. That is necessary, in the original and proper sense of the word, which is, or will be, notwithstanding all supposable opposition. To say, that a thing is necessary, is the same thing as to say, that it is impossible that it should not be. But the word impossible is manifestly a relative term, and has reference to supposed power exerted to bring a thing to pass, which is insufficient for the effect; as the word unable is relative and has relation to ability, or endeavor, which is insufficient. Also the word irresistible is relative, and has always reference to resistance which is made, or may be made, to some force or power tending to an effect, and is insufficient to withstand the power, or hinder the effect. The common notion of Necessity and Impossibility Implies something that frustrates endeavor or desire. Here several things are to be noted.

1. Things are said to be necessary in general, which are or will be notwithstanding any supposable opposition from whatever quarter. But things are said to be necessary to us, which are or will be notwithstanding all opposition supposable in the case from us. The same may be observed of the word impossible, and other such like terms.

2. These terms necessary, impossible, irresistible, &c. more especially belong to controversies about liberty and moral agency, as used in the latter of the two senses now mentioned, viz. as necessary or impossible to us, and with relation to any supposable opposition or endeavor of ours.

3. As the word Necessity, in its vulgar and common use, is relative, and has always reference to some supposable insufficient opposition; so when we speak of anything as necessary to us, it is with relation to some supposable opposition of our Wills, or some voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary. For we do not properly make opposition to an event, any otherwise than as we voluntarily oppose it. Things are said to be what must be, or necessarily are, as to us, when they are, or will be, though we desire or endeavor the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their existence: but such opposition of ours always either consists in, or implies, opposition of our wills.

It is manifest that all such like words and phrases, as vulgarly used, are understood in this manner. A thing is said to be necessary, when we cannot help it, let us do what we will. So any thing is said to be impossible to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to pass, and endeavor it; or

at least may be supposed to desire and seek it; but all our desires and endeavors are, or would be, vain. And that is said to be irresistible, which overcomes all our opposition, resistance, and endeavor to the contrary. And we are said to be unable to do a thing when our supposable desires and endeavors are insufficient.

We are accustomed, in the common use of language, thus to apply and understand these phrases: we grow up with such a habit; which, by the daily use of these terms from our childhood, becomes fixed and settled; so that the idea of a relation to a supposed will, desire, and endeavor of ours, is strongly connected with these terms, whenever we hear the words used. Such ideas, and these words, are so associated, that they unavoidably go together, one suggests the other, and never can be easily separated as long as we live. And though we use the words, as terms of art, in another sense, get, unless we are exceedingly circumspect, we shall insensibly slide into the vulgar use of them, and so apply the words in a very inconsistent manner, which will deceive and confound us in our reasonings and discourses, even when we pretend to use them as terms of art.

4. It follows from what has been observed, that when these terms necessary, impossible, irresistible, unable, &c. are used in cases wherein no insufficient will is supposed, or can be supposed, but the very nature of the supposed case itself excludes any opposition, will, or endeavor; they are then not used in their proper signification. The reason is manifest; in such cases we cannot use the words with reference to a supposable opposition, will, or endeavor. And therefore if any man uses these terms in such cases, he either uses them nonsensically, or in some new sense, diverse from their original and proper meaning. As for instance; if any one should affirm after this manner, That it is necessary for a man, or what must be, that he should choose virtue rather than vice, during the time that he prefers virtue to vice; and that it is a thing impossible and irresistible, that it should be otherwise than that he should have this choice, so long as this choice continues; such a one would use the terms must, irresistible, &c. with either insignificance, or in some new sense, diverse from their common use; which is with reference, as has been observed, to supposable opposition, unwillingness, and resistance; whereas, here, the very supposition excludes and denies any such thing: for the case supposed is that of being willing, and choosing.

5. It appears from what has been said, that these terms necessary, impossible, &c. are often used by philosophers and metaphysicians in a sense quite diverse from their common and original signification; for they apply them to man cases in which no opposition is supposable. Thus they use them with respect to God’s existence before the creation of the world, when there was no other being; with regard to many of the dispositions and acts of the divine Being, such as his loving himself, his loving righteousness, hating sin, &c. So they apply them to many cases of the inclinations and actions of created intelligent beings wherein all opposition of the Will is excluded in the very supposition of the case.

Metaphysical or philosophical Necessity is nothing different from their certainty. I speak not now of the certainty of knowledge, but the certainty that is in things themselves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge, or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the proposition which affirms them.

What is sometimes given as the definition of philosophical Necessity, namely, "That by which a thing cannot but be," or "where by it cannot be otherwise," fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts: First, the words can, or cannot, need explanation as much as the word Necessity; and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one asked us what we mean, when we say, a thing cannot but be, we might explain ourselves by saying, it must necessarily be so; as well as explain Necessity, by saying, it is that by which a thing cannot but be. And Secondly, this definition is liable to the fore-mentioned great inconvenience; the words cannot, or unable, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the thing spoken of; to which as I have now observed, the word Necessity, as used by philosophers, has no reference.

Philosophical Necessity is really nothing else than the FULL AND FIXED CONNECTION BETWEEN THE THINGS SIGNIFIED BY THE SUBJECT AND PREDICATE OF A PROPOSITION, which affirms something to be true. When there is such a connection, then the thing affirmed in the proposition is necessary, in a philosophical sense; whether any opposition or contrary effort be supposed, or no. When the subject and predicate of the proposition, which affirms the existence of any thing, either substance, quality, act, or circumstance, have a full and CERTAIN CONNECTION, then the existence or being of that thing is said to be necessary in a metaphysical sense. And in this sense I use the word necessity, in the following discourse, when I endeavor to prove that necessity is not inconsistent with liberty. The subject and predicate of a proposition, which affirms existence of something, may have a full, fixed, and certain connection several ways.

(1.) They may have a full and perfect connection in and themselves; because it may imply a contradiction, or gross absurdity, to suppose them not connected. Thus many things are necessary in their own nature. So the eternal existence of being generally considered, is necessary in itself: because it would be in itself the greatest absurdity, to deny the existence of being in general, or to say there was absolute and universal nothing; and is as it were the sum of all contradictions; as might be shown if this were a proper place for it. So God’s infinity and other attributes are necessary. So it is necessary in its own nature, that two and two should be four; and it is necessary that all right lines drawn from the center of a circle to the circumference should be equal. It is necessary, fit and suitable, that men should do to others, as they would that they should do to them. So innumerable metaphysical and mathematical truths are necessary in themselves: the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirm them, are perfectly connected of themselves.

(2.) The connection of the subject and predicate of; proposition, which affirms the existence of something, may be fixed and made certain, because the existence of that thing is already come to pass; and either now is, or has been; and so has, as it were, made sure of existence. And therefore, the proposition which affirms present and past existence of it, may by this means be made certain and necessarily and unalterably true; the past event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its existence; and has made it impossible but that existence should be truly predicated of it. Thus the existence of whatever is already come to pass, is now become necessary; it is become impossible it should be otherwise than true, that such a thing has been.

(3.) The subject and predicate of a proposition which affirms something to be, may have a real and certain connection consequently; and so the existence of the thing may be consequently necessary; as it may be surely and firmly connected with something else, that is necessary in one of the former respects. As it is either fully an; thoroughly connected with that which is absolutely necessary in its own nature, or with something which has already received and made sure of existence. This Necessity lies in, or may be explained by, the connection of two or more propositions one with another.----Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are necessary, are necessary themselves, by a Necessity of consequence. And here it may be observed, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be said to be necessary, are necessary only in this last way. Their existence is not necessary in itself; for if so, the always would have existed. Nor is their existence become necessary by being already come to pass. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to pass hereafter is or can be necessary, is by a connection with something that is necessary in its own nature, or something that already is, or has been; so that the one being supposed the other certainly follows.--And this also is the only way that all things past, excepting those which were from eternity, could be necessary before they come to pass; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatsoever that ever has had or will have a beginning, has come into being necessarily, or will hereafter necessarily exist. And therefore this is the Necessity which especially belongs to controversies about the acts of the will.

It may be of some use in these controversies, further to observe concerning, metaphysical Necessity, that (agreeable to the distinction before observed of Necessity, as vulgarly understood) things that exist may be said to be necessary, either with a general or particular Necessity. The existence of a thing may be said to be necessary with a general Necessity, when, all things considered, there is a foundation for the certainty of their existence; or when in the most general and universal view of things, the subject and predicate of the proposition, which affirms its existence, would appear with an infallible connection. An event, or the existence of a thing, may be said to be necessary with a particular Necessity, when nothing that can be taken into consideration, in or about a person, thing, or time, alters the case at all, as to the certainty of an event, or the existence of a thing; or can be of any account at all, in determining the infallibility of the connection of the subject and predicate in the proposition which affirms the existence of the things; so that it is all one, as to that person, or thing, at least, at that time, as if the existence were necessary with a Necessity that is most universal and absolute. Thus there are many things that happen to particular persons, in the existence of which no will of theirs has any concern, at least, at that time; which, whether they are necessary or not, with regard to things in general, yet are necessary to them, and with regard to any volition of theirs at that time; as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair.----I shall have occasion to apply this observation to particular instances in the following discourse.---Whether the same things that are necessary with a particular Necessity, be not also necessary with a general Necessity, may be a matter of future consideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the case, as to the use of this distinction of the kinds of Necessity.

These things may be sufficient for the explaining of the terms necessary and Necessity, as terms of art, and as often used by metaphysicians, and controversial writers in divinity, in a sense diverse from, and more extensive than, their original meaning, in common language, which was before explained.

What has been said to show the meaning of the terms necessary and necessity, may be sufficient for the explaining of the opposite terms, impossible and impossibility. For there is no difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former positive. Impossibility is the same as negative necessity, or a Necessity that a thing should not be. And it is used as a term of art in a like diversity from the original and vulgar meaning, with Necessity. The same may be observed concerning the words unable and inability. It has been observed, that these terms, in their original and common use, have relation to will and endeavor, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient for the bringing to pass the thing willed and endeavored. But as these terms are often used by philosophers and divines, especially writers on controversies about Free Will, they are used in a quite different and far more extensive sense, and are applied to many cases wherein no will or endeavor for the bringing of the thing to pass is or can be supposed. As the words necessary, impossible, unable, &c. are used by polemic writers, in a sense diverse from their common signification, the like has happened to the term contingent. Any thing is said to be contingent, or to come to pass by chance or accident, in the original meaning of such words, when its connection with its causes or antecedents, according to the established course of things, is not discerned; and so is what we have no means of foreseeing. And especially is any thing said to be contingent, or accidental, with regard to us, when it comes to pass without our foreknowledge, and besides our design and scope. But the word contingent is abundantly used in a very different sense; not for that whose connection with the series of things we cannot discern, so as to foresee the event, but for something which has absolutely no previous ground or reason, with which its existence has any fixed and certain connection.

05.01.04. Part 1 Sec 4

Part 1 Sec 4 That Necessity which has been explained, consisting in an infallible connexion of the things signified by the subject and predicate of a proposition, as intelligent beings are the subjects of it, is distinguished into moral and natural Necessity.

I shall not now stand to inquire whether this distinction be a proper and perfect distinction; but shall only explain how these two sorts of Necessity are understood, as the terms are sometimes used, and as they are used in the following discourse. The phrase, moral Necessity, is used variously: some- times it is used for a Necessity of moral obligation. So we say, a man is under Necessity, when he is under bonds of duty and conscience, from which he cannot be discharged. Again, the word Necessity is often used for great obligation in point of interest. Sometimes by moral Necessity is meant that apparent connexion of things, which is the ground of moral evidence; and so is distinguished from absolute Necessity, or that sure connexion of things, that is a foundation for infallible certainty. In this sense, moral Necessity signifies much the same as that high degree of probability, which is ordinarily sufficient to satisfy mankind, in their conduct and behavior in the world, as they would consult their own safety and interest, and treat others properly as members of society. And sometimes by moral Necessity is meant that Necessity of connexion and consequence, which arises from such moral causes, as the strength of inclination, or motives, and the connexion which there is in many cases between these and such certain volitions and actions. And it is in this sense, that I use the phrase, moral necessity, in the following discourse. By natural necessity, as applied to men, I mean such Necessity as men are under through the force of natural causes; as distinguished from what are called moral causes, such as habits and dispositions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus men, placed in certain circumstances, are the subjects of particular sensations by Necessity: they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they see the objects presented before them in a clear light, when their eyes are opened: so they assent to the truth of certain propositions, as soon as the terms are understood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never cross one another; so by a natural Necessity men’s bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to support them. But here several things may be noted concerning these two kinds of Necessity.

1. Moral Necessity may be as absolute as natural Necessity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cause, as a natural, necessary effect is with its natural cause. Whether the Will in every case is necessarily determined by the strongest motive, or whether the Will ever makes any resistance to such a motive, or can ever oppose the strongest present inclination, or not; if that matter should be controverted, yet I suppose none will deny, but that, in some cases, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive presented, may be so powerful, that the act of the will may be certainly and indissolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous bias are very strong, all will allow that there is some difficulty in going against them. And if they were yet stronger, the difficulty would be still greater. And therefore, if more were still added to their strength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty so great, that it would be wholly impossible to surmount it; for this plain reason, because whatever power men may be supposed to

have to surmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and so goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can surmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of strength, because the degrees of strength are beyond the degrees of difficulty; yet if the difficulty be increased to thirty, or an hundred, or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also increased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As therefore it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a sure and perfect connexion between moral causes and effects; so this only is what I call by the name of moral Necessity.

2. When I use this distinction of moral and natured Necessity, I would not he understood to suppose, that if any thing come to pass by the former kind of Necessity, the nature of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a moral habit or motive is so strong, that the act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the nature of things. But natural and moral are the terms by which thee two kinds of Necessity have usually been called; and they must be distinguished by some names, for there is a difference between them, that is very important in its consequences. This difference, however, does not lie so much in the nature of the connexion, as in the two terms connected. The cause with which the effect is connected, is of a particular kind; viz. that which is of a moral nature; either some previous habitual disposition, or some motive exhibited to the understanding. And the effect is also of a particular kind; being likewise of a moral nature; consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul, or voluntary action.

I suppose, that Necessity which is called natural in distinction from moral Necessity, is so called, because mere nature, as the word is vulgarly used, is concerned, without any thing of choice. The word nature is often used in opposition to choice; not because nature has indeed never any hand in our choice; but, probably, because we first get our notion of nature from that obvious course of events, which we observe in many things where our choice has no concern; and especially in the material world; which, in very many parts of it, we easily perceive to be in a settled course; the stated order, and manner of succession, being very apparent. But where we do not readily discern the rule and connexion, (though there be a connexion, according to an established law, truly taking place,) we signify the manner of event by some other name. Even in many things which are seen in the material and inanimate world, which do not obviously come to pass according to any settled course, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of nature, but by such names as accident, chance, contingence, &c. So men make a distinction between nature and choice; as if they were completely and universally distinct. Whereas, I suppose none will deny but that choice, in many cases, arises from nature, as truly as other events. But the connexion between acts of choice, and their causes, according to established laws, is not so obvious. And we observe that choice is, as it were, a new principle of motion and action, different from that established order of things which is most obvious, and seen especially in corporeal things. The choice also often interposes, interrupts, and alters the chain of events in these external objects, and causes them to proceed otherwise than they would do, if let alone. Hence it is spoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely distinct from nature, and properly set in opposition to it. Names being commonly given to things, according to what is most obvious, and is suggested by what appears to the senses without reflection and research.

3. It must be observed, that in what has been explained, as signified by the name of moral Necessity, the word Necessity is not used according to the original design and meaning of the

word: for, as was observed before, such terms, necessary, impossible, irresistible, &c. in common speech, and their most proper sense, are always relative; having reference to some supposable voluntary opposition or endeavour, that is insufficient. But no such opposition, or contrary will and endeavour, is supposable in the case of moral Necessity; which is a certainty of the inclination and will itself; which does not admit of the supposition of a will to oppose and resist it. For it is absurd, to suppose the same individual will to oppose itself, in its present act; or the present choice to be opposite to and resisting present choice: as absurd as it is to talk of two contrary motions, in the same moving body, at the same time.--- And therefore the very case supposed never admits of any trial, whether an opposing or resisting will can overcome this Necessity.

What has been said of natural and mora! Necessity, may serve to explain what is intended by natural arid moral Inability. We are said to be naturally unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we will, because what is most commonly called nature does not allow of it, or because of some impeding defect or obstacle that is extrinsic to the Will; either in the Faculty of understanding, constitution of body, or external objects. Moral Inability consists not in any of these things; but either in the want of inclination; or the strength of a contrary inclination; or the want of sufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the Will, or the strength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both these may be resolved into one; and it may be said in one word, that moral Inability consists in the opposition or want of inclination. For when a person is unable to will or choose such a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the same thing as his being unable through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in such circumstances, and under the influence of such views. To give some instances of this moral Inability.-- A woman of great honour and chastity may have a moral Inability to prostitute herself to her slave. A child of great love and duty to his parents, may be thus unable to kill his father. A very lascivious man, in case of certain opportunities and temptations, and in the absence of such and such restraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his lust. A drunkard, under such and such circumstances, may be unable to forbear taking strong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to desire his prosperity; yea, some may be so under the power of a vile disposition, that they may be unable to love those who are most worthy of their esteem and affection. A strong habit of virtue, and a great degree of holiness, may cause a moral Inability to love wickedness in general, and may render a man unable to take complacence in wicked persons or things; or to choose a wicked in preference to a virtuous life. And on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedness may lay a man under an Inability to love and choose holiness; and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy Being, or to choose and cleave to him as his chief good.

Here it may be of use to observe this distinction of moral Inability, viz. of that which is general and habitual, and that which is particular and occasional. By a general and habitual moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of that kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus a very ill-natured man may be unable to exert such acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts; and a man whose heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert grateful acts. through that stated defect of a grateful inclination. By particular and occasional moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the strength or defect of present motives, or of inducements presented to the view of the

understanding, on this occasion.-- If it be so, that the Will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an Inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any case, that the Will should, at present, go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest advantage to induce it.-- The former of these kinds of moral inability is most commonly called by the name of Inability; because the word, in its most proper and original signification, has respect to some stated defect. And this especially obtains the name of Inability also upon another account: -- because, as before observed, the word Inability, in its original and most common use, is a relative term; and has respect to will and endeavor, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient to bring to pass the thing desired and endeavored. Now there may be more of an appearance and shadow of this, with respect to the acts which arise from a fixed and strong habit, than others that arise only from transient occasions and causes. Indeed will and endeavour against, or diverse from present acts of the Will are in no case supposable, whether those acts be occasional or habitual; for that would be to suppose the Will, at present, to be otherwise than, at present, it is. But yet their may be will and endeavour against future acts of the Will, or volitions that are likely to take place, as viewed at a distance. It is no contradiction, to suppose that the acts of the Will at one time, may be against the acts of the Will at another time; and there may be desires and endeavors to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but such desires and endeavors are, in many cases, rendered insufficient and vain, through fixedness of habit: when the occasion returns, the strength of habit overcomes and baffles all such opposition. In this respect, a man may be in miserable slavery and bondage to a strong habit. But it may be comparatively easy to make an alteration, with respect to such future acts, as are only occasional and transient; because the occasion or transient cause, if foreseen, may often easily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral Inability that attends fixed habits, especially obtains the name of Inability. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly resist itself, and do it in vain, in the case of strong habits; so reason may resist present acts of the Will, and its resistance be insufficient; and this is more commonly the case also, when the acts arise from strong habit. But it must be observed concerning moral Inability, in each kind of it, that the word Inability is used in a sense very diverse from its original import. The word signifies only a natural Inability, in the proper use of it; and is applied to such cases only wherein a present will or inclination to the thing, with respect to which a person is said to be unable, is supposable. It cannot be truly said, according to the ordinary use of language, that a malicious man, let him be never so malicious, cannot hold his hand from striking, or that he is not able to show his neighbor kindness; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be never so strong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the strictest propriety of speech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election: and a man cannot be truly said to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will. It is improperly said, that a person cannot perform those external actions, which are dependent on the act of the Will, and which would be easily performed, if the act of the Will were present. And if it be improperly said, that he cannot perform those external voluntary actions, which depend on the Will, it is in some respect more improperly said, that he is unable to exert the acts of the Will themselves; because it is more evidently false, with respect to these, that he cannot if he will: for to say so, is a downright contradiction; it is to say, he cannot will, if he dries will. And in this case, not only is it true, that it is easy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is performed; and nothing else remains to be done. Therefore, in these things, to ascribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not just; because the thing

wanting, is not a being able, but a being willing. There are faculties of mind, and a capacity of nature, and every thing else, sufficient, but a disposition: nothing is wanting but a will.

05.01.05. Part 1 sec 5

Part 1 sec 5 CONCERNING THE NOTION OF LIBERTY, AND OF MORAL AGENCY. The plain and obvious meaning of the words Freedom and Liberty, in common speech, is The power, opportunity, or advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleases. Or in other words, his being free from hindrance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any respect. as he wills. -- And the contrary to Liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a person's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise.

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word Liberty, in the ordinary use of language; as I trust that none that has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in propriety of speech, neither Liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be ascribed to any being or thing, but that which has such a faculty, power or property, as is called will. For that which is possessed of no will, cannot have any paver or opportunity of doing according to its mill, nor be necessitated to act contrary to its will, nor be restrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore to talk of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the very Will itself, is not to speak good sense; if we judge of sense, and nonsense, by the original and proper signification of words.-- For the Will itself is not an Agent that has a will: the power of choosing, itself, has not a power of choosing. That which has the power of volition is the man, or the soul, and not the power of volition itself. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his will, is the Agent who is possessed of the Will; and not the Will which he is possessed of. We say with propriety, that a bird let loose has power and liberty to fly; but not that the bird's power of flying has a power arid Liberty of flying. To be free is the property of an Agent, who is possessed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But these qualities are the properties of persons; and not the properties of properties.

There are two things contrary to what is called Liberty in common speech. One is constraint; otherwise called force, compulsion, and coaction; which is a person's being necessitated to do a thing contrary to his will. The other is restraint; which is, his being hindered, and not having power to do according to his will. But that which has no will, cannot be the subject of these things.-- I need say the less on this bead, Mr. Locke having set the same thing forth, with so great clearness, in his Essay on the Human Understanding. But one thing more I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called Liberty; namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning of the word, any thing of the cause of that choice; or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition; whether it was caused by some external motive, or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by some internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cause; whether it was necessarily connected with something foregoing, or not connected. Let the person come by his choice any how, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is perfectly free, according to, the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been said may be sufficient to show what is meant by Liberty, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the usual and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as used by Arminians, Pelagians, and others, who oppose the Calvinists, has an entirely different signification.-- These several things belong to their notion of Liberty. 1. That it consists in a self-determining power in the Will, or a certain sovereignty the Will has over itself, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; so as not to be dependent, in its determinations, on any cause without itself, nor determined by any thing prior to its own Acts 2:1-47. Indifference belongs to Liberty in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition, be in equilibria. 3. contingence is another thing that belongs and is essential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as opposed to all necessity, or any fixed and certain I connexion with some previous ground or reason of its existence. They suppose the essence of Liberty so much to consist in these things, that unless the will of man be free in this sense, he has no real freedom, how much soever, he may be at Liberty to act according to his will. A moral agent is a being that is capable of those actions that have a morel quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a moral faculty, or sense of moral good and evil, or of such a thing as desert or worthiness, of praise or blame, reward or punishments; and a capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty. The sun is very excellent and beneficial in its action and influence on the earth, in warming and causing it to bring forth its fruit; but it is not a moral agent: its action, though good, is not virtuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a city, and consumes great part of it, is very mischievous in its operation; but is not a moral Agent: what it does is not faulty or sinful, or deserving of any punishment. The brute creatures are not moral Agents: the actions of some of them are very profitable and pleasant; others are very hurtful: yet seeing they have no moral faculty, or sense of desert, and do not act from choice guided by understanding, or with a capacity of reasoning and reflecting, but only from instinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral inducements, their actions are not properly sinful or virtuous, nor are they properly the subjects of any such moral treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their faults or good deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumstantial difference between the moral Agency of a ruler and a subject. I call it circumstantial, because it lies only in the difference of moral inducements, by which they are capable of being influenced, arising from the difference of circumstance. A ruler, acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its sanctions of threatenings and promises, rewards and punishments, as the subject is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral Agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a ruler towards his creatures, and never as a adjunct, differs in that respect from the moral Agency of created intelligent beings. God’s actions, and particularly those which he exerts as a moral governor, have moral qualifications, and are morally good in the highest degree. They are most perfectly holy and righteous; and we must conceive of Him as influenced, in the highest degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement; viz. the moral good which He sees in such and such things: and therefore He is, in the most proper sense, a moral Agent, the source of all moral ability and Agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reason of his being supreme over all, it is not

possible He should be under the influence of law or command, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments, counsels or warnings. The essential qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greatest possible perfection; such as understanding to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of discerning that moral worthiness and demerit, by which some things are praiseworthy, others deserving of blame and punishment; and also a capacity of choice, and choice guided by understanding, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praiseworthy. And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he made man, (which we read of, Genesis 1:26-27, and Genesis 9:6) by which God distinguished man from the beasts, viz. in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the natural image of God; whereas the spiritual and moral image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency with which he was endowed.

05.02.01. Part 2 Sec 1

Part 2 Sec 1

Showing the manifest inconsistence of the Arminian notion of Liberty of Will, consisting in the Will's self-determining Power.

Having taken notice of those things which may be necessary to be observed, concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phrases made use of in controversies concerning human liberty, and particularly observed what Liberty is according to the common language and general apprehension of mankind, and what it is as understood and maintained by Arminians; I proceed to consider the Arminian notion of the Freedom. of the Will, and the supposed necessity of it in order to moral agency, or in order to any one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatenings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described, as the thing meant by Liberty in common speech, be not sufficient, and the only Liberty, which make, or can make any one a moral agent, and so properly the subject of these things. In this Part, I shall consider whether any such thing be possible or conceivable, as that Freedom of Will which Arminians insist on; and shall inquire, whether any such sort of Liberty be necessary to moral agency, &c. in the next part. And first of all, I shall consider the notion of a self-determining Power in the Will: wherein, according to the Arminians, does most essentially consist the Will's freedom; and shall particularly inquire, whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistence, to suppose that the Will itself determines all the free acts of the will.

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such ways of speaking as the Will determining itself; because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the powers of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes, and much confusion, as Mr. Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the Arminians, when they speak of the Will's determining itself, do by the Will mean the soul willing. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the will, as the determiner, they mean the soul in the exercise of a power of willing, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles of acting, or doing such things we mean that the agents which have these Powers of acting, do them, in the exercise of those Powers. So where we say, valor fights courageously, we mean, the man who is under the influence of valor fights courageously. Where we say, love seeks the object loved, we mean, the person loving seeks that object. When we say, the understanding discerns, we mean the soul in the exercise of that faculty So when it is said, the will decides or determines, this meaning must be, that the person, in the exercise of: Power of willing and choosing, or the soul, acting voluntarily, determines.

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free acts the soul determines them in the exercise of a Power of willing and choosing; or, which is the same thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts, by choosing its own acts. If the Will determines the Will then choice

orders and determines the choice; and acts c choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct of other acts of choice. And therefore if the Will deter mines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the will be also a free act. then by these principles, in this act too, the will is self-determined: that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses; or, which is the same thing, it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the will, choosing that. Which brings us directly to a contradiction: for it supposes an act of the Will preceding the first act in the whole train, dieting and determining the rest; or a free act of the Will, before the first free act of the Will. Or else we must come at last to an act of the will, determining the consequent acts, wherein the Will is not self-determined, and so is not a free act, in this notion of freedom: but if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifest at first view, but shall be demonstrated presently.

If the Will, which we find governs the members of the body, and determines their motions, does also govern itself, and determines its own actions, it doubtless determines them the same way, even by antecedent volitions. The Will determines which way the hands and feet shall move, by an act of choice: and there is no other way of the Will's determining, directing, or commanding any thing at all. Whatsoever the will commands, it commands by an act of the Will. And if it has itself under its command, and determines itself in its own actions, it doubtless does it the same way that it determines other things which are under its command. So that if the freedom of the will consists in this, that it has itself and its own actions under its command and direction, and its own volitions are determined by itself, it will follow, that every free volition arises from another antecedent volition, directing and commanding that: and if that directing volition be also free, in that also the will is determined; that is to say, that directing volition is determined by another going before that; and so on, till we come to the first volition in the whole series: and if that first volition be free, and the will self-determined in it, then that is determined by another volition preceding that. Which is a contradiction; because by the supposition, it can have none before it, to direct or determine it, being the first in the train. But if that first volition is not determined by any preceding act of the Will, then that act is not determined by the Will, and so is not free in the Arminian notion of freedom, which consists in the Will's self-determination. And if that first act of the will which determines and fixes the subsequent acts, be not free, none of the following acts which are determined by it can be free.-- If we suppose there are five acts in the train, the fifth and last determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the second, and the second by the first; if the first is not determined by the Will, and so not free, then none of them are truly determined by the Will: that is, that each of them are as they are, and not otherwise, is not first owing to the will, but to the determination of the erst in the series, which is not dependent on the will, and is that which the will has no hand in determining. And this being that which decides what the rest shall be, and determines their existence; therefore the first determination of their existence is not from the Will. The case is just the same, if instead of a chain of five acts of the Will, we should suppose a succession of ten, or an hundred, or ten thousand. If the first act he not free, being determined by something out of the will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to itself, and that the next, and so on; none of them are free, but all originally depend on, and are determined by, some cause out of the Will; and so all freedom in the case is excluded, and no act of the will can be free, according to this notion of freedom. If we should suppose a long chain of ten thousand links, so connected, that if the first link moves, it will move the next, and that the next; and so the whole

chain must be determined to motion, and in the direction of its motion, by the motion of the first link; and that is moved by something else; in this case, though all the links, but one, are moved by other parts of the same chain, yet it appears that the motion of no one, nor the direction of its motion, is from any self-moving or self-determining power in the chain, any more than if every link were immediately moved by something that did not belong to the chain.-- If the Will be not free in the first act, which causes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is caused by that first act; for though indeed the Will caused it, yet it did not cause it freely; because the preceding act, by which it was caused, was not free. And again, if the Will be not free in the second act, so neither can it be in the third, which is caused by that; because in like manner, that third was determined by an act of the Will that was not free. And so we may go on to the next act, and from that to the next; and how long soever the succession of acts is, it is all one: if the first on which the whole chain depends, and which determines all the rest, be not a free act, the Will is not free in causing or determining any one of those acts; because the act by which it determines them all is not a free act; and therefore the Will is no more free in determining them, than if it did not cause them at all.-- Thus, this Arminian notion of Liberty of the Will, consisting in the will's Self-determination, is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world.

05.02.02. Part 2 sec 2

Part 2 sec 2 Several supposed ways of evading the foregoing reasoning considered. Is to evade the force of what has been observed, it should be said, that when the Arminians speak of the Will determining its own acts, they do not mean that the Will determines them by any preceding act, or that one act of the will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of Will, or the soul in the use of that power, determines its own volitions; and that it does it without any act going before the act determined; such an evasion would be full of the most gross absurdity.-- I confess, it is an evasion of my own inventing; and I do not know but I should wrong the Arminians, in supposing that any of them would make use of it. Bur, it being as good a one as I can invent, I would observe upon it a few things.

First, If the power of the will determines an act of volition, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power determines it, that is the same thing as for the soul to determine volition by an act of will, For an exercise of the power of will, and an art of that power, are the same thing. therefore to say, that the power of will, or the soul in the use or exercise of that power, determines volition, without an act of will preceding the volition determined, is a contradiction.

Secondly, If a power of will determines the act of the Will, then a power of choosing determines it. For, as was before observed, in every act of will, there is choice, and a power of willing is a power of choosing. But if a power of choosing determines the act of volition, it determines it by choosing it. 1 or it is most absurd to say, that a power of choosing determines one thing rather than another, without choosing any thing. But if a power of choosing determines volition by choosing it, then here is the act of volition determined by an antecedent choice, choosing that volition.

Thirdly, To say, that the faculty, or the soul, determines its own volition, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Because for the soul to direct, decide, or determine any thing, is to act; and this is supposed: for the soul is here spoken of as being a cause in this affair, doing something; or, which is the same thing, exerting itself in order to an effect, which effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of will. But certainly, this action is not the same with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted; but must be something prior to it. The advocates for this notion of the freedom of the Will, speak of a certain sovereignty in the will, whereby it has power to determine its own volition. And therefore the determination of volition must itself be an act of the will; for otherwise it can be no exercise of that supposed power and sovereignty. Again, if the Will determines itself, then either the will is active in determining its volitions, or it is not. If active, then the determination is an act of the will; and so there is one act of the will determining another. But if the Will is not active in the determination, then how does it exercise any liberty in it? These gentlemen suppose that the thing wherein the Will exercises liberty, is in its determining its own acts. But how can this be, if it be not active in determining? Certainly the will, or the soul, cannot exercise any liberty in that wherein it doth not act, or wherein it doth not exercise itself. So that if either part of this dilemma be taken, this scheme of liberty, consisting in self-determining power, is overthrown. If there be an act of the Will in determining all

its own free acts, then one free act of the Will is determined by another; and so we have the absurdity of every free act, even the very first, determined by a foregoing free act. But if there be no act or exercise of the Will in determining its own acts, then no liberty is exercised in determining them. From whence it follows, that no liberty consists in the Will's power to determine its own acts: or, which is the same thing, that there is no such thing as liberty consisting in a self-determining power of the Will.

If it should be said, That although it be true, if the soul determines its own volitions, it must be active in so doing, and the determination itself must be an act; yet there is no need of supposing this act to be prior to the volition determined; but the will or soul determines the act of the Will in willing; it determines its own volition, in the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the will, causing it to be so and not otherwise, in exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any should say after this manner, they must mean one of these three things: either, (1.) That the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet is not before it in order of time. Or, (2.) That the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly distinct from it; but that the soul's determining the act of volition is the same thing with its exerting the act of volition: the mind's exerting such a particular act, is its causing and determining the act. Or, (3.) that volition has no cause, and is no effect; but comes into existence, with such a particular determination, without any ground or reason of its existence and determination.-- I shall consider these distinctly.

(1.) If all that is meant, be, that the determining act is not before the act determined in order of time, it will not help the case at all, though it should be allowed. If it be before the determined act in the order of nature, being the cause or ground of its existence, this as much proves it to be distinct from, and independent on it, as if it were before in the order of time. As the cause of the particular motion of a natural body in a certain direction, may have no distance as to time, yet cannot be the same with the motion effected by it, but must be as distinct from it, as any other cause, that is before its effect in the order of time: as the architect is distinct from the house which he builds, or the father distinct from the son which he begets. And if the act of the Will determining be distinct from the act determined, and before it in the order of nature, then we can go back from one to another, till we come to the first in the series, which has no act of the will before it in the order of nature, determining it; and consequently is an act not determined by the will, and so not a free act, in this notion of freedom. And this being the act which determines all the rest, none of them are free acts. As when there is a chain of many links, the first of which only is taken hold of and drawn by hand; all the rest may follow and be moved at the same instant, without any distance of time; but yet the motion of one link is before that of another in the order of nature; the last is moved by the next, and that by the next, and so till we come to the first; which not being moved by any other, but by something distinct from the whole chain, this as much proves that no part is moved by any self-moving power in the chain, as if the motion of one link followed that of another in the order of time.

(2.) If any should say, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in the order of time, or of nature, nor is distinct from it; but that the exertion of the that act is the determination of the act; that for the soul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cause and determine that act of volition: I would on this observe, that the thing in question seems to be forgotten, or kept out of sight in a darkness and unintelligibleness of speech; unless such an objector would mean to

contradict himself.-- The very act of volition itself is doubtless a determination of mind; i. e. it is the mind's drawing up a conclusion, or coming to a choice between two or more things proposed to it. But determining among external objects of choice, is not the same with determining the act of choice itself, among various possible acts of choice.-- The question is, What influences, directs, or determines the mind or Will to come to such a conclusion or choice as it does? Or what is the cause, ground, or reason, why it concludes thus, and not otherwise? Now it must be answered, according to the Arminian notion of freedom, that the Will influences, orders, and determines itself thus to act. And if it does, I say, it must be by some antecedent act. To say, it is caused, influenced, and determined by something, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or nature, is a contradiction. For that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is someway the cause or reason of the thing, with respect to which it is said to be prior.

If the particular act or exertion of will, which comes into existence, be any thing properly determined at all, then it has some cause of existing, and of existing in such a particular determinate manner, and not another; some cause, whose influence decides the matter: which cause is distinct from the effect, and prior to it. But to say, that the Will or mind orders, influences, and determines itself to exert an act by the very exertion itself, is to make the exertion both cause and effect; or the exerting such an act, to be a cause of the exertion of such an act. For the question is, What is the cause and reason of the soul's exerting such an act? To which the answer is, The soul exerts such an act, and that is the cause of it. And so, by this, the exertion must be distinct from, and in the order of nature prior to, itself.

(3.) If the meaning be, that the soul's exertion of such a particular act of will, is a thing that comes to pass of itself, without any cause; and that there is absolutely no reason of the soul being determined to exert such a volition, and make such a choice, rather than another; I say, if this be the meaning of Arminians, when they contend so earnestly for the Will determining its own acts, and for liberty of Will consisting in self-determining power; they do nothing but confound themselves and others with words without a meaning. In the question, What determines the will? and in their answer, that the Will determines itself; and in all the dispute, it seems to be taken for granted, that something determines the Will; and the controversy on this head is not, whether its determination has any cause or foundation at all; but where the foundation of it is, whether in the will itself, or somewhere else. But if the thing intended be what is above mentioned, then nothing at all determines the Will; volition having absolutely no cause or foundation of its existence, either within or without.-- There is a great noise made about self--determining power, as the source of all free acts of the Will: but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the source of these acts, neither self-determining power, nor any other, but they arise from nothing; no cause, no power, no influence, being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the Will are events which come to pass without a cause, is certainly implied in the Arminian notion of liberty of Will; though it be very inconsistent with many other things in their scheme, and repugnant to some things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of volition is without any cause; because they hold the free acts of the will to be contingent events; and contingence is essential to freedom in their notion of it. But certainly, those things which have a prior ground and reason of their particular existence, a cause which antecedently determines them to be, and determines

them to be just as they are, do not happen contingently. If something foregoing, by a casual influence and connexion, determines and fixes precisely their coming to pass, and the manner of it, then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they shall come to pass or no. And because it is a question in many respects very important in this controversy, Whether the free acts of the Will are events which come to pass without a cause; I shall be particular in examining this point in the two following sections.

05.02.03. Part 2 sec 3

Part 2 sec 3 Whether any event whatsoever, and Volition in particular, can come to pass without a Cause of its existence.

BEFORE I enter on any argument on this subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the word Cause in this discourse; since, for want of a better word, I shall have occasion to use it in a sense which is more extensive than that in which it is sometimes used. The word is often used in so restrained a sense as to signify only that which has a positive efficiency or influence to produce a thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many things which have no such positive productive influence; which yet are Causes in this respect, that they have truly the nature of a reason why some things are, rather than others; or why they are thus, rather than otherwise. Thus the absence of the sun in the night, is not the Cause of the fall of dew at that time, in the same manner as its beams are the cause of the ascent of vapors in the day-time; and its withdrawment in the winter, is not in the same manner the Cause of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the spring is the cause of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or absence of the sun is an antecedent, with which these effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reason why they come to pass at that time, rather than at other times; though the absence of the sun is nothing positive, nor has any positive influence.

It may be further observed, that when I speak of connexion of Causes and effects, I have respect to moral Causes, as well as those that are called natural in distinction from them. Moral Causes may be Causes in as proper a sense as any Causes whatsoever; may have as real an influence, and may as truly be the ground and reason of an Event's coming to pass.

Therefore I sometimes use the word Cause, in this inquiry, to signify any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an Event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstance of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that Event is true; whether it has any positive influence, or not. And agreeably to this, I sometimes use the word effect for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a Cause, most properly speaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my meaning, that I may cut off occasion, from any that might seek occasion to cavil and object against some things which I may say concerning the dependence of all things which come to pass, on some Cause, and their connexion with their Cause.

Having thus explained what I mean by Cause, I assert, that nothing ever comes to pass without a Cause. What is self-existent must be from eternity, and must be unchangeable: but as to all things that begin to be, they are not self-existent, and therefore must have some foundation of their

existence without themselves.-- That whatsoever begins to be, which before was not, must have a Cause why it then begins to exist, seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reasonings about the existence of things, past, present, or to come. And this dictate of common sense equally respects substances and modes, or things and the manner and circumstances of things. Thus, if we see a body which has hitherto been at rest, start out of a state of rest, and begin to move, we do as naturally and necessarily suppose there is some Cause or reason of this new mode of existence, as of the existence of a body itself which had hitherto not existed. And so if a body, which had hitherto moved in a certain direction, should suddenly change the direction of its motion; or if it should put off its old figure, and take a new one; or change its color: the beginning of these new modes is a new Event, and the human mind necessarily supposes that there is some Cause or reason of them.

If this grand principle of common sense be taken away, all arguing from effects to causes ceaseth, and so all knowledge of any existence, besides what we have by the most direct and immediate intuition, particularly all our proof of the being of God, ceases: we argue His being from our own being, and the being of other things, which we are sensible once were not, but have begun to be; and from the being of the world, with all its constituent parts, and the manner of their existence; all which we see plainly are not necessary in their own nature, and so not self-existent, and therefore must have a Cause. But if things, not in themselves necessary, may begin to be without a Cause, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the Being of God, without any evidence of it from his works. I do suppose there is a great absurdity in denying Being in general, and imagining an eternal, absolute, universal nothing: and therefore that there would be, in the nature of things, a foundation of intuitive evidence, that there must be an eternal, infinite, most perfect Being; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient, to have a clear idea of general and universal Being. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the Being of God by arguing; our evidence would be intuitive: we should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which are in their own nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as we see that a circle has no angles. If we had as clear an idea of universal, infinite entity, as we have of these other things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the absurdity of supposing such Being not to be; should immediately see there is no room for the question, whether it is possible that Being, in the most general, abstracted notion of it should not be. But we have not that strength and extent of mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive, independent manner: but the way that mankind come to the knowledge of the Being of God, is that which the apostle speaks of, Romans 1:20. The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen; being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead. We first ascend, and prove a posteriori, or from effects, that there must be an eternal Cause; and then secondly, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this Being must be necessarily existent; and then thirds, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may descend, and prove many of his perfections a priori. But if once this grand principle of common sense be given up, that what is not necessary in itself, must have a Cause; and we begin to maintain, that things which heretofore have not been, may come into existence, and begin to be of themselves, without any cause; all our means of ascending in our arguing from

the creature to the Creator, and all our evidence of the Being of God, is cut off at one blow. In this case, we cannot prove that there is a God, either from the Being of the world, and the creatures in it, or from the manner of their Being, their order, beauty, and use. For if things may come into existence without any Cause at all, then they doubtless may without any Cause answerable to the effect. Our minds do alike naturally suppose and determine both these things; namely, that what begins to be has a Cause, and also that it has a Cause proportionable to the effect. The same principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any thing coming to pass without a Cause, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the Cause.

Yea, if once it should be allowed, that things may come to pass without a Cause, we should not only have no proof Of the Being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of any thing whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to Causes: from the ideas now immediately in view, we argue other things not immediately in view; from sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the Causes of these sensations; and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, on which they depend, as effects on Causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas, which are now in our minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations. We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only by means of these, as necessarily connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without Causes, all this necessary connexion and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity or difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of non-existence into being, of itself without a Cause; then there is no absurdity or difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty, multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty: nothing multiplied by nothing, does not increase the sum. And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the Will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the cause in fact, that millions of millions of Events are continually coming into existence contingently, without any Cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it is in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual No-Cause, is always ready at hand, to produce this sort of effects, as long as the agent exists, and as often as he has occasion.

If it were so, that things only of one kind, viz. acts of the Will, seemed to come to pass of themselves; and it were an Event that was continual, and that happened in a course, wherever were found subjects capable of such Events; this very thing would demonstrate that there was some Cause of them, which made such a difference between this Event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For contingence is blind, and does not pick and choose a particular sort of Events. Nothing has no choice. This No-Cause, which causes no existence, cannot cause the existence which comes to pass, to be of one particular sort only, distinguished from all others. Thus, that only one sort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes so often, so constantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, shows that there is some Cause or reason of the falling of water out of the heavens; and that something besides mere contingence has a hand in the matter.

If we should suppose Non-entity to be about to bring forth; and things were coming into existence, without any Cause or antecedent, on which the existence, or kind, or manner of existence

depends; or which could at all determine whether the things should be stones, or stars, or beasts, or angels, or human bodies, or souls, or only some new motion or figure in natural bodies, or some new sensations in animals, or new ideas in the human understanding, or new volitions in the Will; or any thing else of all the infinite number of possibles; then certainly it would not be expected, although many millions of millions of things were coming into existence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they should all be only of one particular kind, and that it should be thus in all ages, and that this sort of existences should never fail to come to pass where there is room for them, or a subject capable of them, and that constantly, whenever there is occasion.

If any should imagine, there is something in the sort of Event that renders it possible for it to come into existence without a Cause, and should say, that the free acts of the Will are existences of an exceeding different nature from other things; by reason of which they may come into existence without any previous ground or reason of it, though other things cannot: if they make this objection in good earnest, it would be an evidence of their strangely forgetting themselves; for they would be giving an account of some ground of the existence of a thing, when at the same time they would maintain there is no ground of its existence. Therefore I would observe, that the particular nature of existence, be it never so diverse from others, can lay no foundation for that thing coming into existence without a Cause; because to suppose this, would be to suppose the particular nature of existence to be a thing prior to the existence, and so a thing which makes way for existence, without a cause or reason of existence. But that which in any respect makes way for a thing coming into being, or for any manner or circumstance of its first existence, must, be prior to the existence. The distinguished nature of the effect, which is something belonging to the effect, cannot have influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar nature of that thing called Volition, can do nothing, can have no influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for its influence: for then the thing has made sure of existence already, without its help. So that it is indeed as repugnant to reason, to suppose that an act of the Will should come into existence without a Cause, as to suppose the human soul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole universe, should come into existence without a Cause. And if once we allow, that such a sort of effect as a Volition may come to pass without a Cause, how do we know but that many other sorts of effects may do so too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the absurdity of supposing it has being without a Cause, but something which is common to all things that ever begin to be, viz. That they are not self- existent, or necessary in the nature of things.

05.02.04. Part 2 sec 4

Part 2 sec 4 Whether Volition can arise without a Cause, through the activity of the nature of the soul. The author of the Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures, in answer to that objection against his doctrine of a self-determining power in the will, (p. 68 -- 69.) That nothing is, or comes to pass, without a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another, allows that it is thus in corporeal things, which are, properly and philosophically speaking, passive being; but denies it is thus in spirits, which are beings of un active nature, who have the spring of action within themselves, and can determine themselves. by which it is plainly supposed, that such an event as an act of the Will, may come to pass in a spirit, without a sufficient reason why it comes to pass, or why it is after this manner, rather than another. But certainly this author, in this matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

1. The objection or difficulty proposed by him seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this: How an event can come to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than another? Instead of solving this difficulty, with regard to Volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself, and answers another question quite diverse, viz. What is a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another! And he assigns the active being's own determination as the Cause, and a Cause sufficient for the effect; and leaves all the difficulty unresolved, even, How the soul's own determination, which he speaks of, came to exist, and to be what it was, without a Cause? The activity of the soul may enable it to be the Cause of effects; but it does not at all enable it to be the subject of effects which have no Cause; which is the thing this author supposes concerning acts of the Will. Activity of nature will no more enable a being to produce effects, and determine the manner of their existence, within itself, without a Cause, than out of itself, in some other being. But if an active being should, through its activity, produce and determine an effect in some external object, how absurd would it be to say, that the effect was produced without a Cause!

2. The question is not so much, How a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as why it exerts such an act, and not another; or why it acts with such a particular determination? If activity of nature be the Cause why a spirit (the soul of man, for instance) acts, and does not lie still; yet that alone is not the Cause why its action is thus and thus limited, directed, and determined. Active nature is a general thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action, generally taken; which may be a Cause why the soul acts as occasion or reason is given; but this alone cannot be a sufficient (Cause why the soul exerts such a particular act, at such a time, rather than others. In order to this there must be something besides a general tendency to action; there must also be a particular tendency to that individual action.--If it should be asked, why the soul of man uses its activity, in such a manner as it does; and it should be answered, that the soul uses its activity thus, rather than otherwise, because it has activity; would such an answer satisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active being can bring no effects to pass by his activity, but what are consequent upon his acting: he produces nothing by his activity, any other way than by the exercise of his activity, and so nothing but the fruits of its exercise: he brings nothing to pass by a dormant activity. But the exercise of his activity is action; and so his action, or exercise of his activity, must be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is conversant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal reason, if the active being is his own object, and his activity is conversant about himself, to produce and determine some effect in himself; still the exercise of his activity must go before the effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the Cause of the determination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise; for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the Cause of it.

4. That the soul, though an active substance, cannot diversify its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of different acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind, and sometimes of another, any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this; that if so, then the same Cause, the same causal influence, without variation in any respect, would produce different effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted, i. e. before in the order of nature, would be the Cause of different effects, viz. different Volitions at different times. But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the Cause, as to any causal exertion, force, or influence. But if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal influence, in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident, that the soul has no influence in the diversity of the effect; and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the supposition.-- It is true, the substance of the soul before it acts, and before their is any difference in that respect, may be in a different state and circumstances: but those whom I oppose, will not allow the different circumstances of the soul to be the determining Causes of the acts of the will; as being contrary to their notion of self-determination.

5. Lt us suppose, as these divines do, that there are no acts of the soul, strictly speaking, but free Volitions; then it will follow, that the soul is an active being in nothing further than it is a voluntary or elecive being; and when ever it produces effects actively, it produces effects volun- tarily and electively. But to produce effects thus, is the same thing as to produce effects in consequence of, and ac- cording to its own choice. And if so, then surely the soul does not by its activity produe all its own acts of will or choice themselves; for this, by the supposition, is to pro- duce all its free acts of choice volutarily an electively or in consequence of its own free acts of choice, which brings the matter directly to the forementioned contradic- tion, of a free act of choice before the first free act of choice.-- According to these gentlemen's own notion of action, if there arises in the mind a Volition without a free act of the Will to produce it, the mind is not the voluntary Cause of that Volition; because it does not arise from, nor is regulated by,choice or design. And therefore it cannot be, that the mind should be the active, voluntary, deter- mining Cause of the first and leading Volition that relates to the afffair.-- The mind being a designing Cause, only enables it to

produce effects in consequence of its design; it will not enable it to be the designing Cause of all its own designs. The mind being an elective Cause, will enable it to produce effects only in consequence of its elections, and according to them; but cannot enable it to be the elective Cause of all its own elections; because that supposes an election before the first election. So the mind being an active Cause enables it to produce effects in consequence of its own acts, but cannot enable it to be the determining Cause of all its own acts; for that is, in the same manner, a contradiction; as it supposes a determining act conver- sant about the first act, and prior to it, having a causal influence on its existence, and manner of existence.

I can conceive of nothing else that can be meant by the soul having power to cause and determine its own Voli- tions, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this; that God has given power to the soul, sometimes at least, to excite Volitions at its pleasure, or according as it chooses. And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all Volitions which are thus caused, even the first of them. Which runs into the forementioned great absurdity.

Therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties with which the notion of a self-determining power in the Will is attended, nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities and inconsistences.

05.02.05. Part 2 sec 5

Part 2 sec 5

Showing, that if the things asserted in these Evasions should be supposed to be true, they are altogether impertinent, and cannot help the cause of Arminian Liberty; and how, this being the state of the case, Arminian writers are obliged to talk inconsistently.

WHAT was last observed in the preceding section, may show--- not only that the active nature of the soul cannot be a reason why an act of the Will is, or why it is in this manner rather than another, but also--- that if it could be proved, that volitions are contingent events, their being and manner of being not fixed or determined by any cause, or any thing antecedent; it would not at all serve the purpose of Arminians, to establish their notion of freedom, as consisting in the Will's determination of itself, which supposes every free act of the Will to be determined by some act of the will going before; inasmuch as for the Will to determine a thing, is the came as for the soul to determine a thing by willing; and there is no way that the Will can determine an act of the Will, than by willing that act of the Will, or, which is the same thing, choosing it. So that here must be two acts of the Will in the case, one going before another, one conversant about the other, and the latter the object of the former, and chosen by the former. If the Will does not cause and determine the act by choice, it does not cause or determine it at all; for that which is not determined by choice, is not determined voluntarily or willingly: and to say, that the Will determines something which the soul does not determine willingly, is as much as to say, that something is done by the will, which the soul doth not with its Will. So that if Arminian liberty of will, consisting in the Will determining its own acts, be maintained, the old absurdity and contradiction must be maintained, that every free act of Will is caused and determined by a foregoing free act of will. Which doth not consist with the free acts arising without any cause, and being so contingent, as not to be fixed by airy thing foregoing. So that this evasion must be given up, as not at all relieving this sort of liberty, but directly destroying it. And if it should be supposed, that the soul determines its own acts of W ill some other way, than by a foregoing act of Will; still it will help not their cause If it determines them by an act of the understanding, or some other power, then the Will does not determine itself; and so the self--determining power of the will is given up. And what liberty is there exercised, according to their own opinion of liberty, by the soul being determined by something besides its own choice? The acts of the Will, it is true, may be directed, and effectually determined and fixed; but it is not done by the soul's own Will and pleasure: there is no exercise at all of choice or Will in producing the effect: and if Will and choice are not exercised in it, how is the liberty of the Will exercised in it? So that let Armninians turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of Will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or foregoing free act of Will; forgoing, either in the order of time, or nature; it implies that gross contradiction, that the first free act belonging to the affair, is determined by a free act which is before it. Or if they say, that the free acts of the Will are determined by some other art of the soul, and not an act of will or choice; this also destroys their notion of liberty consisting in the acts of the Will being determined by the will itself; or if they hold

that the acts of the Will are determined by nothing at all that is prior to them, but that they are contingent in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the Will determining its own acts. This being the true state of the Arminian notion of liberty, the writers who defend it are forced into gross inconsistences, in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr. Whitby; he, in his discourse oil the freedom of the Will, opposes the opinion of the Calvinists, who place man's liberty only in a power of doing what he will, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. Hobbes. And yet he himself mentions the very same notion of liberty, as the dictate of the sense and common reason of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature; viz. that liberty is a power of acting from ourselves, or DOING WHAT WE WILL. This is indeed, as he says, a thing agreeable to the sense and common reason of mankind; and therefore it is not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: for if liberty does not consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? If it be said, as Dr. Whitby elsewhere insists, that it does not only consist in liberty of doing what we will, but also a liberty of willing without necessity; still the question returns, what does that liberty of willing without necessity consist in, but in a power of willing as we please, without being impeded by a contrary necessity? or in other words, a liberty for the soul in its willing to act according to its own choice? Yea, this very thing the same author seems to allow, and suppose again and again, in the use he makes of sayings of the fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of Origen, which he produces as a testimony on his side; "The soul acts by HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever part SHE WILL." And those of Justin Martyr; "The doctrine of the Christians is this, that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE. And from Eusebius, these words; "If fate be established, philosophy and piety are overthrown.-- All these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, aloud not upon meditation and exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE. And again, the words of MACCARIUS; "God, to preserve the liberty of man's Will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to good or evil." --"They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any necessity, but have liberty to turn themselves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL in this life."

Thus, the Doctor in effect comes into that very notion of liberty, which the Calvinists have; which he at the same time condemns, as agreeing with the opinion of Mr. Hobbes, namely, The soul acting by its own choice, men doing good or evil according to their own free choice, their being in that exercise which proceeds from their own free choice, having it in their choice to turn to good or evil, and doing what they will." So that if men exercise this liberty in the acts of the will themselves, it must be in exerting acts of Will according to their own free choice; or, exerting acts of will that proceed from their choice. And if it be so, then let every one judge whether this does not suppose a free choice going before the free act of will, or whether an act of choice does not go before that act of the will which proceeds from it. And if it be thus with all free acts of the Will, then let every one judge, whether it will not follow that there is a free choice going before the first free act of the Will exerted in the case! And finally, let every one judge whether in the scheme of these writers there be any possibility of avoiding these absurdities.

If liberty consists, as Dr. Whitby himself says, in a man's doing what he will; and a man exercises this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the will themselves; then so far as liberty

is exercised in the latter, it consists in willing what he wills: and if any say so, one of these two things must be meant, either, 1. That a man has power to will, as he does will; because what he wills, he wills; and therefore power to will what he has power to will. If this be their meaning, then all this mighty controversy about freedom of the Will and self-determining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, that the mind of man does what it does, and is the subject of what it is the subject, or that what is, is; wherein none has any controversy with them. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that a man has power to will as he chooses to will: that is, he has power by one act of choice to choose another; by an antecedent act of Will to choose a consequent act: and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but shuffling with those they dispute with, and baffling their own reason. For still the question returns, wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of will which chose the consequent act. The answer according to the same principles must be, that his liberty in this also lies in his willing as he would, or as he chose, or agreeable to another act of choice preceding that. And so the question returns in infinitum, and the like answer must be made in infinitum: in order to support their opinion, their must be no beginning, but free acts of Will must have been chosen by foregoing free acts of will in the soul of every man, without beginning.

05.02.06. Part 2 sec 6

Part 2 sec 6 Concerning the Will determining in things which are perfectly indifferent in the view of the mind. A Great argument for self-determining power, is the supposed experience we universally have of an ability to determine our Wills, in cases wherein no prevailing motive is presented: the Will, as is supposed, has its choice to make between two or more things, that are perfectly equal in the view of the mind; and the Will is apparently, altogether indifferent; and yet we find no difficulty in coming to a choice; the Will can instantly determine itself to one, by a sovereign power which it has over itself, without being moved by any preponderating inducement.

Thus the fore-mentioned author of an Essay on the Freedom of the will, &c. (p. 25, 26, 27.) supposes, "That there are many instances, wherein the will is determined neither by present uneasiness, nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by any thing else, but merely by itself, as a sovereign self- determining power of the soul; and that the soul does not will this or that action, in some cases, by any other influence but because it will. Thus, says he, I can turn my face to the south, or the north; I can point with my finger upward, or downward.-- And thus, in some cases, the will determines itself in a very sovereign manner, because it will, without a reason borrowed from the understanding: and hereby it discovers its own perfect power of choice, rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind." And (p. 66, 70, 73, 74.) this author very expressly supposes the will in many cases to be determined by no motive at all, and acts altogether without motive, or ground of preference.-- Here I would observe,

1. The very supposition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itself. For the thing supposed, wherein this grand argument consists, is, that among several things the Will actually chooses one before another, at the same time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very same thing as to say, the mind has a preference, at the same time that it has no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; for certainly this author did not imagine he had a controversy with any person in supposing this. Besides, it appears in fact, that the thing which he supposes, is -- not that the Will chooses one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent before it chooses, but that the Will is indifferent when it chooses; and that it being otherwise than indifferent is not until afterwards, in consequence of its choice; that the chosen thing appearing preferable, and more agreeable than another, arises from its choice already made. His words are, (p. 30.)"Where the objects which are proposed appear equally fit or good, the will is left without a guide or director; and therefore must take its own choice, by its own determination; it being properly a self-determining power. And in such cases the Will does as it were make a good to itself by its own choice, i. e. creates its own pleasure or delight in this self-chosen good. Even as a man by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied land, in an uninhabited country, makes it his own possession and property, and as such rejoices in it. Where things were indifferent before, the Will finds nothing to make them more agreeable, considered merely in themselves, but the pleasure it feels arising from its own choice, and its perseverance therein. We love many things which we have chosen,

and purely because we chose them." This is as much as to say, that we first begin to prefer many things, purely because we have preferred and chosen them before.-- These things must needs be spoken inconsiderately by this author. Choice or preference cannot be before itself in the same instance, either in the order of time or nature: It cannot be the foundation of itself, or the consequence of itself. The very act of choosing one thing rather than another, is preferring that thing, and that is setting a higher value on that thing. But that the mind sets a higher value on one thing than another, is not, in the first place, the fruit of its setting a higher value on that thing. This author says, (p. 36.) "The Will may be perfectly indifferent, and yet the Will may determine itself to choose one or the other." And again, in the same page, "I am entirely indifferent to either; and yet my Will may determine itself to choose." And again, "Which I shall choose must be determined by the mere act of my will." If the choice is determined by a mere act of Will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter, vis. That the act of the Will itself is determined by act of choice, this writer is express. (p. 72.) Speaking of the case, where there is no superior fitness in objects presented, he has these words: "There it must act by its own choice, and determine itself as it PLEASES." Where it is supposed that the very determination, which is the ground and spring of the will's act, is an act of choice and pleasure, wherein one act is more agreeable than another: and this preference and superior pleasure is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the Will does not act at all in indifference; not so much as in the first step it takes. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet surely the will never does; because the will beginning to act is the very same thing as it beginning to choose or prefer. And if in the very first act of the Will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred, does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind: or, which is the same thing, the idea of it has a prevailing influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, viz. That the mind can by a sovereign power choose one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another. So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the Will to choose one of two or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the same time, in effect, deny the thing he supposes, even that the Will, in choosing, is subject to no prevailing influence of the view of the thing chosen. And indeed it is impossible to offer this argument without overthrowing it; the thing supposed in it being that which denies itself. To suppose the Will to act at all in a state of perfect indifference, is to assert that the mind chooses without choosing. To say that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleases, is to say that it can follow its pleasure, when it has no pleasure to follow. And therefore if there be any difficulty in the instances of two cakes, or two eggs, &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author supposes the mind in fact has a choice, and so in effect supposes that it has a preference; it as much concerned himself to solve the difficulty, as it does those whom he opposes. For if these instances prove any thing to his purpose, they prove that a man chooses without choice. And yet this is not to his purpose; because if this is what he asserts, his own words are as much against him, and does as much contradict him, as the words of those he disputes against can do.

2. There is no great difficulty in showing, in such instances as are alleged, not only that it must needs be so, that the mind must be influenced in its choice by something that has a preponderating influence upon it, but also how it is so. A little attention to our own experience, and

a distinct consideration of the acts of our own minds, in such cases, will be sufficient to clear up the matter.

Thus, supposing I have a chess-board before me; and because I am required by a superior, or desired by a friend, or on some other consideration, I am determined to touch some one of the spots or squares on the board with my finger. Not being limited or directed, in the first proposal, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the squares, in themselves considered, that recommends any one of all the sixty-four, more than another; in this case, my mind determines to give itself up to what is vulgularly called accident, by determining to touch that square which happens to be most in view, which my eye is especially upon at that moment, or which happens to be then most in my mind, or which I shall be directed to by some other such like accident. Here are several steps of the mind proceeding (though all may be done, as it were, in a moment). The first step is its general determination that it will touch one of the squares. The next step is another general determination to give itself up to accident, in some certain way; as to touch that which shall be most in the eye or mind at that time, or to some other such like accident. The third and last step is a particular determination to touch a certain individual spot, even that square, which, by that sort of accident the mind has pitched upon, has actually offered itself beyond others. Now it is apparent that in none of these several steps does the mind proceed in absolute indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating inducement. So it is in the first step, the mind's general determination to touch one of the sixty-four spots: the mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it does so or no; it is induced to it, for the sake of making some experiment, or by the desire of a friend, or some other motive that prevails. So it is in the second step, the mind determining to give itself up to accident, by touching that which shall be most in the eve, or the idea of which shall be most prevalent in the mind, &c. The mind is not absolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this rule or no; but chooses it, because it appears at that time a convenient and requisite expedient in order to fulfil the general purpose. And so it is in the third and last step, which is determining to touch that individual spot which actually does prevail in the mind's view. The mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing inducement and reason; which is, that this is a prosecution of the preceding determination, which appeared requisite, and was fixed before in the second step.

Accident will ever serve a man, without hindering him a moment, in such a case. Among a number of objects in view, one will prevail in the eye, or in idea, beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear sunshine, many objects strike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to several of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue so for any time. And so it is with respect to the ideas of the mind in general: several ideas are not in equal strength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at least, does not remain so for any sensible continuance. There is nothing in the world more constantly varying, than the ideas of the mind; they do not remain precisely in the same state for the least perceivable space of time; as is evident by this: -- That all time is perceived by the mind, only by the successive changes of its own ideas. Therefore while the perceptions of the mind remain precisely in the same state, there is no perceivable length of time, because no sensible succession at all. As the acts of the Will, in each step of the forementioned procedure, do not come to pass without a particular cause, but every act is owing to a prevailing inducement; so the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unsearchable course of things, to which

the mind yields itself, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to pass without a cause. The mind in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by something that has no cause; any more than if it be determined to be guided by a lot, or the casting of a die. For though the die falling in such a manner be accidental to him that casts it, yet none will suppose that there is no cause why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the succession of our ideas, though the cause may not be observed, have as much a cause, as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual, infinitely various, successive changes of the unevennesses on the surface of the water.

There are two things especially, which are probably the occasions of confusion in the minds of them who insist upon it, that the Will acts in a proper indifference, and without being moved by any inducement, in its determinations in such cases as have been mentioned.

1. They seem to mistake the point in question, or at least not to keep it distinctly in view. The question they dispute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the objects presented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, &c. as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the question to be considered, is, Whether the person be indifferent with respect to his own actions; whether he does not, on some consideration or other, prefer one act with respect to these objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in these cases, is not most immediately and directly conversant about the objects presented; but the acts to be done concerning these objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them; but the next act of the Will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, &c. these may not appear equal, and one action may properly be chosen before another. In each step of the mind's progress, the determination is not about the objects, unless indirectly and improperly, but about the actions, which it chooses for other reasons than any preference of the objects, and for reasons not taken at all from the objects.

There is no necessity of supposing, that the mind does ever at all properly choose one of the objects before another: either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the man chooses to take or touch one rather than another; but not because it chooses the thing taken, or touched, but from foreign considerations. The case may be so, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reasons, prefer taking that which he undervalues, and choose to neglect that which his mind prefers. In such a case, choosing the thing taken, and choosing to take, are diverse: and so they are in a case where the things presented are equal in the mind's esteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact and experience makes evident, is, that the mind chooses one action rather than another. And therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpose, should be to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference, with respect to that action; and not to prove that the mind chooses the action in perfect indifference with respect to the object; which is very possible, and yet the Will not act at all without prevalent inducement, and proper preponderation.

2. Another reason of confusion and difficulty in this matter, seems to be, not distinguishing between a general indifference, or an indifference with respect to what is to be done in a more distant and general view of it, and a particular indifference, or an indifference with respect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and present circumstances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with respect to his own actions, in the former respect; and yet not in the latter. Thus in

the foregoing instance of touching one of the squares of a chess-board; when it is first proposed that I should touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; because as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the first step of the mind's progress in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the last step, and the very next thing to be determined is which, is to be touched, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be most in my eye or mind, and my mind being now fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, considered thus immediately, and in these particular present circumstances, is not what my mind is absolutely indifferent about.

05.02.07. Part 2 sec 7

Part 2 sec 7 Concerning the Notion of Liberty of Will, consisting in Indifference.

What has been said in the foregone section, has a tendency in some measure to evince the absurdity of the opinion of such as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the will is without all antecedent bias; that the determination of the Will to either side may be entirely from itself, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and the sovereignty which it has over itself, that it goes this way rather than that. But inasmuch as this has been of such long standing, and has been so generally received, and so much insisted on by Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, Jesuits, Socinians, Arminians, and others, it may deserve a more full consideration. And therefore I shall now proceed to a more particular and thorough inquiry into this notion.

Now lest some should suppose that I do not understand those that place Liberty in Indifference, or should charge me with misrepresenting their opinion, I would signify, that I am sensible, there are some, who, when they talk of Liberty of the Will as consisting in Indifference, express themselves as though they would not be understood to mean the Indifference of the inclination or tendency of the Will, but an Indifference of the soul's power, of willing; or that the will, with respect to its power or ability to choose, is indifferent, can go either way indifferently, either to the right hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. This indeed seems to be a refining of some particular writers only, and newly invented, which will by no means consist with the manner of expression used by the defenders of Liberty of Indifference in general. I wish such refiners would thoroughly consider, whether they distinctly know their own meaning, when they make a distinction between an Indifference of the soul as to its power or ability of choosing, and the soul's Indifference as to the preference or choice itself; and whether they do not deceive themselves in imagining that they have any distinct meaning at all. The Indifference of the soul as to its ability or power to will, must be the same thing as the Indifference of the state of the power or faculty of the will, or the indifference of the state which the soul itself, which has that power or faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the exercise of that power, in the choice it shall by and by make. But not to insist any longer on the inexplicable abstruseness of this distinction; let what will be supposed concerning the meaning of them that use it, this much must at least be intended by Arminians when they talk of Indifference as essential to Liberty of Will, if they intend any thing, in any respect to their purpose, viz. That it is such an Indifference as leaves the will not determined already; but free from actual possession, and vacant of predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the self-determining power of the Will; and that the Will's freedom consists in, or depends upon, this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the w ill itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act. And here I would observe in the first place, that to make out this scheme of Liberty, the Indifference must be perfect and absolute; there must be a perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation or inclination. Because if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts its own sovereign power on itself, then its inclination is not wholly owing to itself: if when two opposites are proposed to the soul for its choice, the proposal does not find the soul wholly in a state of Indifference, then it is not found in a state of Liberty for mere self-determination.-- The

least degree of an antecedent bias must be inconsistent with their notion of liberty. For so long as prior inclination possesses the will, and is not removed, the former binds the latter, so that it is utterly impossible that the Will should act otherwise than agreeably to it. Surely the Will cannot act or choose contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the Will. To suppose otherwise, would be the same thing as to suppose that the Will is inclined contrary to its present prevailing inclination, or contrary to what it is inclined to. That which the will prefers, to that, all things considered, it preponderates and inclines. It is equally impossible for the Will to choose contrary to its own remaining and present preponderating inclination, as it is to prefer contrary to its own present preference, or choose contrary to its own present choice. The Will, therefore, so long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at Liberty for a new free act; of any, that shall now be an act of self-determination. That which is a self-determined free act, must be one which the will determines in the possession and use of a peculiar sort of liberty; such as consists in a freedom from every thing, which, if it were there, would make it impossible that the Will, at that time, should be otherwise than that way to which it tends.

If any one should say, there is no need that the Indifference should be perfect; but although a former inclination still remains, yet, if it be not very strong, possibly the strength of the Will may oppose and overcome it:- -- This is grossly absurd; for the strength of the will, let it be never so great, gives it no such sovereignty and command, as to cause itself to prefer and not to prefer at the same time, or to choose contrary to its own present choice.

Therefore, if there be the least degree of antecedent preponderation of the Will, it must be perfectly abolished, before the Will can be at liberty to determine itself the contrary way. And if the Will determines itself the same way, it was not a free determination, because the Will is not wholly at liberty in so doing; its determination is not altogether from itself, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination: and all the freedom the will exercises in the case, is in an increase of inclination, which it gives itself, added to what it had by a foregoing bias; so much is from itself, and so much is from perfect indifference. For though the Will had a previous tendency that way, yet as to that additional degree of inclination, it had no tendency. Therefore the previous tendency is of no consideration, with respect to the act wherein the will is free. So that it comes to the same thing which was said at first, that as to the act of the will, wherein the will is free, there must be perfect indifference, or equilibrium. To illustrate this: suppose a sovereign self-moving power in a natural body; but that the body is in motion already, by an antecedent bias; for instance, gravitation towards the centre of the earth; and has one degree of motion by virtue of that previous tendency; but by its self-moving power it adds one degree more to its motion, and moves so much move swiftly towards the centre of the earth than it would do by its gravity only: it is evident, all that is owing to a self-moving power in this case, is the additional degree of motion; and that the other degree which it had from gravity, is of no consideration in the case; the effect is just the same, as if the body had received from itself one degree of motion from a state of perfect rest. So, if we suppose a self-moving power given to the scale of a balance, which has a weight of one degree beyond the opposite scale; and if we ascribe to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way, by its self-moving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an over-balance from a perfect equipoise, so much self-moving self-preponderating power it has, and no more. So that its free power this way is always to be

measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if Indifference be essential to liberty, it must be perfect Indifference; and that so far as the will is destitute of this, so far is it destitute of that freedom by which it is in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being at all passive, or subject to the power and sway of something else, in its motions and determinations.

Having observed these things, let us now try whether this notion of the Liberty of Will consisting in Indifference and equilibrium, and the Will's self-determination in such a state, be not absurd and inconsistent. And here I would lay down this as an axiom of undoubted truth; that every free act is done IN a slate of freedom, and not only after such a state, If an act of the Will be an act wherein the soul is free, it must be exerted in a stale of freedom, and in the time of freedom. It will not suffice, that the act immediately follows a state of liberty; but Liberty must yet continue, and co-exist with the act; the soul remaining in possession of Liberty. Because that thing as the soul coming to a choice to do so. If the soul does not determine this of choice, or in the exercise of choice, then it does not determine it voluntarily. And if the soul does not determine it voluntarily, or of its own will, then in what sense does its Will determine it? And if the Will does not determine it, then how is the Liberty of the Will exercised in the determination? What sort of Liberty is exercised by the soul in those determinations, wherein there is no exercise of choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the Will is not concerned? But if it be allowed, that this determination is an act of choice, and it be insisted on, that the soul, while it yet remains in a state of perfect Indifference, chooses to put itself out of that state, and to turn itself one way; then the soul is already come to a choice; and chooses that way. And so we have the very same absurdity which we had before. Here is the soul in a state of choice, and in a state of equilibrium, both at the same time: the soul already choosing one way, while it remains in a state of perfect Indifference, and has no choice of one way more than the other.-- And indeed this manner of talking, though it may a little hide the absurdity, in the obscurity of expression, increases the inconsistence. To say, the free act of the Will, or the act which the will exerts in a state of freedom and Indifference, does not imply preference in it, but is what the will does in order to cause or produce a preference, is as much as to say, the soul chooses (for to will and to choose are the same thing) without choice, and prefers without preference, in order to cause or produce the beginning of a preference, or the first choice. And that is, that the first choice is exerted without choice, in order to produce itself!

If any, to evade these things, should own, that a state of liberty and a state of Indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; but should say, that Indifference is still essential to freedom, as it is necessary to go immediately before it; it being essential to the freedom of an act of Will that it should directly and immediately arise out of a state of Indifference; still this will not help the cause of Arminian Liberty, or make it consistent with itself. For if the act springs immediately out of a state of Indifference, then it does not arise from antecedent choice or preference. But if the act arises directly out of a state of Indifference, without any intervening choice to determine it, then the act not being determined by choice, is not determined by the will; the mind exercises no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free will have no hand in the determination of the act. Which is entirely inconsistent with their notion of the freedom of volition.

If any should suppose, that these absurdities may be avoided, by saying, that the Liberty of the mind consists in a power to suspend the act of the will, and so to keep it in a state of Indifference,

until there has been opportunity for consideration; and so shall say, that however Indifference is not essential to Liberty in such a manner, that the mind must make its choice in a state of Indifference, which is an inconsistency, or that the act of will must spring immediately out of Indifference; yet Indifference may be essential to the Liberty of acts of the Will in this respect; viz, That Liberty consists in a power of the mind to forbear or suspend the act of volition, and keep the mind in a state of Indifference for the present, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation: I say, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great mistake: it reconciles no inconsistency, and relieves no difficulty.-- For here the following things must be observed:

1. That this suspending of volition, if there be properly any such thing, is itself an act of volition. If the mind determines to suspend its act, it determines it voluntarily; it chooses, on some consideration, to suspend it. And this choice or determination, is an act of the Will: And indeed it is supposed to be so in the very hypothesis; for it is supposed that the Liberty of the Will consists in its power to do this, and that its doing it is the very thing wherein the Will exercises its Liberty. But how can the Will exercise Liberty in it, if it be not an act of the Will? The Liberty of the Will is not exercised in any thing but what the Will does.

2. This determining to suspend acting is not only an act of the will, but it is supposed to be the only free act of the Will; because it is said, that this is the thing wherein the Liberty of the Will consists.-- If so, then this is all the act of Will that we have to consider in this controversy. And now, the former question returns upon us; viz. Wherein consists the freedom of the will in those acts wherein it is free? And if this act of determining a suspension be the only act in which the Will is free, then wherein consists the Will's freedom with respect to this act of suspension? And how is Indifference essential to this act? The answer must be, according to what is supposed in the ice evasion under consideration, that the liberty of the Will in this act of suspension, consists in a power to suspend even this act, until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation. But this will be to plunge directly into the grossest nonsense: for it is the act of suspension itself that we are speaking of; and there is no room for a space of deliberation and suspension in order to determine whether we will suspend or no. For that supposes, that even suspension itself may be deferred: which is absurd; for the very deferring the determination of suspension, to consider whether we will suspend or no, will be actually suspending. For during the space of suspension, to consider whether to suspend, the act is, ipso facto, suspended. There is no medium between suspending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no possibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment. And besides, this is attended with ridiculous absurdity another way: for now, it seems, Liberty consists wholly in the mind having power to suspend its determination whether to suspend or no; that there may be time for consideration, whether it be best to suspend. And if Liberty consists in this only, then this is the Liberty under consideration. We have to inquire now, how Liberty, with respect to this act of suspending a determination of suspension, consists in Indifference, or how Indifference is essential to it. The answer, according to the hypothesis we are upon, must be, that it consists in a power of suspending even this last-mentioned act, to have time to consider whether to suspend that. And then the same difficulties and inquiries return over again with respect to that; and so on for ever. Which, if it would show any thing, would show only that there is no such thing as a free act. It drives the exercise of freedom back in infinitum; and that is to drive it out of the world. And besides all this, there is a delusion, and a latent gross contradiction in the affair another way; inasmuch as in explaining how, or in what respect, the Will is free, with

regard to a particular act of volition, it is said, that its Liberty consists in a power to determine to suspend that act, which places Liberty not in that act of volition which the inquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent act. Which contradicts the thing supposed in both the question and answer. The question is, wherein consists the mind's liberty in any particular act of volition? And the answer, in pretending to show wherein lies the mind's Liberty in that act, in effect says, it does not lie in that act at all, but in another, viz. a volition to suspend that act. And therefore the answer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beside the purpose. For it does not show wherein the Liberty of the Will consists in the act in question; instead of that, it supposes it does not consist in that act at all, but in another distinct from it, even a volition to suspend that act, and take time to consider of it. And no account is pretended to be given wherein the mind is free with respect to that act, wherein this answer supposes the Liberty of the mind indeed consists, viz. the act of suspension, or of determining the suspension. On the whole, it is exceeding manifest, that the Liberty of the mind does not consist in Indifference, and that Indifference is not essential or necessary to it, or at all belonging to it, as the Arminians suppose; that opinion being full of nothing but self-contradiction.

05.02.08. Part 2 sec 8

Part 2 sec 8 Concerning the supposed Liberty of the will, as opposite to all Necessity.

IT is chiefly insisted on by Arminians, in this controversy, as a thing most important and essential in human Liberty, that volitions, or the acts of the will, are contingent events; understanding contingence as opposite, not only to constraint, but to all Necessity. Therefore I would particularly consider this matter.

And, first, I would inquire, whether there is or can be any such thing, as a volition which is contingent in such a sense, as not only to come to pass without any Necessity of constraint or co-action, but also without a Necessity of consequence, or an infallible connexion with any thing foregoing.-- Secondly, Whether, if it were so, this would at all help the cause of Liberty.

I. I would consider whether volition is a thing that ever does or can come to pass, in this manner, contingently. And here it must be remembered, that it has been already shown, that nothing can ever come to pass without a cause, or a reason, why it exists in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the acts of the will. Now if this be so, it will demonstrably follow, that the acts of the will are never contingent, or without necessity, in the sense spoken of; inasmuch as those things which have a cause, or a reason of their existence, must be connected with their cause. This appears by the following considerations.

1. For an event to have a cause and ground of its existence, and yet not to be connected with its cause, is an inconsistence. For if the event be not connected with the cause, it is not dependent on the cause; its existence is as it were loose from its influence, and may attend it, or may not; it being a mere contingence, whether it follows or attends the influence of the cause, or not: And that is the same thing as not to he dependent on it. And to say, the event is not dependent on its cause, is absurd; it is the same thing as to say, it is not its cause, nor the event the effect of it; for dependence on the influence of a cause is the very notion of an effect. If there be no such relation between one thing and another, consisting in the connexion and dependence of one thing an the influence of another, then it is certain there is no such relation between them as is signified by the terms cause and effect. So far as an event is dependent on a cause, and connected with it, so much causality is there in the case, and no more. The cause does, or brings to pass, no more in any event, than is dependent on it. If we say, the connexion and dependence is not total, but partial, and that the effect, though it has some connexion and dependence, yet is not entirely dependent on it; that is the same thing as to say, that not all that is in the event is an effect of that cause, but that only part of it arises from thence, and part some other way.

2. If there are some events which are not necessarily connected with their causes, then it will follow, that there are some things which come to pass without any cause, contrary to the supposition. For if there be any event which was not necessarily connected with the influence of the cause under such circumstances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cause, or no; it might have followed, and it might not, when the cause was the

same, its influence the same, and under the same circumstances. And if so, why did it follow, rather than not follow? Of this there is no cause or reason. Therefore here is something without any cause or reason why it is, viz. the following of the effect on the influence of the cause, with which it was not necessarily connected. If there be no necessary connexion of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may suppose that sometimes the event will follow the cause, and sometimes not, when the cause is the same, and in every respect in the same state and circumstances. And what can be the cause and reason of this strange phenomenon, even this diversity, that in one instance, the effect should follow, in another not? It is evident by the supposition, that this is wholly without any cause or ground. Here is something in the present manner of the existence of things, and state of the world, that is absolutely without a cause. Which is contrary to the supposition, and contrary to what has been before demonstrated.

3. To suppose there are some events which have a cause and ground of their existence, that yet are not necessarily connected with their cause, is to suppose that they have a cause which is not their cause. Thus; if the effect be not necessarily connected with the cause, with its influence, and influential circumstances; then, as I observed before, it is a thing possible and supposable, that the cause may sometimes exert the same influence, under the same circumstances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any instance, this instance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cause is not sufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been sufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the supposition, in another instance, the same cause, with perfectly the same influence, and when all circumstances which have any influence are the same, it was followed with the effect. By which it is manifest, that the effect in this last instance was not owing to the influence of the cause, but must come to pass some other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cause was not sufficient to produce the effect. And if it was not sufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but must be owing to something else, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing to the influence of the cause, then it is not the cause. Which brings us to the contradiction of a cause, and no cause, that which is the ground and reason of the existence of a thing, and at the same time is NOT the ground and reason of its existence.

If the matter be not already so plain as to render any further reasoning upon it impertinent, I would say, that which seems to be the cause in the supposed case, can be no cause; its power and influence having, on a full trial, proved insufficient to produce such an effect: and if it be not sufficient to produce it, then it does not produce it. To say otherwise, is to say, there is power to do that which there is not power to do. If there be in a cause sufficient power exerted, and in circumstances sufficient to produce an effect, and so the effect be actually produced at one time; all these things concurring, will produce the effect at all times. And so we may turn it the other way; that which proves not sufficient at one time, cannot he sufficient at another, with precisely the same influential circumstances. And therefore if the effect follows, it is not owing to that cause; unless the different time be a circumstance which has influence: but that is contrary to the supposition; for it is supposed that all circumstances that have influence, are the same. And besides, this would be to suppose the time to be the cause; which is contrary to the supposition of the other thing being the cause. But if merely diversity of time has no influence, then it is evident that it is as much of an absurdity to say, the cause was sufficient to produce the effect at one time, and not at another; as to say, that it is sufficient to produce the effect at a certain time, and yet not

sufficient to produce the same effect at the same time. On the whole, it is clearly manifest, that every effect has a necessary connexion with its cause, or with that which is the true ground and reason of its existence. And therefore, if there be no event without a cause, as was proved before, then no event whatsoever is contingent, in the manner that Arminians suppose the free acts of the will to be contingent.

05.02.09. Part 2 sec 9

Part 2 sec 9 Of the Connexion of the Acts of the Will with the Dictates of the Understanding

IT is manifest, that no Acts of the Will are contingent, in such a sense as to be without all necessity, or so as not to be necessary with a necessity of consequence and Connexion; because every Act of the Will is some way connected with the Understanding, and is as the greatest apparent good is, in the manner which has already been explained; namely, that the soul always wills or chooses that which, in the present view of the mind, considered in the whole of that view, and all that belongs to it, appears most agreeable. Because, as was observed before, nothing is more evident than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they please, then they do what appears most agreeable to them; and to say otherwise, would be as much as to affirm, that men do not choose what appears to suit them best, or what seems most pleasing to them; or that they do not choose what they prefer. Which brings the matter to a contradiction. And as it is very evident in itself, that the Acts of the will have some connexion with the dictates or views of the understanding, so this is allowed by some of the chief of the Arminian writers; particularly by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Samuel Clark. Dr. Turnbull, though a great enemy to the doctrine of necessity, allows the same thing. In his Christian Philosophy, (p. 196.) he with much approbation cites another philosopher, as of the same mind, in these words: " No man (says an excellent philosopher) sets himself about any thing, but upon some view or other, which serves him for a reason for what he does; and whatsoever faculties he employs, the Understanding, with such light as it has, well or ill formed, constantly leads; and by that light, true or false, all her operative powers are directed. The Will itself, how absolute and incontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images; and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind; but in truth, the ideas and images in men’s minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission." But whether this be in a just consistence with themselves, and their own notions of liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered.

Dr. Whitby plainly supposes, that the acts and determinations of the Will always follow the understanding’s view of the greatest good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided; or, in other words, that the determinations of the Will constantly and infallibly follow these two things in the Understanding: 1. The degree of good to be obtained, and evil to be avoided, proposed to the understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken notice of by it. 2. The degree of the understanding’s apprehension of that good or evil; which is increased by attention and consideration. That this is an opinion in which he is exceeding peremptory, (as he is in every opinion which he maintains in his controversy with the Calvinists,) with disdain of the contrary opinion, as absurd and self-contradictory, will appear by the following words, in his Discourse on the Five Points.

" Now, it is certain, that what naturally makes the Understanding to perceive, is evidence proposed, and apprehended, considered or adverted to: for nothing else can be requisite to make

us come to the knowledge of the truth. Again, what makes the Will choose, is something approved by the Understanding; and consequently appearing to the soul as good. And whatsoever it refuseth, is something represented by the Understanding, and so appearing to the Will, as evil. Whence all that God requires of us is and can be only this; to refuse the evil, and choose the good. Wherefore, to say that evidence proposed, apprehended, and considered, is not sufficient to make the Understanding approve; or that the greatest good proposed, the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is not sufficient to engage the Will to choose the good and refuse the evil, is in effect to say, that which alone doth move the Will to choose or to refuse, is not sufficient to engage it so to do; which being contradictory to itself, must of necessity be false. Be it then so, that we naturally have an aversion to the truths proposed to us in the gospel; that only can make us indisposed to attend to them, but cannot hinder our conviction, when we do apprehend them, and attend to them.-- Be it, that there is in us also a renitency to the good we are to choose; that only can indispose us to believe it is, and to approve it as our chiefest good. Be it, that we are prone to the evil that we should decline; that only can render it the more difficult for us to believe it is the worst of evils. But yet, what we do really believe to be our chiefest good, will still be chosen; and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we do continue under that conviction be refused by us. It therefore can be only requisite, in order to these ends, that the Good Spirit should so illuminate our Understandings, that we attending to and considering what lies before us, should apprehend and be convinced of our duty; and that the blessings of the gospel should be so propounded to us, as that we may discern them to be our chiefest good; and the miseries it threateneth, so as we may be convinced that they are the worst of evils; that we may choose the one, and refuse the other."

Here let it be observed, how plainly and peremptorily it is asserted, that the greatest good proposed, and the greatest evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is sufficient to engage the will to choose the good, and refuse the evil, and is that alone which doth move the Will to choose or to refuse; and that it is contradictory to itself, to suppose otherwise; and therefore must of necessity be false; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefest good will still be chosen, and what we apprehend to be the worst of evils, will, whilst we continue under that conviction, be refused by us. Nothing could have been said more to the purpose, fully to signify, that the determinations of the Will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction, and notice of the Understanding, with regard to the greatest good and evil proposed, reckoning both the degree of good and evil understood, and the degree of Understanding, notice, and conviction of that proposed good and evil; and that it is thus necessarily, and can be otherwise in no instance: because it is asserted, that it implies a contradiction, to suppose it ever to be otherwise.

I am sensible, the Doctor’s aim in these assertions is against the Calvinist; to show, in opposition to them, that there is no need of any physical operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God’s operation and assistance is only moral, suggesting ideas to the Understanding; which he supposes to be enough, if those ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his design was, nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every determination of the Will, in choosing and refusing, is necessary; directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the Will. For if the determination of the Will, evermore, in this manner, follows the light, conviction, and view of the Understanding, concerning the greatest good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a contradiction to

suppose otherwise; then it is necessarily so, the Will necessarily follows this light or view of the understanding, not only in some of its acts, but in every act of choosing and refusing. So that the Will does not determine itself in any one of its own acts; but every act of choice and refusal depends on, and is necessarily connected with, some antecedent cause; which cause is not the Will itself, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but something belonging to another faculty, whose acts go before the will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them.

Here, if it should be replied, that although it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final determination of the Will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with, the Understanding's conviction, and notice of the greatest good; yet the Acts of the will are not necessary; because that conviction of the Understanding is first dependent on a preceding Act of the Will, in determining to take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is sufficient and effectual to determine the consequent and ultimate choice of the Will; and that the Will, with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not necessary; and that in this, the liberty of the Will consists, that when God holds forth sufficient objective light, the Will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it or not.

Nothing can be more weak and inconsiderate than such a reply as this. For that preceding Act of the Will, in determining to attend and consider, still is an Act of the Will; if the Liberty of the Will consists in it, as is supposed, as if it be an Act of the Will, it is an act of choice or refusal. And therefore, if what the Doctor asserts be true, it is determined by some antecedent light in the Understanding concerning the greatest apparent good or evil. For he asserts, it is that light which alone doth move the will to choose or refuse. And therefore the Will must be moved by that, in choosing to attend to the objective light offered, in order to another consequent act of choice: so that this act is no less necessary than the other. And if we suppose another Act of the will, still preceding both these mentioned, to determine both, still that also must be an Act of the Will, an act of choice; and so must, by the same principles, be infallibly determined by some certain degree of light in the Understanding concerning the greatest good. And let us suppose as many Acts of the Will, one preceding another, as we please, yet are they every one of them necessarily determined by a certain degree of light in the understanding, concerning the greatest and most eligible good in that case; and so, not one of them free according to Dr. Whitby's notion of freedom. And if it be said, the reason why men do not attend to light held forth, is because of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are indisposed to consider the truth held forth to them, the difficulty is not at all avoided: still the question returns, What determined the Will in those preceding evil acts? It must, by Dr. Whitby's principles, still be the view of the Understanding concerning the greatest good and evil. If this view of the Understanding be that alone which doth move the Will to choose or refuse, as the Doctor asserts, then every act of choice or refusal, from a man's first existence, is moved and determined by this view; and this view of the Understanding exciting and governing the act, must be before the act. And therefore the Will is necessarily determined, in every one of its acts, from a man's first existence, by a cause beside the will, and a cause that does not proceed from or depend on any act of the Will at all. Which at once utterly abolishes the Doctor's whole scheme of Liberty of Will; and he, at one stroke, has cut the sinews of all his arguments from the goodness, righteousness, faithfulness, and sincerity of God, in his commands, promises, threatenings, calls, invitations, and expostulations; which he makes use of,

under the heads of reprobation, election, universal redemption, sufficient and effectual grace, and the freedom of the will of man; and has made vain all his exclamations against the doctrine of the Calvinists, as charging God with manifest unrighteousness, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, fallaciousness, and cruelty.

Dr. Samuel Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, to evade the argument to prove the necessity of volition, from its necessary Connexion with the last Dictate of the Understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the Act of the will itself. But if it be so, it will not alter the case as to the necessity of the Act. If the Dictate of the Understanding be the very same with the determination of the Will, as Dr. Clark supposes, then this determination is no fruit or effect of choice; and if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it: it is necessary; that is, choice cannot prevent it. If the last Dictate of the Understanding be the same with the determination of volition itself, then the existence of that determination must be necessary as to volition; in as much as volition can have no opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having existence already before volition has opportunity to determine any thing. It is itself the very rise and existence of volition. But a thing after it exists, has no opportunity to determine as to its own existence; it is too late for that.

If liberty consists in that which Arminians suppose, viz. in the will determining its own acts, having free opportunity and being without all necessity; this is the same as to say, that liberty consists in the soul having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the will it pleases. And if the determinations of the Will, and the last Dictates of the Understanding, be the same thing, then liberty consists in the mind having power and opportunity to choose its own Dictates of understanding. But this is absurd; for it is to make the determination of choice prior to the Dictate of Understanding, and the ground of it; which cannot consist with the Dictate of the Understanding being the determination of choice itself.

Here is no alternative, but to recur to the old absurdity of one determination before another, and the cause of it; and another before, determining that; end so on in infinitum. If the last Dictate of the Understanding be the determination of the Will itself, and the soul be free with regard to that Dictate, in the Arminian notion of freedom; then the soul, before that dictate of its Understanding exists, voluntarily and according to its own choice determines, in every case, what that Dictate of the Understanding shall be; otherwise that Dictate, as to the will, is necessary; and the acts determined by it must also be necessary. So that there is a determination of the mind prior to that Dictate of the Understanding, an act of choice going before it, choosing and determining what that Dictate of the Understanding shall be: and this preceding act of choice, being a free Act of Will, must also be the same with another last Dictate of the Understanding: And if the mind also be free in that Dictate of Understanding, that must be determined still by another; and so on for ever.

Besides, if the Dictate of the Understanding, and determination of the will be the same, this confounds the Understanding and will, and makes them the same. Whether they be the same or no, I will not now dispute; but only would observe, that if it be so, and the Arminian notion of liberty consists in a self-determining power in the Understanding, free of all necessity; being independent, undetermined by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the Understanding is thus independent, and sovereign over its own determinations, the more free: then the freedom of the soul, as a moral agent, must consist in the independence of the

Understanding on any evidence or appearance of things, or any thing whatsoever that stands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the Understanding's determination. And what a liberty is this! consisting in an ability, freedom, and easiness of judging, either according to evidence, or against it; having a sovereign command over itself at all times, to judge, either agreeably or disagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly, it is no liberty that renders persons the proper subjects of persuasive reasoning, arguments, expostulations, and such like moral means and inducements. The use of which with mankind is a main argument of the Arminians, to defend their notion of liberty without all necessity. For according to this, the more free men are, the less they are under the government of such means, less subject to the power of evidence and reason, and more independent on their influence, in their determinations. And whether the Understanding and Will are the same or no, as Dr. Clark seems to suppose, yet in order to maintain the Arminian notion of liberty without necessity, the free Will is not determined by the Understanding, nor necessarily connected with the Understanding; and the further from such Connexion, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and complete, the determinations of the will have no Connexion at all with the Dictates of the Understanding. And if so, in vain are all the applications to the Understanding, in order to induce to any free virtuous act; and so in vain are all instructions, counsels, invitations, expostulations, and all arguments and persuasive whatsoever: for these are but applications to the Understanding, and a clear and lively exhibition of the objects of choice to the mind's view. But if, after all, the will must be self-determined, and independent on the Understanding, to what purpose are things thus represented to the Understanding, in order to determine the choice?

05.02.10. Part 2 sec 10

Part 2 sec 10

Volition necessarily connected with the influence of Motives: with particular observations on the great inconsistence of Mr. Chubb's assertions and reasonings about the Freedom of the Will That every act of the Will has some cause, and consequently (by what has been already proved) has a necessary connexion with its cause, and so is necessary by a necessity of connexion and consequence, is evident by this, that every act of the Will whatsoever is excited by some motive: which is manifest, because, if the mind, in willing after the manner it does, is excited by no motive or inducement, then it has no end which it proposes to itself, or pursues in so doing; it aims at nothing, and seeks nothing. And if it seeks nothing, then it does not go after any thing, or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing, Which brings the matter to a contradiction; because for the mind to will something, and for it to go after something by an act of preference and inclination, are the same thing. But if every act of the Will is excited by a motive, then that Motive is the cause of the act. If the acts of the Will are excited by motives, then Motives are the causes of their being excited; or, which is the same thing, the cause of their existence. And if so, the existence of the acts of the will is properly the effect of their motives. Motives do nothing, as Motives or inducements, but by their influence; and so much as is done by their influence is the effect of them. For that is the notion of an effect, something that is brought to pass by the influence of something else. And if volitions are properly the effects of their Motives, then they are necessarily connected with their Motives. Every effect and event being as was proved before, necessarily connected with that which is the proper ground and reason of its existence. Thus it is manifest, that volition is necessary, and is not from any self-determining power in the will: the volition, which is caused by previous motive and inducement, is not caused by the will exercising a sovereign power over itself, to determine, cause, and excite volitions in itself. This is not consistent with the will acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium, to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which Motives operate, is by biasing the will, and giving it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

Here it may he proper to observe, that Mr. Chubb in his Collection of Tracts on Various Subjects, has advanced a scheme of liberty, which is greatly divided against itself, and thoroughly subversive of itself: and that many ways.

1. He is abundant in asserting, that the Will, in all its acts, is influenced by Motive and excitement; and that this is the previous ground and reason of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance. He says, (p. 262.) "No action can take place without some Motive to excite it." And, (p. 263,) " Volition cannot take place without SOME PREVIOUS reason or motive to induce it." And, (p. 310.) Action would not take place without some reason or motive to induce it; it being absurd to suppose, that the active faculty would be exerted without some PREVIOUS reason to dispose the mind to action." (So also p. 257.) And he speaks of these things, as what we may be absolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have of certainty respecting God's

moral perfections. (p. 252 -- 255, 261 -- 264.) And yet, at the same time, by his scheme, the influence of Motives upon us to excite to action, and to be actually a ground of volition, is consequent on the volition or choice of the mind. For he very greatly insists upon it, that in all free actions, before the mind is the subject of those volitions, which motives excite, it chooses to be so. It chooses, whether it will comply with the Motive, which presents itself in view, or not; and when various Motives are presented, it chooses which it will yield to, and which it will reject. (p. 256.) " Every man has power to act, or to refrain from acting, agreeably with, or contrary to, any Motive that presents." (p. 257.) " Every man is at liberty to act, or refrain from acting, agreeably with, or contrary to, what each of these motives, considered singly, would excite him to.--- Man has power, and is as much at liberty, to reject the Motive that does prevail, as he has power, and is at liberty, to reject those Motives that do not." (And so p. 310, 311.) " In order to constitute a moral agent, it is necessary, that he should have power to act, or to refrain from acting, upon such moral motives, as he pleases." And to the like purpose in many other places. According to these things, the Will acts first, and chooses or refuses to comply with the Motive that is presented, before it falls under its prevailing influence: and it is first determined by the mind’s pleasure or choice, what Motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can these things hang together? How can the mind First act, and by its act of volition and choice determine what motives shall be the ground and reason of its volition and choice? For this supposes, the choice is already made, before the Motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted, before the Motive prevails, so as actually to be the ground of the volition; and make the prevailing of the Motive, the consequence of the volition, of which yet it is the ground. If the mind has already chosen to comply with a motive, and to yield to its excitement, the excitement comes in too late, and is needless afterwards. If the mind has already chosen to yield to a Motive which invites to a thing, that implies, and in fact is, a choosing of the thing incited to; and the very act of choice is before the influence of the motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice; the son is beforehand with the father that begets him: the choice is supposed to be the ground of that influence of the Motive, which very influence is supposed to be the ground of the choice. And so vice versa, the choice is supposed to be the consequence of the influence of the Motive, which influence of the Motive is the consequence of that very choice. And besides, if the Will acts first towards the motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the Motive upon it to induce it to act and choose, be the fruit and consequence of its act and choice, then how is the Motive " a PREVIOUS ground and reason of the act and choice, so that in the nature of the things, volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason and Motive to induce it;" and that this act is consequent upon, and follows the Motive? Which things Mr. Chubb often asserts, as of certain and undoubted truth. So that the very same Motive is both previous and consequent, both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very same thing!

II. Agreeable to the forementioned inconsistent notion of the Will first acting towards the motive, choosing whether it will comply with it, in order to it becoming a ground of the Will’s acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr. Chubb frequently calls Motives and excitements to the action of the will, " the passive ground or reason of that action." Which is a remarkable phrase; than which I presume there is none more unintelligible, and void of distinct and consistent meaning, in all the writings of Duns Scotus, or Thomas Aquinas. When he represents the Motive volition as passive, he must mean -- passive in that affair, or passive with respect to that action, which he

speaks of; otherwise it is nothing to the design of his argument: he must mean, (if that can be called a meaning,) that the Motive to volition is first acted upon or towards by the volition, choosing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to fetch its influence from thence; and so to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and existence. Which is the same absurdity, as if one should say, that the soul of man, previous to its existence, chose by what cause it would come into existence, and acted upon its cause, to fetch influence thence, to bring it into being; and so its cause was a passive ground of its existence!

Mr. Chubb very plainly supposeds motive or excitement to be the ground of the being of volition. He speaks of it as the ground or reason of the EXERTION of an act of the will, (p. 391, and 392.) and expressly says, that " volition cannot TAKE PLACE without some previous ground or Motive to induce it," (p. 363.) And he speaks of the act as "FROM the motive, and FROM THE INFLUENCE of the motive," (p. 352.) " and from the influence that the Motive has on the man, for the PRODUCTION of an action," (p. 317.) Certainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is easily judged, whether motive can be the ground of volition taking place, so that the very production of it is from the influence of the motive, and yet the Motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is passive, or acted upon the volition. But this I will say, that a man, who insists so much on clearness of meaning in others, and is so much in blaming their confusion and inconsistence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phrase of" passive ground of action," so as to show it not to be confused and inconsistent.

If any should suppose, that Mr. Chubb, when he speaks of motive as a " passive ground of action," does not mean passive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but some other antecedent volition, (though his purpose and argument, and whole discourse, will by no means allow of such a supposition,) yet it would not help the mat ter in the least. For, (1.) If we suppose an act, by which the soul chooses to yield to the invitation of a Motive to another volition; both these supposed volitions are in effect the very same. A volition to yield to the force of a motive inviting to choose something, comes to just the same thing as choosing the thing which the motive invites to, as I observed before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a distinction of two volitions. (2.) If the Motive be passive, not with respect to the same volition to which the motive excites, but to one truly distinct and prior; yet, by Mr. Chubb, that prior volition cannot take place without a Motive or excitement, as a previous ground of its existence. For he insists, that " it is absurd to suppose any volition should take place without some previous motive to induce it," So that at last it comes to just the same absurdity: for if every volition must have a previous motive, then the very first in the whole series must be excited by a previous Motive; and yet the Motive to that first volition is passive; but cannot be passive with regard to another antecedent volition, because, by the supposition, it is the very first: therefore if it be passive with respect to any volition, it must be so with regard to that very volition of which it is the ground, and that is excited by it.

III. Though Mr. Chubb asserts, as above, that every volition has some motive, and that "in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without some motive to induce it;" yet he asserts, that volition does not always follow the strongest Motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any superior strength of the motive that is followed, beyond Motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itself. His own words (p. 258.) are as follow:

"Though with regard to physical causes, that which is strongest always prevails, yet it is otherwise with regard to moral causes. Of these, sometimes the stronger, sometimes the weaker, prevails. And the ground of this difference is evident, namely, that what we call moral causes, strictly speaking, are no causes at all, but barely passive reasons of or excitements to the action, or to the refraining from acting: which excitements we have power, or are at liberty, to comply with or reject, as I have showed above." And so throughout the paragraph, he in a variety of phrases insists, that the Will is not always determined by the strongest Motive, unless by strongest we preposterously mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the Motive, but in the Will; but that the will is not always determined by the Motive which is strongest, by any strength previous to the volition itself. And he elsewhere abundantly asserts, that the will is determined by no superior strength or advantage, that Motives have, from any constitution or state of things, or any circumstances whatsoever, previous to the actual determination of the will. And indeed his whole discourse on human liberty implies it, his whole scheme is founded upon it. But these things cannot stand together. There is a diversity of strength in Motives to choice, previous to the choice itself. Mr. Chubb himself supposes, that they do previously invite, induce, excite, and dispose the mind to action. This implies, that they have something in themselves that is inviting, some tendency to induce and dispose to volition previous to volition itself. And if they have in themselves this nature and tendency, doubtless they have it in certain limited degrees, which are capable of diversity; and some have it in greater degrees, others in less; and they that have most of this tendency, considered with all their nature and circumstances, previous to volition, are the strongest Motives, and those that have least, are the weakest Motives.

Now if volition sometimes does not follow the motive which is strongest, or has most previous tendency or advantage, all things considered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakest, or that which, as it stands previously in the mind’s view, has least tendency to induce it; herein the will apparently acts wholly without Motive, without any previous reason to dispose the mind to it, contrary to what the same author supposes. The act, wherein the will must proceed without a previous motive to induce it, is the act of preferring the weakest Motive. For how absurd is it to say, the mind sees previous reason in the Motive, to prefer that Motive before the other; and at the same time to suppose, that there is nothing in the motive, in its nature, state, or any circumstance of it whatsoever, as it stands in the previous view of the mind, that gives it any preference: but on the contrary, the other Motive that stands in competition with it, in all these respects, has most belonging to it that is inviting and moving, and has most of a tendency to choice and preference. This is certainly as much as to say, there is previous ground and reason in the Motive for the act of preference, and yet no previous reason for it. By the supposition, as to all that is in the two rival Motives, which tends to preference, previous to the act of preference, it is not in that which is preferred, but wholly in the other: and yet Mr. Chubb supposes, that the act of preference is from previous ground and reason, in the motive which is preferred. But are these things consistent? Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event? If one thing follows another, without any previous tendency to its following, then I should think it very plain, that it follows it without any manner of previous reason why it should follow.

Yea, in this case, Mr. Chubb supposes, that the event follows an antecedent, as the ground of its existence, which has not only no tendency to it, but a contrary tendency. The event is the

preference, which the mind gives to that Motive, which is weaker, as it stands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate antecedent is the view the mind has of the two rival motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, all the preferableness, or previous tendency to preference, is supposed to be on the other side, or in the contrary Motive; and all the unworthiness of preference, and so previous tendency to comparative neglect, or undervaluing, is on that side which is preferred: and yet in this view of the mind is supposed to be the previous ground or reason of this act of preference, exciting it, and disposing the mind to it. Which I leave the reader to judge, whether it be absurd or not. If it be not, then it is not absurd to say, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a consequent, is the ground and reason why that consequent does not follow; and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reason why that event does follow. An act of choice or preference is a comparative act, wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and stand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind, in this comparative act, prefers that which appears inferior in the comparison, then the mind herein acts absolutely without motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatsoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two sorts of food, to both which he finds an appetite, but has a stronger appetite to one than the other; and there be no circumstances or excitements whatsoever in the case to induce him to take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite: if in the choice he makes between them, he chooses that which he has least appetite to, and refuse that to which he has the strongest appetite, this is a choice made absolutely without previous Motive, Excitement, Reason, or Temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either; because his volition in this case is a comparative act, following a comparative view of the food, which he chooses, in which view his preference has absolutely no previous ground, yea, is against all previous ground and motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may arise after this manner, from the same principle volition may arise wholly without motive on either side. If the mind in its volition can go beyond Motive, then it can go without Motive: for when it is beyond the Motive, it is out of the reach of the Motive, out of the limits of its influence, and so without. Motive. If so, this demonstrates the independence of volition on Motive; and no reason can be given for what Mr. Chubb so often asserts, even that " in the nature of things volition cannot take place without o motive to induce it."

If the Most High should endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in such a manner, that when unequaled weights are put into the scales, its agency could enable it to cause that scale to descend, which has the least weight, and so to raise the greater weight; this would clearly demonstrate, that the motion of the balance does not depend on weights in the scales; at least, as much as if the balance should move itself, when there is no weight in either scale. And the activity of the balance which is sufficient to move itself against the greater weight, must certainly be more than sufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

Mr. Chubb supposes, that the Will cannot stir at all without some Motive; and also supposes, that if there be a Motive to one thing, and none to the contrary, volition will infallibly follow that motive. This is virtually to suppose an entire dependence of the Will on Motives; if it were not wholly dependent on them, it could surely help itself a little without them; or help itself a little against a Motive, without help from the strength and weight of a contrary Motive. And yet his supposing that the will, when it has before it various opposite Motives, can use them as it pleases, and choose its own influence from them, and neglect the strongest, and follow the weakest, supposes it to be

wholly independent on Motives.

It further appears, on Mr. Chubb's hypothesis, that volition must be without any previous ground in any motive, thus: if it be, as he supposes, that the will is not determined by any previous superior strength of the motive, but determines and chooses its own Motive, then, when the rival Motives are exactly equal, in all respects, it may follow either; and may, in such a case, sometimes follow one, sometimes the other. And if so, this diversity which appears between the acts of the Will, is plainly without previous ground in either of the Motives; for all that is previously in the Motives, is supposed precisely and perfectly the same, without any diversity whatsoever. Now perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reason of diversity in the consequent. Perfect identity in the ground, cannot be a reason why it is not followed with the same consequence. And therefore the source of this diversity of consequence must be sought for elsewhere. And lastly, it may be observed, that however much Mr. Chubb insists, that no volition can take place without some Motive to induce it, which previously disposes the mind to it; yet, as he also insists that the mind, without reference to any superior strength of motives, picks and chooses for its Motive to follow; he himself herein plainly supposes, that, with regard to the mind's preference of one Motive before another -- it is not the motive that disposes the Will, but -- the will disposes itself to follow the Motive.

IV. Mr. Chubb supposes necessity to be utterly inconsistent with agency; and that to suppose a being to be an agent in that which is necessary, is a plain contradiction, p. 311. and throughout his discourses on the subject of Liberty, he supposes, that necessity cannot consist with agency or freedom; and that to suppose otherwise, is to make Liberty and Necessity, Action and Passion, the same thing. And so he seems to suppose, that there is no action, strictly speaking, but volition; and that as to the effects of volition in body or mind, in themselves considered, being necessary, they are said to be free, only as they are the effects of an act that is not necessary. And yet, according to him, volition itself is the effect of volition; yea, every act of free volition; and therefore every act of free volition must, by what has now been observed from him, be necessary. That every act of free volition is itself the effect of volition, is abundantly supposed by him. In p. 341, he says," If a man is such a creature as I have proved him to be, that is, if he has in him a power of Liberty of doing either good or evil, and either of these is the subject of his own free choice, so that he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED, have CHOSEN and done the contrary." -- Here he supposes all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and so that his good or evil choice itself is the effect of his pleasure or choice, in these words, "he might if he had PLEASED, have CHOSEN the contrary." So in p 356, "Though it be highly reasonable, that a man should always choose the greater good,-- yet he may, if he PLEASES, CHOOSE otherwise." Which is the same thing as if he had said, he may if He chooses choose otherwise. And then he goes on,--" that is, he may, if he pleases, choose what is good for himself," &c. And again in the same page," The Will is not confined by the understanding, to any particular sort of good, whether greater or less; but it is at liberty to choose what kind of good it pleases." -- If there be any meaning in the last words, it must be this, that the Will is at liberty to choose what kind of good it chooses to choose; supposing the act of choice itself determined by an antecedent choice. The Liberty Mr. Chubb speaks of, is not only a man's power to move his body, agreeable to an antecedent act of choice, but to use or exert the faculties of his soul. Thus, (p. 379.) speaking of the faculties of the mind, he says," Man has power, and is at liberty to neglect these faculties, to use them aright, or to abuse them, as he

pleases." And that he supposes an act of choice or exercise of pleasure, properly distinct from, and antecedent to, those acts thus chosen, directing, commanding, and producing the chosen acts, and even the acts of choice themselves, is very plain in p. 283. " He can command his actions; and herein consists his Liberty; he can give or deny himself that pleasure, as he pleases. And p. 377. If the actions of men -- are not the produce of a free choice, or election, but spring from a necessity of nature,-- he cannot in reason be the object of reward or punishment on their account. Whereas, if action in man, whether good or evil, is the produce of will or free choice; so that a man in either case, had it in his power, and was at liberty to have CHOSEN the contrary, he is the proper object of reward or punishment, according as he chooses to behave himself." Here, in these last words, he speaks of Liberty of choosing according as he chooses. So that the behavior which he speaks of as subject to his choice, is his choosing itself, as well as his external conduct consequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themselves, When he speaks of all free actions, as the PRODUCE of free choice. And this is abundantly evident in what he says elsewhere, (p. 372, 373.)

Now these things imply a twofold great inconsistence.

1. To suppose, as Mr. Chubb plainly does, that every free act of choice is commanded by, and is the produce of, free choice, is to suppose the first free act of choice belonging to the case, yea, the first free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be the produce of an antecedent act of choice. But I hope I need not labor at all to convince my readers, that it is an absurdity to say, the very first act is the produce of another act that went before it.

2. If it were both possible and real, as Mr. Chubb insists, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his principles, no one act of choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing cause. For Mr. Chubb himself says, (p. 389.) "When the self-moving power is exerted, it becomes the necessary cause of its effects." -- So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction, to suppose it to be free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; so that there must be an infinite number of free acts in succession, without any beginning, in an agent that has a beginning. And therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not any one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a necessary effect. All the acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the agent cannot, in reason, be the object of reward or punishment, on account of any one of these actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, &c.

V. Mr. Chubb most strenuously denies, that Motives are causes of the acts of the Will; or that the moving principle in man is moved, or caused to be exerted by motives. His words, (p. 388 and 389.) are, "If the moving principle in man is Moved, or caused to be Exerted, by something external to man, which all Motives are, then it would not be a self-moving principle, seeing it would be moved by a principle external to itself. And to say, that a self-moving principle is moved, or caused to be exerted, by a cause external to itself; is absurd and a contradiction," &c.--- And in the next page, it is particularly and largely insisted, that motives are causes in no case, that "they are merely passive in the production of action, and have no causality in the production of it,-- no

causality, to be the cause of the exertion of the will.

Now I desire it may be considered, how this can possibly consist with what he says in other places. Let it be noted here, 1. Mr. Chubb abundantly speaks of Motives as excitements of the acts of the Will; and says, that motives do excite volition, and induce it, and that they are necessary to this end; that in the reason and nature of things, volition cannot take place without motives to excite it. But now, if Motives excite the will, they move it; and yet he says, it is absurd to say, the Will is moved by motives. And again, if language is of any significancy at all, if Motives excite volition, then they are the cause of its being excited; and to cause volition to be excited, is to cause it to be put forth or excited. Yea, Mr. Chubb says himself, (p. 317.) motive is necessary to the exertion of the active faculty. To excite, is positively to do something; and certainly that which does something, is the cause of the thing done by it. To create, is to cause to be created; to make, is to cause to be made; to kill, is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and to excite, is to cause to be excited. To excite, is to be a cause, in the most proper sense, not merely a negative occasion, but a ground of existence by positive influence. The notion of exciting, is exerting influence to cause the effect to arise or come forth into existence.

2. Mr. Chubb himself (p. 3l7.) speaks of Motives as the ground and reason of action BY INFLUENCE, and BY PREVAILING INFLUENCE. Now, what can be meant by a cause, but something that is the ground and reason of a thing by its influence, an influence that is prevalent and effectual?

3. This author not only speaks of Motives as the ground and reason of action, by prevailing influence; but expressly of their influence as prevailing for the production of an action, (p. 317.) which makes the inconsistency still more palpable and notorious. The production of an effect is certainly the causing of an effect; and production influence is causal influence, if any thing is; and that which has this influence prevalently, so as thereby to become the ground of another thing, is a cause of that thing, if there be any such thing as a cause. This influence, Mr. Chubb says, Motives have to produce an action; and yet, he says, it is absurd and a contradiction, to say they are causes.

4. In the same page, he once and again speaks of motives as disposing the Agent to action, by their influence. His words are these: "As Motive, which takes place in the understanding, and is the product of intelligence, is NECESSARY to action, that is, to the EXERTION of the active faculty, because that faculty would not be exerted without some PREVIOUS REASON TO DISPOSE the mind to action; so from hence it plainly appears, that when a man is said to be disposed to one action rather than another, this properly signifies the PREVAILING INFLUENCE that one motive has upon a man FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, or for the being at rest, before all other Motives, for the production of the contrary. For as motive is the ground and reason of any action, so the Motive that prevails, disposes the agent to the performance of that action."

Now, if motives dispose the mind to action, then they cause the mind to be disposed; and to cause the mind to be disposed is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing is to cause it to will; and that is the same thing as to be the cause of an act of the Will. And yet this same Mr. Chub holds it to be absurd, to suppose motive to be a cause of the act of the Will. And if we compare these things together, we have here again a whole heap of inconsistencies. Motives are the previous ground and reason of the acts of the Will; yea, the necessary ground and reason of their

exertion, without which they will not be exerted, and cannot, in the nature of things, take place; and they do excite these acts of the Will, and do this by a prevailing influence; yea, an influence which prevails for the production of the act of the Will, and for the disposing of the mind to it; and yet it is absurd, to suppose Motive to be a cause of an act of the Will, or that a principle of Will is moved or caused to be exerted by it, or that it has any causality in the production of it, or any causality to be the cause of the exertion of the Will. A due consideration of these things which Mr. Chubb has advanced, the strange inconsistencies which his notion of Liberty--consisting in the Will's power of self-determination void of all necessity, united with that dictate of common sense, that there can be no volition without a Motive--drove him into, may be sufficient to convince us, that is utterly impossible ever to make that notion of Liberty consistent with the influence of motives in volition. And as it is in a manner self-evident, that there can be no act of Will, or preference of the mind, without some motive or inducement, something in the mind's view which it aims at, and goes after; so it is most manifest, that there is no such Liberty in the universe as Arminians insist on; nor any such thing possible, or conceivable.

05.02.11. Part 2 sec 11

Part 2 sec 11 The evidence of Gods certain Foreknowledge of the volitions of moral Agents. THAT the acts of the Wills of moral Agents are not contingent events, in such a sense, as to be without all necessity, appears by God's certain Foreknowledge of such events. In handling this argument, I would in the first place prove, that God has a certain Foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral Agents; and secondly, show the consequence, or how it follows from hence, that the Volitions of moral Agents are not contingent, so as to be without necessity of connexion and consequence.

First, I am to prove, that God has an absolute and certain Foreknowledge of the free actions of moral Agents.

One would think it wholly needless to enter on such an argument with any that profess themselves Christians: but so it is; God's certain Foreknowledge of the free acts of moral Agents, is denied by some that pretend to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; and especially of late. I therefore shall consider the evidence of such a prescience in the Most High, as fully as the designed limits of this essay will admit; -supposing myself herein to have to do with such as own the truth of the Bible.

Arg. I. My first argument shall be taken from God's prediction of such events. Here I would, in the first place, lay down these two things as axioms.

1. If God does not foreknow, He cannot foretell such events; that is, He cannot peremptorily and certainly foretell them. If God has no more than an uncertain guess concerning events of this kind, then he can declare no more than an uncertain guess. Positively to foretell, is to profess to foreknow, or declare positive Foreknowledge.

If God does not certainly foreknow the future Volitions of moral Agents, then neither can he certainly foreknow those events which are dependent on these Volitions. The existence of the one depending on the existence of the other, the knowledge of the existence of the one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other; and the one cannot be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how great, and how extensive soever the consequences of the Volitions of moral Agents may be; though they should extend to an alteration of the state of things through the universe, and should be continued in a series of successive events to all eternity, and should in the progress of things branch forth into an infinite number of series, each of them going on in an endless chain of events; God must be as ignorant of all these consequences, as he is of the Volition whence they first take their rise: and the whole state of things depending on them, how important, extensive, and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These positions being such as, I suppose, none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following things. 1. Men's moral conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God.-- Pharaoh's moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to

Moses, Exodus 3:19. " I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go." Here. God professes not only to guess at, but to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. In Exodus 7:4. God says, " but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt," &c. And Exodus 9:30. Moses says to Pharaoh, " as for thee, and thy servants, I Know that ye will not fear the Lord." See also Exodus 11:9.-- The moral conduct of Josiah, by name, in his zealously exerting himself to oppose idolatry, in particular acts, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born, and the prophecy sealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a second prophet, as what surely would not fail, (1 Kings 13:1-6, 1 Kings 13:32) This prophecy was also in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their schismatical and idolatrous worship until that time, and the idolatry of those priests of the high places, which it is foretold Josiah should offer upon that altar of Bethel. Micah foretold the foolish and sinful conduct of Ahab, in refusing to hearken to the word of the Lord by him, and choosing rather to hearken to the false prophets, in going to RamothGilead to his ruin, (1 Kings 21:20-22) The moral conduct of Hazael was foretold, in that cruelty he should be guilty of; on which Hazael says, "what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing!" The prophet speaks of the event as what be knew, and not what he conjectured, 2 Kings 8:12. "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: Thou wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child." The moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold, long before he had a being, in his mercy to God' people, and regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jew's, and promoting the building of the temple, (Isaiah 44:28 and Isaiah 55:13 compare 2 Chronicles 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-4) How many instances of the moral conduct of the kings of the North and South, particular instances of the wicked behaviour of the kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in Daniel 11:1-45! Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery, and lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes, called there " a vile person," instead of Epiphones, or illustrious! In that chapter, and also in Daniel 8:9, Daniel 8:13, Daniel 8:23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit, and lies, his having "his heart set to do mischief," and set "against the holy covenant," his "destroying and treading under foot the holy people," in a marvellous manner, his "having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it, and conspiring against it," his " polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate;" his great pride, " magnifying himself against God, and uttering marvellous blasphemies against Him," until God in indignation should destroy him. Withal, the moral conduct of the Jews, on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is foretold, that " he should corrupt many by flatteries," (Daniel 11:32-34) But that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude, in opposition to him, (Daniel 11:32) And that some good men should fall and repent, (Daniel 11:35) Christ foretold Peter's sin, in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, in a peremptory manner. And so, that great sin of Judas, in betraying his master, and its dreadful and eternal punishment in hell, was foretold in the like positive manner, Matthew 26:21-25, and parallel places in the other Evangelists.

2. Many events have been foretold by God, which are dependent on the moral conduct of particular persons, and were accomplished, either by their virtuous or vicious actions. Thus, the children of Israel's going down into Egypt to dwell there, was foretold to Abraham,, (Genesis 15:1-21) which was brought about by the wickedness of Joseph.'s brethren in selling him, and the wickedness of Joseph's mistress, and his own signal virtue in resisting her temptation. The accomplishment of the thing prefigured in Joseph's dream, depended on the same moral conduct.

Jotham's parable and prophecy, (Judges 9:15-20) was accomplished by the wicked conduct of Abimelech, and the men of Shechem. The prophecies against the house of Eli, (1 Samuel 2:1-36 and 1 Samuel 3:1-21) were accomplished by the wickedness of Doeg the Elomite, in accusing the priests; and the great impiety, and extreme cruelty of Saul in destroying the priests at Nob (1 Samuel 22:1-23) Nathan's prophecy against David, (2 Samuel 12:11-12) was fulfilled by the horrible wickedness of Absalom, in rebelling against his father, seeking his life, and lying with his concubines in the sight of the sun. The prophecy against Solomon, (1 Kings 11:11-13) was fulfilled by Jeroboam's rebellion and usurpation, which are spoken of as his wickedness, (2 Chronicles 13:5-6 compare 2 Chronicles 13:18) The prophecy against Jeroboam's family, (1 Kings 14:1-31) was fulfilled by the conspiracy, treason, and cruel murders of Bassha, (2 Kings 15:27 &c.). The predictions of the prophet Jehu against the house of Bassha, (1 Kings 16:1-34 at the beginning,) were fulfilled by the treason and parricide of Zimri, (1 Kings 16:9-13, 1 Kings 16:20)

3. How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and successions of men; with God's judicial proceedings, and many other events consequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the Volitions of men, wherein they acted as moral Agents, had not been foreseen! The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppressing Israel, and God's judging and punishing them for it, was foretold long before it came to pass, (Genesis 15:13-14) The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites, and the increase of it until it should be full, and they ripe for destruction, was foretold above four hundred years before, (Genesis 15:16. Acts 7:6-7) The prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the land of Judah, were absolute; (2 Kings 20:17-19. 2 Kings 22:15-20). It was foretold in Hezekiah's time, and was abundantly insisted on in the book of the prophet Isaiah, who wrote nothing after Hezekiah's days. It was foretold in Josiah's time, in the beginning of a great reformation, (2 Kings 22:1-20) And it is manifest by innumerable things in the predictions of the prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circumstances, its continuance, and end; the return from the captivity, the restoration of the temple, city, and land, &c. I say, these show plainly, that the prophecies of this great event were absolute. And yet this event was connected with, and dependent on, two things in men's moral conduct: first, the injurious rapine and violence of the king of Babylon and his people, as the efficient cause; which God often speaks of as what He Highly resented, and would severely punish; and secondly, the final obstinacy of the Jews. That great event is often spoken of as suspended on this, (Jeremiah 4:1 and Jeremiah 5:1, Jeremiah 7:1-7. Jeremiah 11:1-6. Jeremiah 17:24-41, Jeremiah 25:1-7. Jeremiah 26:1-8, Jeremiah 26:13 and Jeremiah 38:17-18) Therefore this destruction and captivity could not be foreknown, unless such a moral conduct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the people should he finally obstinate, to the utter desolation of the city and land, (Isaiah 6:9-11; Jeremiah 1:18-19. Jeremiah 7:27-29. Ezekiel 3:7 and Ezekiel 14:13-14) The final obstinacy of those Jews who were left in the land of Israel, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God, was foretold by him, and the prediction confirmed with an oath, (Jeremiah 46:26-27) And God tells the people, (Isaiah 48:3, Isaiah 48:4-8) that he had predicted those things which should be consequent on their treachery and obstinacy, because he knew they would be obstinate; and that he had declared these things beforehand, for their conviction of his being the only true God, &c. The destruction of Babylon, with many of the circumstances of it, was foretold, as the judgment of God for the exceeding pride and haughtiness of the heads of that monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, and their wickedly destroying other nations, and particularly for their exalting themselves against the true

God and his people, before any of these monarchs had a being; (Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 47:1-15 compare Habakkuk 2:5-20, and Jeremiah 1:1-19 and Jeremiah 41:1-18) That Babylon's destruction was to be "a recompense, according to the works of their own hands," appears by Jeremiah 25:14.-- The immorality of which the people of Babylon, and particularly her princes and great men, were guilty, that very night that the city was destroyed, their reveling and drunkenness at Belshazzar's idolatrous feast, was foretold, Jeremiah 51:39, Jeremiah 51:57) The return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is often very particularly foretold, with many circumstances, and the promises of it are very peremptory: (Jeremiah 31:35-40 and Jeremiah 32:6-15, Jeremiah 32:41-44 and Jeremiah 33:24-26) And the very time of their return was prefixed; (Jeremiah 25:11-12 and Jeremiah 29:10-11. 2 Chronicles 26:21. Ezekiel 4:6 and Daniel 9:2) And yet the prophecies represent their return as consequent on their repentance. And their repentance itself is very expressly and particularly foretold, (Jeremiah 29:12-14. Jeremiah 31:8-9, Jeremiah 31:18-31. Jeremiah 33:8. Jeremiah 33:1. Jeremiah 33:4-5. Ezekiel 6:8-10. Ezekiel 7:16. Ezekiel 14:22-23 and Ezekiel 20:43-44)

It was foretold under the Old Testament, that the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully set forth, Psal. xxii. applied to Christ in the New Testament, (Matthew 27:35, Matthew 27:43. Luke 23:34. John 19:24. Hebrews 2:12) And likewise in Psalms 59:1-17 which, it is also evident by the New Testament, is spoken of Christ; (John 15:25. John 7:5, &c. and John 2:17. Romans 15:3. Matthew 27:34, Matthew 27:48. Mark 15:23. John 19:29) The same thing is also foretold, Isaiah 53:1-12 and Isaiah 50:6 and Micah 5:1. This cruelty of men was their sin, and what they acted as moral Agents. It was foretold, that there should be an union of heathen and Jewish rulers against Christ, (Psalms 2:1-2 compared with Acts 4:25-28) It was foretold, that the Jew should generally reject and despise the Messiah, (Isaiah 49:5-7 and Isaiah 53:1-3. Psalms 22:6-7 and Psalms 119:4, Psalms 119:8, Psalms 119:19-20) And it was foretold, that the body of that nation should be rejected in the Messiah's days, from being God's people, for their obstinacy in sin; (Isaiah 49:4-7 and Isaiah 8:14-16 compared with Romans 10:19 and Isaiah 1:1-31 at the beginning, compared with Romans 10:20-21) It was foretold, that Christ should be rejected by the chief priests and rulers among the Jews, (Psalms 118:22. compared with Matthew 21:42. Acts 4:11. 1 Peter 2:4, 1 Peter 2:7)

Christ himself foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death; and that he by them should be delivered to the Gentiles: and that he should be mocked and scourged, and crucified, (Matthew 16:21 and Matthew 20:17-19. Luke 9:22. John 8:28) and that the people should be concerned in and consenting to his death, (Luke 20:13-18) especially the inhabitants of Jerusalem; (Luke 13:33-35) He foretold, that the disciples should all be offended because of him, that night in which he was betrayed, and should forsake him; (Matthew 26:31. John 16:32) He foretold, that he should be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they should continue obstinate to their ruin; (Matthew 12:45. Matthew 21:33-42 and Matthew 22:1-7. Luke 13:16, Luke 13:21, Luke 13:24. Luke 17:25. Luke 17:14, Luke 17:27, Luke 20:13-18 and Luke 23:34-39) As it was foretold in both the Old Testament and the New that the Jews should reject the Messiah, so it was foretold that the Gentiles should receive him, and so be admitted to the privileges of God's people; in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Testament, that the Jews should envy the Gentiles on this account; (Deuteronomy 32:21 compared with

Romans 10:19) Christ himself often foretold, that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; (Matthew 8:10-12. Matthew 21:41-43 and Matthew 22:8-10. Luke 13:28. Luke 14:16-24 and Luke 20:16. John 10:16) He also foretold the Jews envy of the Gentiles on this occasion; (Matthew 20:12-16. Luke 15:26-32) He foretold, that they should continue in this opposition and envy, and should manifest it in the cruel persecutions of his followers, to their utter destruction; (Matthew 21:33-42. Matthew 22:6 and Matthew 23:34-39. Luke 11:49-51) The obstinacy of the Jews is also foretold, (Acts 22:18) Christ often foretold the great persecutions his followers should meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; (Matthew 10:16-18, Matthew 20:21-22, Matthew 20:34-36 and Matthew 24:9. Mark 13:9. Luke 10:3. Luke 12:11, Luke 12:49-53 and Luke 21:12, Luke 12:16-17. John 15:18-21 and John 16:1-4, John 16:20-23) He foretold the martyrdom of particular persons; (Matthew 20:23. John 13:36 and John 21:18-19, John 21:22) He foretold the great success of the gospel in the city of Samaria, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip, (John 4:35-38) He foretold the rising of many deceivers after his departure, (Matthew 24:4-5, Matthew 24:11) and the apostasy of many of his professed followers; (Matthew 24:10, Matthew 24:12) The persecutions, which the apostle Paul was to meet with in the world, were foretold; (Acts 9:16. Acts 20:23, and Acts 21:11) The apostle says, to the Christian Ephesians, Acts 20:29-30) "I know, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Rock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The apostle says, he knew this: but he did not know it, if God did not know the future actions of moral Agents.

4. Unless God foreknows the future acts of moral Agents, all the prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great Antichristian apostasy; the rise, reign, wicked qualities, and deeds of "the man of sin," and his instruments and adherents; the extent and long continuance of his dominion, his influence on the minds of princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to idolatry, and other foul vices; his great and cruel persecutions; the behaviour of the saints under these great temptations, &c. &.c. I say, unless the Volitions of moral Agents are foreseen, all these prophecies are uttered without knowing the things foretold. The predictions relating to this great apostasy are all of a moral nature, relating to men’s virtues and vices, and their exercises, fruits, and consequences, and events depending on them; and are very particular; and most of them often repeated, with many precise characteristics, descriptions, and limitations of qualities, conduct, influence, effects, extent, duration, periods, circumstances, final issue, &c. which it would be tedious to mention particularly. And to suppose, that all these are predicted by God, without any certain knowledge of the future moral behaviour of free Agents, would be to the utmost degree absurd.

5. Unless God foreknow the future acts of men’s Wills, and their behaviour as moral Agents, all those great things which are foretold both in the Old Testament and the New, concerning the erection, establishment, and universal extent of the kingdom of the Messiah, were predicted and promised while God was in ignorance whether any of these things would come to pass or no, and did but guess at them. For that kingdom is not of this world, it does not consist in things external, but is within men, and consists in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy ghost; and in these things made manifest in practice, to the praise and glory of God. The Messiah came " to save men from their sins, and deliver them from their spiritual enemies; that they might serve him in righteousness and holiness before Him: he gave himself for

us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And therefore his success consists in gaining men's hearts to virtue, in their being made God's willing people in the day of his power. His conquest of his enemies consists in his victory over men's corruptions and vices. And such a victory, and such a dominion is often expressly foretold: that his kingdom shall fill the earth; that all people, nations, and languages should serve and obey him; and so that all nations should go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths; and that all men should be drawn to Christ, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord (true virtue and religion) as the waters cover the seas; that God's laws should be put into men's inward parts, and written in their hearts; and that God's people should be all righteous, &c. &c. A very great part of the Old-Testament prophecies is taken up in such predictions as these.-- And here I would observe, that the prophecies of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of the Messiah, and true religion of Jesus Christ, are delivered in the most peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God, Isaiah 45:22, to the end, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have SWORN by my Self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come," &c. But, here, this peremptory declaration and great oath of the Most High, are delivered with such mighty solemnity, respecting things which God did not know, if he did not certainly foresee the Volitions of moral Agents. And all the predictions of Christ and his apostles, to the like purpose, must be without knowledge: as those of our Saviour comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard-seed, growing exceeding great, from a small beginning; and to leaven, hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened, &c.-- And the prophecies in the epistles concerning the restoration of the Jewish nation to the true church of God, and bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles; and the prophecies in all the Revelation concerning the glorious change in the moral state of the world of mankind, attending the destruction of Antichrist, " the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ;" and its being granted to the church to be " arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints," &c.

Corol. 1. Hence that great promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Testament and the New, namely, " That in their seed all the nations and families of the earth should be blessed," must be made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents. For the fulfilment of this promise consists in that success of Christ in the work of redemption, and that setting up of his spiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been spoken of. Men are " blessed in Christ" no otherwise than as they are brought to acknowledge him, trust in him, love and serve him, as is represented and predicted in Psalms 72:11. " All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve him." With Psalms 72:17. "Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in subduing men's iniquities; as is implied in that of the prophet Micah, Micah 7:19-20.

Corol. 2. Hence also it appears, that the first gospel promise that ever was made to mankind, that great prediction of the salvation of the Messiah, and his victory over Satan, made to our first parents, (Genesis 3:15) if there be no certain Prescience of the volitions of moral Agents, must have no better foundation than conjecture. For Christ's victory over Satan consists in men's being

saved from sin, and in the victory of virtue and holiness over that vice and wickedness which Satan by his temptations has introduced, and wherein his kingdom consists.

6. If it be so, that God has not a Prescience of the future actions of moral Agents, it will follow, that the prophecies of Scripture in general are without Foreknowledge. For Scripture prophecies, almost all of them, if not universally, are either predictions of the actings and behaviour of moral Agents, or of events depending on them, or some way connected with them; judicial dispensations, judgments on men for their wickedness, or rewards of virtue and righteousness, remarkable manifestations of favour to the righteous, or manifestations of sovereign mercy to sinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of divine grace; or dispensations of Providence, in some respect or other, relating to the conduct of the subjects of God's moral government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future state of things, through the Volitions and voluntary actions of moral Agents, or consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or others which are connected with and accommodated to them. That the predictions of Scripture in general must be without knowledge, if God does not foresee the Volitions of men, will further appear, if it be considered, that almost all events belonging to the future state of the world of mankind, the changes and revolutions which come to pass in empires, kingdoms, and nations, and all societies, depend, in ways innumerable, on the acts of men's Wills; yea, on an innumerable multitude of millions of Volitions. Such is the state and course of things in the world of mankind, that one single event, which appears in itself exceeding inconsiderable, may, in the progress and series of things, occasion a succession of the greatest and most important and extensive events; causing the state of mankind to be vastly different from what it would otherwise have been, for all succeeding generations. For instance, the coming into existence of those particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, which, under God, have had the main hand in all the consequent state of the world, in all after-ages; such as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, Julius Caesar, &c. undoubtedly depended on many millions of acts of the will, in their parents. And perhaps most of these Volitions depended on millions of Volitions in their contemporaries of the same generation; and most of these on millions of millions of Volitions in preceding generations.-- As we go back, still the number of Volitions, which were some way the occasion of the event, multiply as the branches of a river, until they come at last, as it"were, to an infinite number. This will not seem strange to any one who well considers the matter; if we recollect what philosophers tell us of the innumerable multitudes of those things which are the principia, or stamina vitce, concerned in generation; the animalcula in semine masculo, and the ova in the womb of the female; the impregnation or animating of one of these in distinction from all the rest, must depend on things infinitely minute relating to the time and circumstances of the act of the parents, the state of their bodies, &c. which must depend on innumerable foregoing circumstances and occurrences; which must depend, infinite ways, on foregoing acts of their wills; which are occasioned by innumerable things that happen in the course of their lives, in which their own and their neighbor's behaviour must have a hand, an infinite number of ways. And as the Volitions of others must be so many ways concerned in the conception and birth of such men; so, no less, in their preservation, and circumstances of life, their particular determinations and actions, on which the great revolutions they were the occasions of, depended. As, for instance, when the conspirators in Persia, against the Magi, were consulting about a succession to the empire, it came into the mind of one of them, to propose, that he whose horse neighed first, when they came

together the next morning, should be king. Now, such a thing coming into his mind, might depend on innumerable incidents, wherein the Volitions of mankind had been concerned. But, in consequence of this accident, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was king. And if this had not been, probably his successor would not have been the same, and all the circumstances of the Persian empire might have been far otherwise: Then perhaps Alexander might never have conquered that empire; and then probably the circumstances of the world in all succeeding ages, might have been vastly otherwise. I might further instance in many other occurrences; such as those on which depended Alexander's preservation, in the many critical junctures of his life, wherein a small trifle would have turned the scale against him; and the preservation and success of the Roman people, in the infancy of their kingdom and commonwealth, and afterwards; upon which all the succeeding changes in their state, and the mighty revolutions that afterwards came to pass in the habitable world, depended. But these hints may be sufficient for every discerning considerate person, to convince him, that the dhole state of the world of mankind, in all ages, and the very being of every person who has ever lived in it, in every age, since the times of the ancient prophets, has depended on more Volitions, or acts of the Wills of men, than there are sands on the sea-shore. And therefore, unless God does most exactly and perfectly foresee the fixture acts of men's Wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the wars, commotions, victories, prosperity, and calamities, of any kingdoms, nations, or communities in the world, have all been without knowledge. So that, according to this notion, God not foreseeing the Volitions and free actions of men, he could foresee nothing appertaining to the state of the world of mankind in future ages; not so much as the being of one person that should live in it: and could foreknow no events, but only such as he would bring to pass himself by the extraordinary interposition of his immediate power; or things which should come to pass in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and course of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind: that is, as he might, like a very able mathematician and astronomer, with great exactness calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation. And if we closely consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty, foresee even these. As to the first, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition. And that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world, requiring such divine interposition. Thus God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Israel's redemption out of it, the expelling of the seven nations of Canaan, and the bringing Israel into that land; for these all are represented as connected with things belonging to the state of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the most proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the course and state of things in the moral World.

Nor, Secondly, can we on this supposition reasonably think, that God can certainly foresee what things shall come to pass, in the course of things, in the natural and material world, even those which in an ordinary state of things might be calculated by a good astronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the course of things in the former, is undoubtedly subordinate

to God’s designs with respect to the latter. Therefore he, has seen cause, from regard to the state of things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpose, to interrupt, and lay an arrest on the course of things in the natural world; and unless he can foresee the Volition of men, and so know something of the future state of the moral world, he cannot know but that he may still have as great occasion to interpose in this manner, as ever he had: nor can he foresee how, or when, he shall have occasion thus to interpose.

Corol. 1. It appears from the things observed, that unless God foresees the Volition of moral Agents, that cannot be true which is observed by the apostle James, (Acts 15:18) "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."

Corol. 2. It appears, that unless God foreknows the Volition of moral Agents, all the prophecies of Scripture have no better foundation than mere conjecture; and that, in most instances, a conjecture which most have the utmost uncertainty; depending on an innumerable multitude of Volition, which are all, even to God, uncertain events: however, these prophecies are delivered as absolute predictions, and very many of them in the most positive manner, with asseverations; and some of them with the most solemn oaths.

Corol. 3. It also follows, that if this notion of God’s ignorance of future Volition’ be true, in vain did Christ say, after uttering many great and important predictions, depending on men’s moral actions, (Matthew 24:35) " Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away."

Corol. 4. From the same notion of God’s ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has he himself often spoken of the predictions of his word, as evidences of Foreknowledge; of that which is his prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar glory, greatly distinguishing him from all other beings; (as in Isaiah 41:22-26. Isaiah 43:9-10. Isaiah 44:8. Isaiah 45:21. Isaiah 46:10. and Isaiah 48:14)

Arg. II. If God does not foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents, then he did not foreknow the fall of man, nor of angels, and so could not foreknow the great things which are consequent on these events; such as his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption; all the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; setting Him at the head of the universe as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and setting up his church and kingdom in this world, and appointing him the Judge of the world; and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ: and the great transactions of the day of judgment, &c. And if God was thus ignorant, the following scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning, or contrary to truth. (Ephesians 1:4) " According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." (1 Peter 1:20)" Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world." (2 Timothy 1:9) " who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose, and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." So (Ephesians 3:11) speaking of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption, " according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus." (Titus 1:2)" In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began." (Romans 8:29) "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate," &c. (1 Peter 1:2)" Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the Volitions of man since the fall; then he did not foreknow the saints in any sense; neither as particular persons, nor as societies or nations; either by election, or by mere foresight of their virtue or good works; or any foresight of any thing about them relating to their salvation; or any benefit they have by Christ, or any manner of concern of theirs with a Redeemer.

Arg. III. On the supposition of God's ignorance of the future Volitions of free Agents, it will follow, that God must in many cases truly repent what he has done, so as properly to wish he had done otherwise: by reason that the event of things in those affairs which are most important, viz. the affairs of his moral kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwise than he was before aware of. And there would be reason to understand that, in the most literal sense, (Genesis 6:6) " It repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart," (and 1 Samuel 15:11) contrary to Numbers 23:19. " God is not the son of Man, that he should repent;" and 1 Samuel 15:29. "Also the Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." Yea, from this notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at his heart, in a literal sense, continually; and is always exposed to an infinite number of real disappointments in governing the world; and to manifold, constant, great perplexity and vexation: but this is not very consistent with his title of " God over all, blessed for evermore;" which represents him as possessed of perfect, constant, and uninterrupted tranquillity and felicity, as God over the universe, and in his management of the affairs of the world, as supreme and universal ruler. (See Romans 1:25. Romans 9:5. 2 Corinthians 11:31. 1 Timothy 6:15)

ARG. IV. It will also follow from this notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting of what he has done; so he must be exposed to be constantly changing his mind and intentions, as to his future conduct; altering his measures, relinquishing his old designs, and forming new schemes and projects. For his purposes, even as to the main parts of his scheme, such as belong to the state of his moral kingdom, must be always liable to be broken, through want of foresight; and he must be continually putting his system to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingence of the actions of moral Agents: he must. be a Being, who, instead of being absolutely immutable, must necessarily be the subject of infinitely the most numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatsoever; for this plain reason, that his vastly extensive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of those things which are to him contingent and uncertain. In such a situation, he must have little else to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements, in the best manner the case will allow, The Supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages, in governing the world which he has made, and of which he has the care, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter shall befall his system; for which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing things, for some great events which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which he may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known before, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes, and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make him continually change his mind, subject him to vexation, and bring him into confusion. But how do these things consist with reason, or with the word of God?

Which represents, that all God’s works, all that he has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are from the beginning perfectly in his view; and declares, that whatever devices and designs are in the hearts of men, " the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations," (Proverbs 19:21. Psalms 33:10-11) And a " that which the Lord of hosts hath purposed, none shall disannul," (Isaiah 14:27) And that he cannot be frustrated in one design or thought, (Job 42:2) And" that which God doth, it shall be for ever, that nothing can be put to it, or taken from it," (Ecclesiastes 3:14) The stability and perpetuity of God’s counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with his foreknowledge, (Isaiah 46:10) " Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do my pleasure." -- And how are these things consistent with what the Scripture says of God’s immutability, which represents him as "without variableness, or shadow of turning;" and speaks of him, most particularly, as unchangeable with regard to his purposes, (Malachi 3:6)" I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Exodus 3:14) " I AM THAT I AM. (Job 23:13-14) "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."

Arg. V. If this notion of God’s ignorance of future Volitions of moral Agents be thoroughly considered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the world, was liable to be wholly frustrated of his end in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works he had wrought. It is manifest, the moral world is the end of the natural: the rest of the creation is but a house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral Agents: and the good or bad state of the moral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural Agency, and so depends on their Volitions. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, when mankind, by the abuse of their mortal Agency, became very corrupt before the flood, " that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart;" so, when he made the universe, he did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatized: and how could God know before, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding means used to reclaim them, being still left to the freedom of their own Will, would continue in their apostasy, and grow worse and worse, as they of the old world before the flood did?

According to the scheme I am endeavouring to confute, the Fall of neither men nor angels could be foreseen, and God must be greatly disappointed in these events; and so the grand contrivance for our redemption, and destroying the works of the devil, by the Messiah, and all the great things God has done in the prosecution of these designs, must be only the fruits of his own disappointment; contrivances to mend, as well as he could, his system, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was broken and confounded by the free Will of angels and men. And still he must be liable to be totally disappointed a second time: he could not know, that he should have his desired success, in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and exaltation of his only-begotten Son, and other great works accomplished to restore the state of things: he could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable measure of restoration; for this

depended on the free Will of man. There has been a general great apostasy of almost all the Christian world, to that which was worse than heathenism; which continued for many ages. And how could God, without foreseeing men’s Volitions, know whether ever Christendom would return from this apostasy? And which way would he foretell how soon it would begin? The apostle says, it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the gospel which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apostasy, which they had been confirmed in for so many ages?

It is represented often in Scripture, that God, who made the world for himself, and created it for his pleasure, would infallibly obtain his end in the creation, and in all his works; that as all things are of him, so they would all be to him; and that in the final issue of things it would appear that he is " the first, and the last." (Revelation 21:6) " And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." But these things are not consistent with God’s liability to be disappointed in all his works, nor indeed with his failing of his end in any thing that he has undertaken.

05.02.12. Part 2 sec 12

Part 2 sec 12

God’s certain foreknowledge of the future volitions of moral agents, inconsistent with such a contingence of those volitions as is without all necessity.

Having proved, that GOD has a certain and infallible Prescience of the voluntary acts of moral agents, I come now, in the second place, to show the consequence; how it follows from hence, that these events are necessary, with a Necessity of connexion or consequence. The chief Arminian divines, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, deny this consequence; and affirm, that if such Foreknowledge be allowed, it is no evidence of any necessity of the event foreknown. Now I desire, that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly inquired into. I cannot but think that on particular and full consideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed so or not. In order to a proper consideration of this matter, I would observe the following things. I. It is very evident, that, with regard to a thing whose existence is infallibly and indissolubly connected with something which already hath, or has had existence, the existence of that thing is necessary. Here may be noted the following particulars:

1. I observed before, in explaining the nature of Necessity, that in things which are past, their past existence is now necessary: having already made sure of existence, it is too late for any possibility of alteration in that respect; it is now impossible that it should be otherwise than true, that the thing has existed.

2. If there be any such thing as a divine Foreknowledge of the volitions of free agents, that Foreknowledge, by the supposition is a thing which already has, and long ago had existence; and so, now its existence is necessary; it is now utterly impossible to be otherwise, than that this Foreknowledge should be or should have been.

3. It is also very manifest, that those things which are indissolubly connected with other things that are necessary, are themselves necessary. As that proposition whose truth is necessarily connected with another proposition, which is necessarily true, is itself necessarily true. To say otherwise would be a contradiction: it would be in effect to say, that the connexion was indissoluble, and yet was not so, but might be broken. If that, the existence of which is indissolubly connected with something whose existence is now necessary, is itself not necessary, then it may possibly not exist, notwithstanding that indissoluble connexion of its existence.-- Whether the absurdity be not glaring, let the reader Judges 4:1-24. It is no less evident, that if there be a full, certain, and infallible Foreknowledge of the future existence of the volitions of moral agents, then there is a certain, infallible, and indissoluble connexion between those events and that Foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding observations, those events are necessary events; being infallibly and indissolubly connected with that, whose existence already is, and so is now necessary, and cannot but have been. To say, the Foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the connexion of the event with that Foreknowledge is dissoluble and fallible, is very

absurd. To affirm it, would be the same thing as to affirm, that there is no necessary connexion between a proposition being infallibly known to be true, and its being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonstrable, that if there be any infallible knowledge of future volitions, the event is necessary; or, in other words, that it is impossible but the event should come to pass. For if it be not impossible but that it may be otherwise, then it is not impossible but that the proposition which affirms its future coming to pass, may not now be true. There is this absurdity in it, that it is not impossible, but that there now should be no truth in that proposition, which is now infallibly known to be true.

II. That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all Necessity, may be proved thus; it is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without evidence. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: because for a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be evident to that understanding: and for a thing to be evident to any understanding is the same thing, as for that understanding to see evidence of it: but no understanding, created or uncreated, can see evidence where there is none; for that is the same thing, as to see that to be which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known. But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all Necessity, the future existence of the event is absolutely without evidence. If there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either self-evidence or proof; an evident thing must be either evident in itself; or evident in something else: that is, evident by connexion with something else. But a future thing, whose existence is without all Necessity, can have neither of these sorts of evidence. It cannot be self-evident: for if it be, it may be now known, by what is now to be seen in the thing itself; its present existence, or the Necessity of its nature: but both these are contrary to the supposition. It is supposed, both that the thing has no present existence to be seen; and also that it is not of such a nature as to be necessarily existent for the future: so that its future existence is not self-evident. And secondly, neither is there any proof, or evidence in any thing else, or evidence of connexion with something else that is evident; for this is also contrary to the supposition. It is supposed that there is now nothing existent, with which the future existence of the contingent event is connected. For such a connexion destroys its contingence, and supposes Necessity. Thus it is demonstrated, that there is in the nature of things absolutely no evidence at all of the future existence of that event, which is contingent, without all Necessity, (if any such event there be,) neither self-evidence nor proof. And therefore the thing in reality is not evident; and so cannot be seen to be evident, or, which is the same thing, cannot be known.

Let us consider this in an example. Suppose that five thousand seven hundred and sixty years ago, there was no other being but the Divine Being; and then this world, or some particular body or spirit, all at once starts out of nothing into being, and takes on itself a particular nature and form; all in absolute Contingence, without any concern of God, or any other cause, in the matter; without any manner of ground or reason of its existence; or any dependence upon, or connexion at all with any thing foregoing: I say, that if this be supposed, there was no evidence of that event beforehand. There was no evidence of it to be seen in the thing itself; for the thing itself, as yet, was not. And there was no evidence of it to be seen in any thing else; for evidence in something else, is connexion with something else: but such connexion is contrary to the supposition. There

was no evidence before, that this thing would happen; for by the supposition, there was no reason why it should happen, rather than something else, or rather than nothing. And if so, then all things before were exactly equal, and the same, with respect to that and other possible things; there was no preponderation, no superior weight or value; and therefore, nothing that could be of weight or value to determine any understanding. The thing was absolutely without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, inwards discerning any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased never so much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increase of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with ease; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none.

III. To suppose the future volitions of moral agents not to be necessary events; or, which is the same thing, events which it is not impossible but that they may not come to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all things; is to suppose God's knowledge to be inconsistent with itself. For to say, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, knows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the same time he knows to be so contingent, that it may possibly not be, is to suppose his knowledge inconsistent with itself; or that one thing he knows, is utterly inconsistent with another thing he knows. It is the same as to say, he now knows a proposition to be of certain infallible truth, which he knows to be of contingent uncertain truth. If a future volition is so without all Necessity, that nothing hinders but it may not be, then the proposition which asserts its future existence, is so uncertain, that nothing hinders, but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all things, he knows this proposition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconsistent with his knowing that it is infallibly true; and so inconsistent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed contingent, God views it so, and judges it to be contingent, if he views things as they are. If the event be not necessary, then it is possible it may never be: and if it be possible it may never be, God knows it may possibly never be; and that is to know that the proposition, which affirms its existence, may possibly not be true; and that is to know that the truth of it is uncertain; which surely is inconsistent with his knowing it as a certain truth. If volitions are in themselves contingent events, without all Necessity, then it is no argument of perfection of knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the contrary, an argument of ignorance and mistake; because it would argue, that he supposes that proposition to be certain, which in its own nature, and all things considered, is uncertain and contingent. To say, in such a case, that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much so, as to say, that God may know contradictions to be true, for ought we know; or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the same time know it not to be certain, though we cannot conceive how; because he has ways of knowing which we cannot comprehend.

Corol. 1. From what has been observed it is evident, that the absolute decrees of God are no more inconsistent with human liberty, on account of any Necessity of the event, which follows from such decrees, than the absolute Foreknowledge of God. Because the connexion between the event and certain Foreknowledge, is as infallible and indissoluble, as between the event and an absolute

decree. That is, it is no more impossible, that the event and decree should not agree together, than that the event and absolute Knowledge should disagree. The connexion between the event and Foreknowledge is absolutely perfect, by the supposition: because it is supposed, that the certainty and infallibility of the knowledge is absolutely perfect. And it being so, the certainty cannot be increased; and therefore the connexion, between the Knowledge and thing known, cannot be increased; so that if a decree be added to the Foreknowledge, it does not at all increase the connexion, or make it more infallible and indissoluble. If it were not so, the certainty of Knowledge might be increased by the addition of a decree; which is contrary to the supposition, which is, that the Knowledge is absolutely perfect, or perfect to the highest possible degree.

There is as much impossibility but that the things which are infallibly foreknown, should be, or, which is the same thing, as great a Necessity of their future existence, as if the event were already written down, and was known and read by all mankind, through all preceding ages, and there was the most indissoluble and perfect connexion possible between the writing and the thing written. In such a case, it would be as impossible the event should fail of existence, as if it had existed already; and a decree cannot make an event surer or more necessary than this. And therefore, if there be any such Foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then Necessity of connexion and consequence is not at all inconsistent with any liberty which man, or any other creature, enjoys. And from hence it may be inferred, that absolute decrees, which do not at all increase the necessity, are not inconsistent with the liberty which man enjoys, on any such account, as that they make the event decreed necessary, and render it utterly impossible but that it should come to pass. Therefore, if absolute decrees are inconsistent with man's liberty as a moral agent, or his liberty in a state of probation, or any liberty whatsoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any Necessity which absolute decrees infer.

Dr. Whitby supposes, there is a great difference between God's foreknowledge, and his decrees, with regard to necessity of future events. In his Discourse on the five points, (p. 474, &c.) he says, God's Prescience has no influence at all on our actions.-- Should God, says he, by immediate revelation, give me the knowledge of the event of any man's state or actions, would my knowledge of them have any influence upon his actions? Surely none at all.-- Our knowledge doth not affect the things we know, to make them more certain, or more fixture, than they could be without it. Now, Foreknowledge in God is knowledge. As therefore Knowledge has no influence on things that are, so neither has Foreknowledge on things that shall be. And consequently, the Foreknowledge of any action that would be otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom. Whereas (god's decree of election is powerful and active, and comprehends the preparation and exhibition of such means, as shall unfrustrably produce the end.-- Hence God's Prescience renders no actions necessary." And to this purpose, (p. 473.) he cites Origen, where he says, " God's Prescience is not the cause of things future, but their being future is the cause of God's Prescience that they will be:" and Le Blanic, where he says, " This is the truest resolution of this difficulty, that Prescience is not the cause that things are future; but their being future is the cause they are foreseen." In like manner, Dr. Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, (p. 95 -- 99.) And the Author of The Freedom of the Will, in God and Creation, speaking to the like purpose with Dr. Whitby, represents "Foreknowledge as having no more influence on things known, to make them necessary, than after-knowledge, or to that purpose. To all which I would say; that what is said about knowledge, its not having influence on the thing known to make

it necessary, is nothing to the purpose, nor does it in the least affect the foregoing reasoning. Whether Prescience be the thing that makes event necessary or no, it alters not the case. Infallible Foreknowledge may prove the Necessity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing which causes the Necessity. If the foreknowledge be absolute, this proves the event known to be necessary, or proves that it is impossible but that the event should be, by some means or other, either by a decree, or some other way, if there be any other way: because, as was said before, it is absurd to say, that a proposition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may possibly prove not true. The whole of the seeming force of this evasion lies in this; that, inasmuch as certain Foreknowledge does not cause an event to be necessary, as a decree does; therefore it does not prove it to be necessary, as a decree does. But there is no force in this arguing: for it is built wholly on this supposition, that nothing can prove or be an evidence of a thing being necessary, but that which has a causal influence to make it so. But this can never be maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the future existence of an event be not the thing which first makes it impossible that it should fail of existence; yet it may, and certainly does demonstrate, that it is impossible it should fail of it, however that impossibility comes. If Foreknowledge be not the cause, but the effect of this impossibility, it may prove that there is such an impossibility, as much as if it were the cause. It is as strong arguing from the effect to the cause, as from the cause to the effect. It is enough, that an existence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that impossibility arises from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident as any thing can be, that it is impossible a thing, which is infallibly known to be true, should prove not to be true; therefore there is a Necessity that it should be otherwise; whether the Knowledge be the cause of this Necessity, or the Necessity the cause of the Knowledge.

All certain knowledge, whether it be Foreknowledge or After-knowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to he necessary, by some means or other; or proves that it is impossible it should now be otherwise than true.-- I freely allow, that Foreknowledge does not prove a thing to be necessary any more than After-knowledge: but then After-knowledge, which is certain and infallible, proves that it is now become impossible but that the proposition known should be true. Certain After knowledge proves that it is now, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates past existence on the event, should be true. And so does certain Foreknowledge prove, that now in the time of the knowledge, it is, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates future existence on the event, should be true. The necessity of the truth of the propositions, consisting in the present impossibility of the non-existence of the event affirmed, in both cases, is the immediate ground of the certainty of the Knowledge; there can be no certainty of knowledge without it.

There must he a certainty in things themselves, before they are certainly known, or which is the same thing, known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And there is nothing but the necessity of truth known, or its being impossible but that it should be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connexion between the subject and predicate of the proposition that contains that truth. All certainty of Knowledge consists in the view of the firmness of that connexion. So God’s certain foreknowledge of the future existence of any event, is his view of the firm and indissoluble connexion of the subject and

predicate of the proposition that affirms its future existence. The subject is that possible event; the predicate is its future existence, but if future existence be firmly and indissolubly connected with that event, then the future existence of that event is necessary. If God certainly knows the future existence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may possibly never be, then, he sees a firm connexion between a subject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

I allow what Dr. Whitby says to be true, that mere Knowledge does not affect the thing known, to make it more certain or more future. But yet, I say, it supposes and proves the thing to be already, both future and certain; i. e. necessarily future. Knowledge of futurity, supposes futurity; and a certain knowledge of futurity, supposes certain futurity, antecedent to that certain Knowledge. But there is no other certain futurity of a thing, antecedent to certainty of Knowledge, than a prior impossibility but that the thing should prove true; or, which is the same thing, the necessity of the event.

I would observe one thing further; that if it be as those forementioned writers suppose, that God's Foreknowledge is not the cause, but the effect of the existence of the event foreknown; this is so far from showing that this Foreknowledge doth not infer the Necessity of the existence of that event, that it rather shows the contrary the more plainly. Because it shows the existence of the event to be so settled and firm, that it is as if it had already been; inasmuch as in effect it actually exists already; its future existence has already had actual influence and efficiency, and has produced an effect, viz. Prescience: the effect exists already; and as the effect supposes the cause, and depends entirely upon it, therefore it is as if the future event, which is the cause, had existed already. The effect is firm as possible, it having already the possession of existence, and has made sure of it. But the effect cannot be more firm and stable than its cause, ground, and reason. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation.

I To illustrate this matter; let us suppose the appearances and images of things in a glass, for instance, a reflecting telescope, to be the real effects of heavenly bodies (at a distance, and out of sight) which they resemble: if it be so, then, as these images in the telescope have had a past actual existence, and it is become utterly impossible now that it should be otherwise than that they have existed; so they being the true effects of the heavenly bodies they resemble, this proves the existence of those heavenly bodies to be as real, infallible, firm, and necessary, as the existence of these effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on the other.-- Now let us suppose future existences, some way or other, to have influence back, to produce effects beforehand, and cause exact and perfect images of themselves in a glass, a thousand years before they exist, yea, in all preceding ages; but yet that these images are real effects of these future existences, perfectly dependent on, and connected with their cause. These effects and images having already had actual existence, render that matter of their existence perfectly firm and stable, and utterly impossible to be otherwise; and this proves, as in the other instance, that the existence of the things, which are their causes, is also equally sure, firm, and necessary; and that it is alike impossible but that they should be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if instead of images in a glass, we suppose the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have existed there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cause, the case is not altered.

Another thing which has been said by some Arminians, to take off the force of what is urged from God's Prescience, against the continuance of the volitions of moral agents, is to this purpose; " That when we talk of Foreknowledge in God, there is no strict propriety in our so speaking; and that although it be true, that there is in God the most perfect Knowledge of all events from eternity to eternity, yet there is no such thing as before and after in God, but he sees all things by one perfect unchangeable view, without any succession." -- To this I answer,

1. It has been already shown, that all certain Knowledge proves the Necessity of the truth known; whether it be before, after, or at the same time.-- Though it be true, that there is no succession in God's Knowledge, and the manner of his Knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much we know concerning it, that there is no event, past, present, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of. He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible Knowledge of it; he always sees the existence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always sees things just as they are in truth; hence there never is in reality any thing contingent in such a sense, as that possibly it may happen never to exist. If, strictly speaking, there is no Foreknowledge in God, it is because those things, which are future to us, are as present to God, as if they already had existence: and that is as much as to say, that future events are always in God's view as evident, clear, sure, and necessary, as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the existence of the event is not present with God, then there never is a time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of existence, as if its existence were present, and were already come to pass.

God viewing things so perfectly and unchangeably, as that there is no succession in his ideas or judgment, does not hinder but that there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect Knowledge of the moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence: yea the objection supposes this; and therefore it certainly does not hinder but that, by the foregoing arguments, it is now impossible these moral actions should not come to pass.

We know, that God foreknows the future voluntary actions of men, in such a sense, as that he is able particularly to foretell them, and cause them to be recorded, as he often has done; and therefore that necessary connexion which there is between God's Knowledge and the event known, as much proves the event to be necessary beforehand, as if the Divine Knowledge were in the same sense before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the Knowledge be infallible, then the expression of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connexion between that written prediction and the event. And if so, then it is impossible it should ever be otherwise, than that the prediction and the event should agree: and this is the same thing as to say, it is impossible but that the event should come to pass: and this is the same as to say that its coming to pass is necessary.-- So that it is manifest, that there being no proper succession in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the Necessity of the existence of the events known. Yea,

2. This is so far from weakening the proof, given of the impossibility of future events known, not coming to pass, as that it establishes the foregoing arguments, and shows the clearness of the evidence. For,

(1.) The very reason, why God's Knowledge is without succession, is, because it is absolutely perfect, to the highest possible degree of clearness and certainty. All things, whether past, present, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fulness; future things being seen with as much clearness, as if they were present; the view is always in absolute perfection; and absolute

constant perfection admits of no alteration, and so no succession; the actual existence of the thing known, does not at all increase or add to the clearness or certainty of the thing known: God calls the things that are not, as though they were; they are all one to him as if they had already existed. But herein consists the strength of the demonstration before given; that it is as impossible they should fail of existence, as if they existed already. This objection, instead of weakening the argument, sets it in the strongest light; for it supposes it to be so indeed, that the existence of future events is in God's view so much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exist, it makes not the least alteration or variation in his knowledge of them.

(2.) The objection is founded on the immutability of God's knowledge: for it is the immutability of Knowledge that makes it to be without succession. But this most directly and plainly demonstrates the thing I insist on, viz. that it is utterly impossible the known events should fail of existence. For if that mere possible, then a change in Gad's Knowledge and view of things, were possible. For if the known event should not come into being, as God expected, then he would see it, and so would change his mind, and see his former mistake; and thus there would be change and succession in his knowledge. But as God is immutable, and it is infinitely impossible that His view should be changed; so it is, for the same reason, just so impossible that the foreknown event should not exist; and that is to be impossible in the highest degree; and therefore the contrary is necessary. Nothing is more impossible than that the immutable God should be changed, by the succession of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to eternity, in one, most perfect, and unalterable view; so that his whole eternal duration is vitae interminabilis, tota, simul et perfecta possessio. On the whole, I need not fear to say, that there is no geometrical theorem or proposition whatsoever, more capable of strict demonstration, than that God's certain Prescience of the volitions of moral agents is inconsistent with such a Contingence of these events, as is without all Necessity; and so is inconsistent with the Arminian notion of liberty.

Corol. 2. Hence the doctrine of the Calvinists, concerning the absolute decrees of God, does not all infer any more fatality in things, than will demonstrably follow from the doctrine of the most Arminian divines, who acknowledge God's omniscience, and universal Prescience. Therefore all objections they make against the doctrine of the Calvinists, as implying Hobbes's doctrine of Necessity, or the stoical doctrine of fate, lie no more against the doctrine of Calvinists, than their own doctrine: and therefore it doth not become those divines, to raise such an outcry against the Calvinists, on this account.

Corol. 3. Hence all arguments of Arminians, who own God's omniscience, against the doctrine of the inability of unregenerate men to perform the conditions of salvation, and the commands of God requiring spiritual duties, and against the Calvinistic doctrine of efficacious grace; on this ground, that those doctrines, though they do not suppose men to be under any constraint or coaction, yet suppose them under Necessity, must fall to the ground. And their arguments against the necessity of men's volitions, taken from the reasonableness of God's commands, promises, and threatenings, and the sincerity of his counsels and invitations; and all objections against any doctrines of the Calvinists as being inconsistent with human liberty, because they infer Necessity; I say, all these arguments and objections must be justly esteemed vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being leveled against their own doctrine, as well as against that of the Calvinists.

05.02.13. Part 2 sec 13

Part 2 sec 13

Whether we suppose the volitions of moral Agents to be connected with any thing antecedent, or not, yet they must be necessary in such a sense as to overthrow Arminian liberty.

Every act of the Will has a cause, or it has not. If it has a cause, then, according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the effect being necessarily dependent and consequent on its cause, let that cause be what it will. If the cause is the Will itself, by antecedent acts choosing and determining; still the determined caused act must be a necessary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cause, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cause; but must be wholly subject to its determination and command, as much as the motions of the hands and feet. The consequent commanded acts of the Will are as passive and as necessary, with respect to the antecedent determining acts, as the parts of the body are to the volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the will are all determined effects determined by the will itself, that is by antecedent choice, then they are all necessary; they are all subject to, and decisively fixed by, the foregoing act, which is their cause: yea, even the determining act itself; for that must be determined and fixed by another act preceding, if it be a free and voluntary act; and so must be necessary. So that by this, all the free acts of the will are necessary, and cannot be free unless they are necessary: because they cannot be free, according to the Arminian notion of freedom, unless they are determined by the Will; and this is to be determined by antecedent choice, which being their cause, proves them necessary. And yet they say, Necessity is utterly inconsistent with Liberty. So that, by their scheme, the acts of the will cannot be free unless they are necessary, and yet cannot be free if they be necessary! But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, that the free acts of the Will have no cause, and are connected with nothing whatsoever that goes before and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and absolute Contingence, and this should be allowed to be possible; still it will not serve their turn. For if the volition come to pass by perfect Contingence, and without any cause at all, then it is certain, no act of the Will, no prior act of the soul, was the cause, no determination or choice of the soul had any hand in it. The will, or the soul, was indeed the subject of what happened to it accidentally, but was not the cause. The Will is not active in causing or determining, but purely the passive subject; at least, according to their notion of action and passion. In this case, Contingence as much prevents the determination of the Will, as a proper cause; and as to the Will, it was necessary, and could be no otherwise. For to suppose that it could have been otherwise, if the Will or soul had pleased, is to suppose that the act is dependent on some prior act of choice or pleasure, contrary to what is now supposed; it is to suppose that it might have been otherwise, if its cause had ordered it otherwise. But this does not agree to it having no cause or orderer at ail. That must be necessary as to the soul, which is dependent on no free act of the soul: but that which is without a cause, is dependent on no free act of the soul; because, by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing, and is connected with nothing. In such a case, the soul is necessarily subjected to what accident brings to pass, from time to time, as much

as the earth that is inactive, is necessarily subjected to what falls upon it. But this does not consist with the Arminian notion of Liberty, which is the Will's power of determining itself in its own acts, and being wholly active in it, without passiveness, and without being subject to necessity.-- Thus, Contingence belongs to the Arminian notion of Liberty, and yet is inconsistent with it.

I would here observe, that the author of the Essay on the Freedom of the Will, in God and the Creature, (p. 76, 77.) says as follows. "The word chance always means something done without design. Chance and design stand in direct opposition to each other: and Chance can never be properly applied to acts of the will, which is the spring of all design, and which designs to choose whatsoever it doth choose, whether there be any superior fitness in the thing which it chooses, or no; and it designs to determine itself to one thing, where two things, perfectly equal, are proposed, merely because it will." But herein appears a very great inadvertence. For if the will be the spring of all design, as he says, then certainly it is not always the effect of design; and the acts of the will themselves must sometimes come to pass, when they do not spring from design; and consequently come to pass by chance, according to his own definition of Chance. And if the will designs to choose whatever it does choose, and designs to determine itself, as he says, then it designs to determine all its designs. Which carries us back from one design to a foregoing design determining that, and to another determining that; and so on in infinitum. The very first design must be the effect of foregoing design, or else it must be by Chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be proposed, relating to the connexion of the acts of the Will with something foregoing that is their cause, not much unlike to the other; which is this: either human liberty may well stand with volitions being necessarily connected with the views of the understanding, and so is consistent with Necessity; or it is inconsistent with and contrary to such a connexion and Necessity. The former is directly subversive of the Arminian notion of Liberty, consisting in freedom from all Necessity. And if the latter be chosen, and it be said, that liberty is inconsistent with any such necessary connexion of volition with foregoing views of the understanding, it consisting in freedom from any such Necessity of the Will as that would imply; then the Liberty of the soul consists, partly at least, in freedom from restraint, limitation, and government, in its actings, by the understanding, and in Liberty and liableness to act contrary to the views and dictates of the understanding: and consequently the more the soul has of this disengagedness in its acting, the more Liberty. Now let it be considered to what this brings the noble principle of human Liberty, particularly when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfection, viz. a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act altogether at random, without the least connexion with, or restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or any thing whatsoever apprehended, considered, or viewed by the understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect sovereignty of the Will over its own determinations.-- The notion mankind have conceived of Liberty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth claiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in being given up to such a wild Contingence as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unreasonably, and as much without the guidance of understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of perception, as the smoke that is driven by the wind!

05.03.01. Part 3 sec 1

Part 3 sec 1 God’s moral Excellency necessary, yet virtuous and praiseworthy.

Having considered the first thing proposed, relating to that freedom of Will which Arminians maintain; namely, Whether any such thing does, ever did, or ever can exist, I come now to the second thing proposed to be the subject of inquiry, viz. Whether any such kind of liberty be requisite to moral agency, virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment, &c.

I shall begin with some consideration of the virtue and agency of the Supreme moral Agent, and Fountain of all Agency and Virtue.

Dr. Whitby in his Discourse on the five Points, (p. 14.) says, " If all human actions are necessary, virtue and vice must be empty names; we being capable of nothing that is blameworthy, or deserveth praise; for who can blame a person for doing only what he could not help, or judge that he deserveth praise only for what he could not avoid?" To the like purpose he speaks in places innumerable; especially in his Discourse on the Freedom of the Will; constantly maintaining, that a freedom not only from coaction, but necessity, is absolutely requisite, in order to actions being either worthy of blame, or deserving of praise. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of Arminian writers, who, in general, hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or punishment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr. Whitby (p. 300.) allows, that God is without this freedom; and, Arminians, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, generally acknowledge, that God is necessarily holy, and his will necessarily determined to that which is good. So that, putting these things together, the infinitely holy God -- who always used to be esteemed by God’s people not only virtuous, but a Being in whom is all possible virtue, in the most absolute purity and perfection, brightness and amiableness; the most perfect pattern of virtue, and from whom all the virtue of others is but as beams from the sun; and who has been supposed to be, (being thus every where represented in Scripture,) on the account of his virtue and holiness, infinitely more worthy to be esteemed, loved, honoured, admired, commended, extolled, and praised, than any creature -- this Being, according to this notion of Dr. Whitby, and other Arminians, has no virtue at all; virtue, when ascribed to him, is but on empty name; and he is deserving of no commendation or praise; because he is under necessity, he cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It seems, the holiness, justice, faithfulness, &c. of the Most High, must not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous and praiseworthy. They will not deny, that these things in God are good; but then we must understand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent as the brightness of the sun, and the fertility of the earth, are good, but not virtuous, because these properties are necessary to these bodies, and not the fruit of self-determining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion, to Christians acquainted with the Bible, but only stating and particularly representing it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is represented, as in every respect, in the highest manner virtuous, and supremely praiseworthy, would be endless,

and is altogether needless to such as have been brought up in the light of the gospel.

It were to be wished, that Dr. Whitby and other divines of the same sort, had explained themselves, when they have asserted, that that which is necessary, is not deserving of praise; at the same time that they have owned God's perfection to he necessary, and so in effect representing God as not deserving praise. Certainly, if their words have any meaning at all, by praise, they must mean the exercise or testimony of esteem, respect, or honourable regard. And will they then say, that men are worthy of that esteem, respect, and honour for their virtue, small and imperfect as it is, which yet God is not worthy of, for his infinite righteousness, holiness, and goodness? If so, it must be, because of some sort of peculiar excellency in the virtuous man, which is his prerogative, wherein he really has the preference; some dignity, that is entirely distinguished from any Excellency or amiableness in God; not in dependence, but in pre-eminence; which therefore he does not receive from God, nor is God the fountain or pattern of it; nor can God, in that respect, stand in competition with him, as the object of honour and regard; But man may claim a peculiar esteem, commendation, and glory, to which God can have no pretension. Yea, God has no right, by virtue of his necessary holiness, to intermeddle with that grateful respect and praise, due to the virtuous man, who chooses virtue, in the exercise of a freedom ad utrumque; any more than a precious stone, which. cannot avoid being hard and beautiful. And if it be so, let it be explained what that peculiar respect is, that is due to the virtuous man, which differs in nature and kind, in some way of pre-eminence, from all that is due to God. What is the name or description of that peculiar affection? Is it esteem, love, admiration, honour, praise, or gratitude? The Scripture every where represents God as the highest object of all these: there we read of the soul magnifying the Lord, of "loving him with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength;" admiring him, and his righteous acts, or greatly regarding them, as marvelous and wonderful; honouring, glorifying, exalting, extolling, blessing, thanking, and praising him; giving unto him all the glory of the good which is done or received, rather than unto men; "that no flesh should glory in his presence;" but that he should be regarded as the Being to whom all glory is due. What then is that respect? What passion, affection, or exercise is it, that Arminians call praise, diverse from all these things, which men are worthy of for their virtue, and which God is not worthy of, in any degree?

If that necessity which attends God's moral perfections and actions, be as inconsistent with being worthy of praise, as a necessity of co-action; as is plainly implied in, or inferred from, Dr. Whitby's discourse; then why should we thank God for his goodness, any more than if he were forced to be good, or any more than we should thank one of our fellow-creatures who did us good, not freely, and of good will, or from any kindness of heart, but from mere compulsion, or extrinsical necessity? Arminians suppose, that God is necessarily a good and gracious being; for this they make the ground of some of their main arguments against many doctrines maintained by Calvinists; they say, these are certainly false, and it is impossible they should be true, because they are not consistent with the goodness of God. This supposes, that it is impossible but that God should be good: for if it be possible that he should be otherwise, then that impossibility of the truth of these doctrines ceases according to their own argument. That virtue in God is not, in the most proper sense, rewardable, is not for want of merit in his moral perfections arid actions, sufficient to deserve rewards from his creatures; but because he is infinitely above all capacity of receiving any reward. He is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we cannot be profitable unto him.

But still he is worthy of our supreme benevolence for his virtue: and would be worthy of our beneficence, which is the fruit and expression of benevolence, if our goodness could extend to him. If God deserves to be thanked and praised for his goodness, he would, for the same reason, deserve that we should also requite his kindness, if that were possible. " What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" is the natural language of thankfulness: and so far as in us lies, it is our duty to render again according to benefits received. And that we might have opportunity for so natural an expression of our gratitude to God, as beneficence, notwithstanding his being infinitely above our reach, he has appointed others to be his receivers, and to stand in his stead, as the objects of our beneficence; such are especially our indigent brethren.

05.03.02. Part 3 sec 2

Part 3 sec 2 The Acts of the Will of the human soul of Jesus Christ, necessarily holy, yet truly virtuous, praise-worthy, rewardable, &c.

I HAVE already considered how Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that a freedom, not only from coaction, but necessity, is requisite either to virtue or vice, praise or dispraise, reward or punishment. He also insists on the same freedom as absolutely requisite to a person being the subject of a law, of precepts, or prohibitions; in the book before mentioned, (p. 301, 314, 328, 339, 340, 341, 342, 347, 361, 373, 410.) Areal of promises and threatenings, (p. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to a state of trial, p. 297, &c.

Now, therefore, with an eye to thee things, I would inquire into the moral conduct and practices of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he exhibited in his human nature, in his state of humiliation. And first, I would show, that His holy behaviour was necessary; or that it was impossible it should be otherwise, than that he should behave Himself holy, and that he should he perfectly holy in each individual act of his life. And secondly, that his holy behaviour was properly of the nature of virtue, and was worthy of praise; and that he was the subject of law, precept, or commands, promises and rewards; and that he was in a state o trial.

I. It was impossible, that the Acts of the will of Christ’s human soul should, in any instance, degree, or circumstance, be otherwise than holy, and agreeable to God’s nature and Will. The following things make this evident.

1. God had promised so effectually to preserve and up hold him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of the end for which he came into the world; but he would have failed, had he fallen into sin. We have such a promise, (Isaiah 43:1-4) " Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.-- He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait his law." This promise of God’s Spirit put upon him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, &c. relates to the time of Christ’s appearance on earth; as is manifest from the nature of the promise, and also the application of it in the New Testament, (Matthew 12:18) And the words imply a promise of his being so upheld by God’s Spirit, that he should be preserved from sin; particularly from pride and vain-glory; and from being overcome by any temptations he should be under to affect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince, or the applause and praise of men: and that he should be so upheld, that he should by no means fail of obtaining the end of his earning into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and establishing his kingdom of grace in the earth. And in the following verses, this promise is confirmed, with the greatest imaginable solemnity. "Thus saith the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand; and will keep thee, and give thee for a

Covenant of the people, for a Light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name," &c.

Very parallel with these promises is another, (Isaiah 49:7-9) which also has an apparent respect to the time of Christ's humiliation on earth.--"Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers; kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee; in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth," &.c. And in Isaiah 50:5-6. we have the Messiah expressing his assurance, that God would help him, by so opening his ear, or inclining his heart to God's commandments, that he should not be rebellious, but should persevere, and not apostatize, or turn his back: that through God's help, he should be immovable in obedience, under great trials of reproach and suffering; setting his face like a flint: so that he knew he should not be ashamed, or frustrated in his design; and finally should be approved and justified, as having done his work faithfully. "The Lord hath opened mine ear; so that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up."

2. The same thing is evident from all the promises which God made to the Messiah, of his future glory, kingdom, and success, in his office and character of a Mediator: which glory could not have been obtained, if his holiness had failed, and he had been guilty of sin. God's absolute promise makes the things promised necessary, and their failing to take place absolutely impossible: and, in like manner, it makes those things necessary, on which the thing promised depends, and without which it cannot take effect. Therefore it appears, that it was utterly impossible that Christ's holiness should fail, from such absolute promises as these, (Psalms 110:4) " The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." And from every other promise in that psalm, contained in each verse of it. (And Psalms 2:6-7) "I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee: Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," &c. (Psalms 45:3-4, &c.) " Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously." And so every thing that is said from thence to the end of the psalm. (See Isaiah 3:13-15 and Isaiah 53:10-12) And all those promises which God makes to the Messiah, of success, dominion, and glory in the character of a Redeemer, (Isaiah 49:1-26)

3. It was often promised to the church of God of old, for their comfort, that God would give them a righteous, sinless Saviour. (Jeremiah 23:5-6) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will rise up unto David a righteous branch; and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness." (So, Jeremiah 33:15) "I will cause the branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, and he shall execute judgment and

righteousness in the land." (Isaiah 11:6-7) "For unto us a child is born; -- upon the throne of David and of his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this." (Isaiah 11:1, &c.) "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,-- the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord: -- with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity: -- Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." (Isaiah 52:13) "My servant shall deal prudently." (Isaiah 53:9) "Because he had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth." If it be impossible, that these promises should fail, and it be easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one jot or tittle of them to pass away, then it was impossible that Christ should commit any sin.-- Christ himself signified, that it was impossible but that the things which were spoken concerning him, should be fulfilled. (Luke 24:44) "That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me." (Matthew 26:53-54) "But how then shall the scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Mark 14:49) "But the scriptures must be fulfilled.' And so the apostle, (Acts 1:16-17) "This scripture must needs have been fulfilled."

4. All the promises, which were made to the church of old, of the Messiah as a future Saviour, from that made to our first parents in paradise, to that which was delivered by the prophet Malachi show it to be impossible that Christ should not have persevered in perfect holiness. The ancient predictions given to God's church, of the Messiah as a Saviour, were of the nature of promises; as is evident by the predictions themselves, and the manner of delivering them. But they are expressly and very often called promises in the New Testament; (as in Luke 1:54-55, Luke 1:72-73. Acts 13:32-33. Romans 1:1-3 and Romans 15:8. Hebrews 6:13, &c.) These promises were often made with great solemnity, and confirmed with an oath; as, (Genesis 22:16-17), "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore: -- And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Compare Luke 1:72-73 and Galatians 3:8) The apostle in Hebrews 6:17-18. speaking of this promise to Abraham, says, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two IMMUTABLE things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, we might have strong consolation." In which words, the necessity of the accomplishment, or (which is the same thing) the impossibility of the contrary, is fully declared. So God confirmed the promise of the Messiah's great salvation, made to David, by an oath; (Psalms 89:3-4) "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." There is nothing so abundantly set forth in Scripture, as sure and irrefragable, as this promise and oath to David. (See Psalms 89:34-36. 2 Samuel 23:5. Acts 2:29-30 and Acts 13:34) The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly impossible that this promise and oath to David, concerning the everlasting dominion of the Messiah, should fail. (Jeremiah 33:15, &c.) "In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David.-- For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." (Jeremiah 33:20-21) "If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne." (So in Jeremiah 33:25-26) Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how impossible it was, that the promises made of old concerning the great salvation and kingdom of the Messiah

should fail: which implies, that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second Adam, the promised seed of Abraham, and of David, should fall from his integrity, as the first Adam did.

5. All the promises that were made to the church of God under the Old Testament, of the great enlargement of the church, and advancement of her glory, in the days of the gospel, after the coming of the Messiah; the increase of her light, liberty, holiness, joy, triumph over her enemies, &c. of which so great a part of the Old Testament consists; which are repeated so often, are so variously exhibited, so frequently introduced with great pomp and solemnity, and are so abundantly sealed with typical and symbolical representations; I say, all these promises imply, that the Messiah should perfect the work of redemption: and this implies, that he should persevere in the work, which the Father had appointed him, beings in all things conformed to his Will. Thee promises were often confirmed by an oath. (See Isaiah 54:9 with the context; chap. lxii. 18.) And it is represented as utterly impossible that these promises should fail. (Isaiah 49:15 with the context, Isaiah 44:10 with the context; Isaiah 51:4-8. Isaiah 40:8 with the context.) And therefore it was impossible that the Messiah should fail, or commit sin.

6. It was impossible that the Messiah should fail of persevering in integrity and holiness, as the first Adam did, because this would have been inconsistent with the promises, which God made to the blessed Virgin, his mother, and to her husband; implying, that he should "save his people from their sins," that God would " give him the throne of his father David," that he should "reign over the house of Jacob for ever;" and that "of his kingdom there shall be no end." These promises were sure, and it was impossible they should fail, and therefore the Virgin Mary, in trusting fully to them, acted reasonably, having an immovable foundation of her faith; as Elizabeth observes, (ver. 45.) "And blessed is she that believeth; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."

7. That it should have been possible that Christ should sin, and so fail in the work of our redemption, does not consist with the eternal purpose and decree of God, revealed in the Scriptures, that he would provide salvation for fallen man in and by Jesus Christ, and that salvation should be offered to sinners through the preaching of the gospel. Thus much is implied in many scriptures, (as 1 Corinthians 2:7.-- Ephesians 1:4-5 and Ephesians 3:9-11.-- 1 Peter 1:19-20) Such an absolute decree as this, Arminians allow to be signified in many texts; their election of nations and societies, and general election of the Christian church, and conditional election of particular persons, imply this. God could not decree before the foundation of the world, to save all that should believe in and obey Christ, unless, he had absolutely decreed, that salvation should be provided, and effectually wrought out by Christ. And since (as the Arminians themselves strenuously maintain) a decree of God infers necessity; hence it became necessary, that Christ should persevere and actually work out salvation for us, and that he should not fail by the commission of sin.

8. That it should have been possible for Christ’s holiness to fail, is not consistent with what God promised to his Son, before all ages. For that salvation should be offered to men, through Christ, and bestowed on all his faithful followers, is at least implied in that certain and infallible promise spoken of by the apostle, (Titus 1:2) "In hope of eternal life; which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." This does not seem to be controverted by Arminians.

9. That it should be possible for Christ to fail of doing his Father’s Will, is inconsistent with the promise made to the Father by the Son, the Logos that was with the Father from the beginning, before he took the human nature: as may be seen in Psalms 40:6-8. (compared with the apostle’s interpretation, Hebrews 10:5-9)" Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened, (or bored;) burnt-offering and sin-offering thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, 0 my God, yea, thy law is within my heart." Where is a manifest allusion to the covenant, which the willing servant, who loved his master’s service, made with his master, to be his servant for ever, on the day wherein he had his ear bored; which covenant was probably inserted in the public records, called the VOLUME OF THE BOOK, by the judges, who were called to take cognizance of the transaction; (Exodus 21:1-36) If the Logos, who was with the Father before the world, and who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do the Will of the Father in the human nature, and the promise was as it were recorded, that it, might be made sure, doubtless it was impossible that it should fail; and so it was impossible that Christ should fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human nature.

10. If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out redemption for sinners, then the salvation of all the saints, who were saved from the beginning of the world, to the death of Christ, was not built on a firm foundation. The Messiah, and the redemption which he was to work out by his obedience unto death, was the saving foundation of all that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old-Testament saints had the pardon of their sins and the favour of God promised them, and salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit sin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to Evil; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future time, and depended so much upon it, that he proceeded actually to save men on the account of it, though it had been already done. But this trust and dependence of God, on the supposition of Christ’s being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a staff that was weak, and might possibly break. The saints of old trusted on the promises of a future redemption to be wrought out and completed by the Messiah, and built their comfort upon it: Abraham saw Christ’s day, and rejoiced; and he and the other Patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it, (Hebrews 11:13) But on this supposition, their faith, their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a fallible foundation; Christ was not to them "a tried stone, a sure foundation;" (Isaiah 28:16) David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah; and said it was all his salvation, and all his desire; and comforts himself that this covenant was an "everlasting covenant, ordered in ail things and sure," (2 Samuel 23:5) But if Christ’s virtue might fail, he was mistaken: his great comfort was not built so "sure" as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the determinations of the Free Will of Christ’s human soul; which was subject to no necessity, and might be determined either one way or the other. Also the dependence of those, who "looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and wailed for the consolation of Israel," (Luke 2:25, and Luke 2:38) and the confidence of the disciples of Jesus, who forsook all and followed him, that they might enjoy the benefits of his future kingdom, were built on a sandy foundation.

11. The man Christ Jesus, before he had finished his course of obedience, and while in the midst of temptations and trials, was abundant in positively predicting his own future glory in his kingdom,

and the enlargement of his church, the salvation of the Gentiles through him, &c. and in promises of blessings he would bestow on his true disciples in his future kingdom; on which promises he required the full dependence of his disciples, (John 14:1-31) But the disciples would have no ground for such dependence, if Christ had been liable to fail in his work: and Christ himself would have been guilty of presumption, in so abounding in peremptory promises of great things, which depended on a mere contingence; viz. the determinations of his Free Will, consisting in a freedom ad ulrumque, to either sin or holiness, standing in indifference, and incident, in thousands of future instances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was impossible that the Acts of the will of the human soul of Christ should be otherwise than holy, and conformed to the Will of the Father; or, in other words, they were necessarily so conformed.

I have been the longer in the proof of this matter, it being a thing denied by some of the greatest Arminians, by Episcopius in particular; and because I look upon it as a point clearly and absolutely determining the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, concerning the necessity of such a freedom of Will as is insisted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promise or threatening, reward or punishment, praise or dispraise, merit or demerit. I now therefore proceed,

II. To consider whether CHRIST, in his holy behaviour on earth, was not thus a moral agent, subject to commands, promises, &c.

Dr. Whitby very often speaks of what he calls a freedom ad utrumlibet, without necessity, as requisite to law and commands: and speaks of necessity as entirely inconsistent with injunctions and prohibitions. But yet we read of Christ being the subject of His Father’s commands, (John 10:18 and John 15:10) And Christ tells us, that every thing that he said, or did, was in compliance with "commandments he had received of the Father;" (John 12:49-50 and John 14:31) And we often read of Christ’s obedience to his Father’s commands, (Romans 5:19. Php 2:18. Hebrews 5:8) The forementioned writer represents promises offered as motives to person to do their duty, or a being moved and induced by promises, as utterly inconsistent with a state wherein persons have not a liberty ad utrumlibet, but are necessarily determined to one. (See particularly, p. 298, and 311.) But the thing which this writer asserts, is demonstrably false, if the Christian religion be true. If there be any truth in Christianity or the Holy Scriptures, the man Christ Jesus had his Will infallibly and unalterably determined to good, and that alone; but yet he had promises of glorious rewards made to him, on condition of his persevering in and perfecting the work which God had appointed him; (Isaiah 53:10-12. Psalms 2:1-12 and Psalms 110:1-7. Isaiah 49:7-9) In Luke 22:28, Luke 22:20. Christ says to his disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." The word most properly signifies to appoint by covenant, or promise. The plain meaning of Christ’s words is this: "As you have partaken of my temptations and trials, and have been steadfast, and have overcome; I promise to make you partakers of my reward, and to give you a kingdom; as the Father has promised me a kingdom for continuing steadfast and overcoming in those trials." And the words are well explained by those in 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." And Christ had not only promises of glorious success and rewards made to his obedience and

sufferings, but the Scriptures plainly represent him as using these promises for motives and inducements to obey and suffer; and particularly that promise of a kingdom which the Father had appointed him, or sitting with the Father on his throne; (as in Hebrews 12:1-2) "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God." And how strange would it be to hear any Christian assert, that the holy and excellent temper and behaviour of Jesus Christ, and that obedience which he performed under such great trials, was not virtuous or praiseworthy; because his Will was not free ad, utrumque, to either holiness or sin, but was unalterably determined to one; that upon this account, there is no virtue at all in all Christ's humility, meekness, patience, charity, forgiveness of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly-mindedness, submission to the Will of God, perfect obedience to his commands unto death, even the death of the cross, his great compassion to the afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfulness to God and man, under such great trials; his praying for his enemies, even when nailing him to the cross; that virtue, when applied to these things, is but an empty name; that there was no merit in any of these things; that is, that Christ was worthy of nothing at all on account of them, worthy of no reward, no praise, no honour or respect from God or man; because his will was not indifferent, and free either to these things, or the contrary; but under such a strong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it impossible that he should choose the contrary; that upon this account, to use Dr. Whitby's language, it would be sensibly unreasonable that the human nature should be rewarded for any of these things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently set forth in Scripture as the first-born of every creature, as having in all things the pre-eminence, and as the highest of all creatures in virtue, honour, and worthiness of esteem, praise, and glory, on account of his virtue, is less worthy of reward or praise, than the very least of saints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or mere machine, that is purely passive, and moved by natural necessity.

If we judge by scriptural representations of things, we have reason to suppose, that Christ took on him our nature, and dwelt with us in this world, in a suffering state, not only to satisfy for our sins; but that he, being in our nature and circumstances, and under our trials, might be our most fit and proper example, leader, and captain, in the exercise of glorious and victorious virtue, and might be a visible instance of the glorious end and reward of it; that we might see in Him the beauty, amiableness, and true honour and glory, and exceeding benefit, of that virtue, which it is proper for us human beings to practice; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to seek the like glory and honour, and to obtain the like glorious reward. (See Hebrews 2:9-14. with Hebrews 5:8-9 and Hebrews 12:1-3. John 15:10. Romans 8:17. 2 Timothy 2:11-12. 1 Peter 2:19-20 and 1 Peter 4:1-3) But if there was nothing of any virtue or merit, or worthiness of any reward, glory, praise, or commendation at all, in all that he did, because it was all necessary, and he could not help it; then how is here any thing so proper to animate and incite us, free creatures, by patient continuance in well-doing, to seek for honour glory, and virtue?

God speaks of himself as peculiarly well pleased with the righteousness of this distinguished servant. (Isaiah 42:21) "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake." The sacrifices of old are spoken of as a sweet savor to God, but the obedience of Christ as far more acceptable than they. (Psalms 40:6-7) "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ear hast thou opened [as

thy servant performing willing obedience;] burnt- offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come, [as a servant that cheerfully answers the calls of his master:] I delight to do thy will, 0 my God, and thy law is within mine heart." (Matthew 17:5) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." And Christ tells us expressly, that the Father loves Him for that wonderful instance of his obedience, his voluntary yielding himself to death, in compliance with the Father's command, (John 10:17-18) "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life: -- No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself -- This commandment received I of my Father." And if there was no merit in Christ's obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praise, and of the most glorious rewards, the heavenly hosts were exceedingly mistaken, by the account that is given of them, (Revelation 5:8-12) "The four beasts, and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them carps, and golden vials full of odours; -- and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain.-- And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saving with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Christ speaks of the eternal life which he was to receive, as the reward of his obedience to the Father's commandments. (John 12:49-50)" I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak;: and I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." -- God promises to divide him a portion with the great, &c. for his being his righteous servant, for his glorious virtue under such great trials and afflictions. (Isaiah 53:11-12) "He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death." The Scriptures represent God as rewarding him far above all his other servants. (Php 2:7-9) "He took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath Highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." (Psalms 45:7) "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

There is no room to pretend, that the glorious benefits bestowed in consequence of Christ's obedience, are not properly of the nature of a reward. What is a reward, in the most proper sense, but a benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent in quality or behaviour, in testimony of well-blessedness in that moral excellency, and of respect and favour on that account? If we consider the nature of a reward most strictly, and make the utmost of it, and add to the things contained in this description proper merit or worthiness, and the bestowment of the benefit in consequence of a promise; still it will be found, there is nothing belonging to it, but what the Scripture most expressly ascribes to the glory bestowed on Christ, after his sufferings; as appears from what has been already observed; there was a glorious benefit bestowed in consequence of something morally excellent, being called Righteousness and Obedience; there was great favour, love, and well-pleasedness, for this righteousness and obedience, in the bestower; there was proper merit, or worthiness of the benefit, in the obedience; it was bestowed in fulfilment of

promises, made to that obedience; and was bestowed therefore, or because he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all these things, that Jesus Christ, while here in the flesh, was manifestly in a state of trial. The last Adam, as Christ is called, (1 Corinthians 15:45. Romans 5:14) taking on him the human nature, and so the form of a servant, and being under the law, to stand and act for us, was put into a state of trial, as the first Adam was.-- Dr. Whitby mentions these three things as evidences of persons being in a state of trial, (on the five Points, p. 298, 299.) namely, their afflictions being spoken of as their trials or temptations, their being the subjects of promises, and their being exposed to Satan's temptations. But Christ was apparently the subject of each of these. Concerning promises made to him, I have spoken already. The difficulties and afflictions he met with in the course of his obedience, are called his temptations or trials, (Luke 22:28) "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations trials." (Hebrews 2:18) "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted [or tried,] he is able to succor them that are tempted." And, (Hebrews 4:15) " We have not an high-priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." And as to his being tempted by Satan it is what none will dispute.

05.03.02. Part 3 sec 2

Part 3 sec 2 The case of such as are given up of God to sin, and of fallen man in general, proves moral Necessity and Inability to be consistent with Blameworthiness.

DR. WHITBY asserts freedom, not only from coaction, but Necessity, to be essential to any thing deserving the name of sin, and to an action being culpable; in these words, (Discourse on Five Points, edit. 3. p. 348.) "If they be thus necessitated, then neither their sins of omission or commission could deserve that name: it being essential to the nature of sin, according to St. Austin's definition, that it be an action a duo liberum est abstinere. Three things seem plainly necessary to make an action or omission culpable; 1. That it be in our power to perform or forbear it: for, as Origen, and all the fathers, say, no man is blameworthy for not doing what he could not do." And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any do evil of Necessity, what they do is no vice, that they are guilty of no fault, are worthy of no blame, dispraise, or dishonour, but are unblamable."

If these things are true, in Dr. Whitby's sense of Necessity, they will prove all such to be blameless, who are given up of God to sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up,-- That there is such a thing as men being judicially given up to sin, is certain, if the Scripture rightly informs us; such a thing being often there spoken of: as in Psalms 81:12. "So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels." (Acts 7:42) "Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven." (Romans 1:24) " Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves." (Romans 1:26) "For this cause God gave them up to vile affections." (Romans 1:28) "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient."

It is needless to stand particularly to inquire, what God's "giving men up to their own hearts' lusts" signifies: it is sufficient to observe, that hereby is certainly meant God so ordering or disposing things, in some respect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the consequence should be men continuing in their sins. So much as men are given up to, so much is the consequence of their being given up, whether that be less or more. If God does not order things so, by action or permission, that sin will be the consequence, then the event proves that they are not given up to that consequence. If good be the consequence, instead of evil, then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good; which mercy must be contrary to God's judgment in giving up to evil. If the event must prove, that they are given up to evil as the consequence, then the persons, who are the subjects of this judgment, must be the subjects of such an event, and so the event is necessary.

If not only coaction, but all Necessity, will prove men blameless, then Judas was blameless, after Christ had given him over, and had already declared his certain damnation, and that he should verily betray him. He was guilty of no sin in betraying his Master, on this supposition; though his so doing is spoken of by Christ as the most aggravated sin, more heinous than the sin of Pilate in

crucifying him. And the Jews in Egypt, in Jeremiah's time, were guilty of no sin, in their not worshiping the true God, after God had "sworn by his great name, that his name should be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt," (Jeremiah 44:26)

Dr. Whitby (Disc. on five Points, p. 302, 303.) denies, that men, in this world, are ever so given up by God to sin, that their Wills should be necessarily determined to evil; though he owns, that hereby it may become exceeding difficult for men to do good, having a strong bent and powerful inclination to what is evil. But if we should allow the case to be just as he represents, the judgment of giving up to sin will no better agree with his notions of that liberty, which is essential to praise or blame, than if we should suppose it to render the avoiding of sin impossible. For if an impossibility of avoiding sin wholly excuses a man; then for the same reason, its being difficult to avoid it, excuses him in part; and this just in proportion to the degree of difficulty.-- If the influence of moral impossibility or inability be the same, to excuse persons in not doing or not avoiding any thing, as that of natural inability, (which is supposed,) then undoubtedly, in like manner, mortal difficulty has the same influence to excuse with natural difficulty. But all allow, that natural impossibility wholly excuses, and also that natural difficulty excuses in part, and makes the act or omission less blamable in proportion to the difficulty. All natural difficulty, according to the plainest dictates of the light of nature, excuses in some degree, so that the neglect is not so blamable, as if there had been no difficulty in the case: and so the greater the difficulty is, still the more excusable, in proportion to the increase of the difficulty. And as natural impossibility wholly excuses, and excludes all blame, so the nearer the difficulty approaches to impossibility, still the nearer a person is to blamelessness in proportion to that approach. And if the case of moral impossibility or Necessity, be just the same with natural Necessity or coaction, as to its influence to excuse a neglect, then also, for the same reason, the case of natural difficulty does not differ in influence, to excuse a neglect, from moral difficulty, arising from a strong bias or bent to evil, such as Dr. Whitby owns in the case of those that are given up to their own hearts' lusts. So that the fault of such persons must be lessened, in proportion to the difficulty, and approach to impossibility. If ten degrees of moral difficulty make the action quite impossible, and so wholly excuse, then if there be nine degrees of difficulty, the person is in great part excused, and is nine degrees in ten less blameworthy, than if there had been no difficulty at all; and he has but one degree of blameworthiness. The reason is plain, on Arminian principles; viz. because as difficulty, by antecedent bent and bias on the Will, is increased, liberty of indifference, and self-determination in the Will, is diminished; so much hindrance, impediment is there, in the way of the will acting freely, by mere self-determination. And if ten degrees of such hindrance take away all such liberty, then nine degree,- take away nine parts in ten, and leave but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is but one degree of blameableness in the neglect; the man being no further blamable in what he does, or neglects, than he has liberty in that affair: for blame or praise (say they) arises wholly from a good use or abuse of liberty. From all which it follows, that a strong bent and bias one way, and difficulty of going the contrary, never causes a person to be at all more exposed to sin, or any thing blamable: because, as the difficulty is increased, so much the less is required and expected. Though in one respect, exposedness to sin is increased, viz. by an increase of exposedness to the evil action or omission; yet it is diminished in another respect, to balance it; namely, as the sinfulness or blamableness of the action or omission is diminished in the same proportion. So that, on the whole, the affair, as to exposedness to guilt or blame, is left just as it was. To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balance to be intelligent, and a free agent, and indued with a

self-moving power, by virtue of which it could act and produce effects to a certain degree, ex. gr. to move itself up or down with a force equal to a weight of ten pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force; for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blameworthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of ten pounds to be put in the opposite scale, which in force entirely counterbalances its self-moving power, and so renders it impossible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excuses it from any such motion. But if we suppose there to be only nine pounds in the opposite scale, this renders its motion not impossible, but yet more difficult; so that it can now only move down with the force of one pound; but however, this is all that is required of it under these circumstances; it is wholly excused from nine parts of its motion; and if the scale, under these circumstances, neglect to move, and remain at rest, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one tenth part of its motion; for which it had as much liberty and advantage, as in usual circumstances it has for the greater motion, which in such a case would be required. So that this new difficulty does not at all increase its exposedness to any thing blameworthy. And thus the very supposition of difficulty in the way of a man's duty, or proclivity to sin, through a being given up to hardness of heart, or indeed by any other means whatsoever, is an inconsistence, according to Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praise. The avoiding of sin and blame, and the doing of what is virtuous and praiseworthy, most be always equally easy.

Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, obligation, virtue. sin, &c. led him into another great inconsistence. He abundantly insists, that necessity is inconsistent with the nature of sin or fault. He says, in the forementioned treatise, (p. 14.) Who can blame a person for doing what he could not help? And, (p. 15.) It being sensibly unjust, to punish any man for doing that which was never in his power to avoid. And, (p. 341.) to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the fathers, saying, Why doth God command, if man hath not free will and power to obey? And again, in the same and the next page, Who will not cry out, that it is folly to command him, that hath not liberty to do what is commanded; and that it is unjust to condemn him, that has it not in his power to do what is required? And, (p. 373.) he cites another saying, A law is given to him that can turn to both parts; I. e. obey or transgress it; but no Law can be against him who is bound by nature. And yet the same Dr. Whitby asserts, that fallen man is not able to perform perfect obedience. In p. 165, he has these words: "The nature of Adam had power to continue innocent, and without sin; whereas, it is certain our nature never had." But if we have not power to continue innocent and without sin, then sin is not inconsistent with Necessity, and we may be sinful in that which we have not power to avoid; and those things cannot be true, which he asserts elsewhere, namely,"That if we be necessitated, neither sins of omission nor commission, would deserve that name," (p. 348.) If we have it not in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in our power to be blameless; and if so, we are under a Necessity of being blameworthy. And how does this consist with what he so often asserts, that Necessity is inconsistent with blame or praise? If we have it not in our power to perform perfect obedience to all the commands of God, then we are under a Necessity of breaking some commands, in some degree; having no power to perform so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he cry out of the unreasonableness and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?

Arminians in general are very inconsistent with themselves, in what they say of the Inability of fallen man in this respect. They strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God, to require any

thing of us beyond our present power and ability to perform; and also hold that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Christ died to satisfy for the imperfections of our obedience and has made way, that our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect; wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistence. For (as I have observed elsewhere) "they hold that God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution or law, that they were under originally, and instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor inf poor infirm impotent circumstances since the fall." Now how can these things be made consistent? I would ask, of what law are these imperfections of our obedience a breach? If they are a breach of no law that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins,what need of Christ dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law is it? They cannot be a breach of their new law, for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections: and therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their old law: for that, they say, is entirely abolished; and we never were under it.-- They say, it would not be just in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just to require more than we can perform, or to punish us for failing of it. And, therefore, by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deserve to be punished. What need therefore of Christ dying, to satisfy for them? What need of his suffering, to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no suffering? What need of Christ dying, to purchase, that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience than imperfect should be required? What need of Christ dying to make way for God’s accepting of such obedience, as it would be unjust in him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ dying to prevail with God not to do unrighteously? -- If it be said, that Christ died to satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law; still I would inquire, what need of Christ dying, that we might not be under a law, which (by their principles) it would be in itself unjust that we should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because, in our present state, we are not able to keep it? So the Arminians are inconsistent with themselves, not only, in what they say of the need of Christ’s satisfaction to atone for those imperfections, which we cannot avoid, but also in what they say of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the sincere obedience of the new law. "I grant indeed, (says Dr. Stebbing,) that by original sin, we are utterly disabled for the performance of the condition, without new grace from God. But I say then, that he gives such a grace to all of us, by which the performance of the condition, is truly possible; and upon this ground he may and doth most righteously require it." If Dr. Stebbing intends to speak properly, by grace he must mean, that assistance which is of grace, or of free favour and kindness. But yet in the same place he speaks of it as very unreasonableness, unjust, and cruel, for God to require that, as the condition of pardon, that is become impossible by original sin. If it be so, what grace is there in giving assistance and ability to perform the condition of pardon? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an absolute debt, which God is bound to bestow, and which it would be unjust and cruel in him to withhold, seeing he requires that, as the condition of pardon, which he cannot perform without it?

05.03.04. Part 3 sec 4

Part 3 sec 4 Command and Obligation to Obedience, consistent with moral Inability to obey.

IT being so much insisted on by Arminian writers, that necessity is inconsistent with law or command, and particularly, that it is absurd to suppose God by his command should require that of men which they are unable to do; not allowing in this case for any difference between natural and moral Inability; I would therefore now particularly consider this matter.-- And for greater clearness I would distinctly lay down the following things.

I. The Will itself, and not only those actions which are the effects of the will, is the proper object of Precept or Command. That is, such a state or acts of men's Wills, are in many cases properly required of them by Commands; and not only those alterations in the state of their bodies or minds that are the consequences of volition. This is most manifest; for it is the soul only that is properly and directly the subject of Precepts or Commands; that only being capable of receiving or perceiving Commands. The motions or state of the body are matter of Command, only as they are subject to the soul, and connected with its acts. But now the soul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the most direct and proper sense, consent, yield to, or comply with any Command, but the faculty of the Will; and it is by this faculty only, that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance: for the very notions of consenting, yielding, accepting, complying, refusing, rejecting, &c. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the will. Obedience, in the primary nature of it, is the submitting and yielding of the Will of one, to the will of another. Disobedience is the not consenting, not complying of the Will of the commanded, to the manifested Will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the Will, as certain motions of the body and alterations in the soul, are Obedience or Disobedience only indirectly, as they are connected with the state or actions of the will, according to an established law of nature. So that it is manifest, the Will itself may be required: and the being of a good Will is the most proper, direct, and immediate subject of Command; and if this cannot be prescribed or required by Command or Precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwise than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of a good Will.

Corol. 1. If there be several acts of the Will, or a series of acts, one following another, and one the effect of another, the first and determining act is properly the subject of Command, and not only the consequent acts, which are dependent upon it. Yea, this more especially is that to which Command or Precept has a proper respect; because it is this act that determines the whole affair: in this act the Obedience or Disobedience lies, in a peculiar manner; the consequent acts being all governed and determined by it. This governing act must be the proper object of Precept, or none.

Corol. 2. It also follows, from what has been observed, that if there be any act, or exertion of the soul, prior to all free acts of choice in the case, directing and determining what the acts of the Will shall be; that act of the soul cannot properly be subject to any Command or Precept, in any respect whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be subject to Commands directly, because they are no acts of the Will; being by the supposition prior

to all acts of the Will, determining and giving rise to all its acts: they not being acts of the Will, there can be in them no consent to or compliance with any Command. Neither can they be subject to Command or Precept indirectly or remotely; for they are not so much as the sects or consequences of the Will, being prior to all its acts. So that if there be any Obedience in that original act of the soul, determining all volitions, it is an act of Obedience wherein the Will has no concern at all; it preceding every act of Will. And therefore, if the soul either obeys or disobeys in this act, it is wholly involuntarily; there is no willing Obedience or rebellion, no compliance or opposition of the Will in the affair: and what sort of Obedience or rebellion is this? And thus the Arminian notion of the freedom of the will consisting in the soul's determining its own acts of Will, instead of being essential to moral agency, and to men being the subjects of moral government, is utterly inconsistent with it. For if the soul determines all its acts of Will, it is therein subject to no Command or moral government, as has been now observed; because its original determining act is no act of Will or choice, it being prior, by the supposition, to every act of Will. And the soul cannot be the subject of Command in the act of the Will itself, which depends on the foregoing determining act, and is determined by it; in as much as this is necessary, being the necessary consequence and effect of that prior determining act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the man be the subject of Command or government in his external actions; because these are all necessary, being the necessary effects of the acts of the Will themselves. So that mankind, according to this scheme, are subjects of Command or moral government in nothing at all; and all their moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room is left for virtue or vice in the world. So that the Arminian scheme, and not that of the Calvinists, is utterly inconsistent with moral government, and with all use of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promises, or threatenings. Neither is there any way whatsoever to make their principles consist with these things. For if it be said, that there is no prior determining act of the soul, preceding the acts of the Will, but that volitions are events that come to pass by pure accident, without any determining cause, this is most palpably inconsistent with all use of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no use to direct and regulate perfect accident: which, by the supposition of its being pure accident, is in no case regulated by any thing preceding; but happens, this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cause or rule. The perfect uselessness of laws and precepts also follows from the Arminian notion of indifference, as essential to that liberty, which is requisite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to bind to one side; and the end of Commands is to turn the Will one way: and therefore they are of no use, unless they turn or bias the Will that way. But if liberty consists in indifference, then their biassing the Will one way only, destroys liberty; as it puts the Will out of equilibrium. So that the will, having a bias, through the influence of binding law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to itself, to determine itself which way it will, without influence from without.

II. Having shown that the Will itself, especially in those acts which are original, leading and determining in any case, is the proper subject of Precept and Command -- and not only those alterations in the body, &c. which are the effects of the Will -- I now proceed, in the second place, to observe, that the very opposition or defect of the Will itself, in its original and determining act in the case, to a thing proposed or commanded, or its failing of compliance, implies a moral inability to that thing: or, in other words, whenever a Command requires a certain state or act of the Will, and the person commanded, notwithstanding the Command and the circumstances under which it is exhibited, still finds his will opposite or wanting, in that, belonging to its state or acts, which is original and determining in the affair, that man is morally unable to obey that Command. This is

manifest from what was observed in the first part concerning the nature of moral Inability, as distinguished from natural: where it was observed, that a man may then be said to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence or prevalence of a contrary inclination, or has a want of inclination, under such circumstances and views. It is also evident, from what has been before proved, that the Will is always, and in every individual act, necessarily determined by the strongest motive; and so is always unable to go against the motive, which, all things considered, has now the greatest strength and advantage to move the Will.-- But not further to insist on these things, the truth of the position now laid down, viz. that when the Will is opposite to, or failing of a compliance with, a thing, in its original determination or act, it is not able to comply, appears by the consideration of these two things.

1. The Will in the time of that diverse or opposite leading act or inclination, and when actually under its influence, is not able to exert itself to the contrary, to make an alteration, in order to a compliance. The inclination is unable to change itself; and that for this plain reason, that it is unable to incline to change itself. Present choice cannot at present choose to be otherwise: for that would be at present to choose something diverse from what is at present chosen. If the will, all things now considered, inclines or chooses to go that way, then it cannot choose, all things now considered, to go the other way, and so cannot choose to be made to go the other way. To suppose that the mind is now sincerely inclined to change itself to a different inclination, is to suppose the mind is now truly inclined otherwise than it is now inclined. The Will may oppose some future remote act that it is exposed to, but not its own present Acts 2:1-47. As it is impossible that the Will should comply with the thing commanded, with respect to its leading act, by any act of its own, in the time of that diverse or opposite leading and original act, or after it has actually come under the influence of that determining choice or inclination; so it is impossible it should be determined to a compliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very supposition, there is no foregoing act; the opposite or noncomplying act being that act which is original and determining in the case. Therefore it must be so, that if this first determining act be found non-complying, on the proposal of the command, the mind is morally unable to obey. For to suppose it to be able to obey, is to suppose it to be able to determine and cause its first determining act to be otherwise, and that it has power better to govern and regulate its first governing and regulating act, which is absurd; for it is to suppose a prior act of the Will, determining its first determining act; that is, an act prior to the first, and leading and governing the original and governing act of all; which is a contradiction.

Here if it should be said, that although the mind has not any ability to will contrary to what it does will, in the original and leading act of the Will, because there is supposed to be no prior act to determine and order it otherwise, and the will cannot immediately change itself, because it cannot at present incline to a change; yet the mind has an ability for the present to forbear to proceed to action, and taking time for deliberation; which may be an occasion of the change of the inclination.

I answer, (1.) In this objection, that seems to be forgotten which was observed before, viz. that the determining to take the matter into consideration, is itself an act of the Will: and if this be all the act wherein the mind exercises ability and freedom, then this, by the supposition, must be all that can be commanded or required by precept. And if this act be the commanding act, then all that has been observed concerning the commanding act of the Will remains true, that the very want of it is a moral Inability to exert it, &c. (2.) We are speaking concerning the first and leading act of the will about the affair; and if determining to deliberate, or, on the contrary, to proceed immediately

without deliberating, be the first and leading act; or whether it be or no, if there be another act before it, which determines that; or whatever be the original and leading act; still the foregoing proof stands good, that the non-compliance of the leading act implies moral Inability to comply.

If it should be objected, that these things make all moral Inability equal, and suppose men morally unable to will otherwise than they actually do will, in all cases, and equally so in every instance.-- In answer to this objection, I desire two things may be observed.

First, That if by being equally unable, be meant, as really unable; then, so far as the Inability is merely moral, it is true; the will, in every instance, acts by moral necessity, and is morally unable to act otherwise, as truly and properly in one case as another; as, I humbly conceive, has been perfectly and abundantly demonstrated by what has been said in the preceding part of this essay. But yet, in some respect, the Inability may be said to be greater in some instances than others: though the man may be truly unable, (if moral inability can truly be called Inability.) yet he may be further from being able to do Some things than others. As it is in things, which men are naturally unable to do. A person, whose strength is no more than sufficient to lift the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one hundred and one pounds, as ten thousand pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former; and so, according to the common use of speech, has a greater Inability for it. So it is in moral Inability. A man is truly morally unable to choose contrary to a present inclination, which in the least degree prevails; or, contrary to that motive, which, all things considered, has strength and advantage now to move the Will, in the least degree, superior to all other motives in view: but yet he is further from ability to insist a very strong habit, and a violent and deeply rooted inclination, or a motive vastly exceeding all others in strength. And again, the Inability may, in some respects, be called greater in some instances than others, as it may be more general and extensive to all acts of that kind. So men may be said to be unable in a different sense, and to be further from moral ability, who have that moral Inability which is general and habitual, than they who have only that Inability which is occasional and particular. Thus in cases of natural inability; he that is born blind may be said to be unable to see, in a different manner, and is, in some respects, further from being able to see, than he whose sight is hindered by a transient cloud or mist. And besides, that which was observed in the first part of this discourse, concerning the Inability which attends a strong and settled habit, should be there remembered; viz. that a fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral inability, by which it is distinguished from occasional volition, namely, that endeavours to avoid future volitions of that kind, which are agreeable to such a habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and insufficient. For though it is impossible there should be any sincere endeavours against a present choice, yet there may be against volitions of that kind, when viewed at a distance. A person may desire and use means to prevent future exercises of a certain inclination; and, in order to it, may wish the habit might be removed; but his desires and endeavours may be ineffectual. The man may be said in some sense to be unable; yea, even as the word unable is a relative term, and has relation to ineffectual endeavours; yet not with regard to present, but remote endeavours.

Secondly, It must be borne in mind, according to what was observed before, that indeed no Inability whatsoever, which is merely moral, is properly called by the name of Inability; and that in the strictest propriety of speech, a man may be said to have a thing in his power, if he has it at his election, and he cannot be said to be unable to do a thing, when he can, if he now pleases, or whenever he has a proper, direct, and immediate desire for it. As to those desires and

endeavours, that may be against the exercises of a strong habit, with regard to which men may be said to be unable to avoid those exercises, they are remote desires and endeavours in two respects. first, as to time; they are never against present volitions, but only against volitions of such a kind, when viewed at a distance. Secondly, as to their nature; these opposite desires are not directly and properly against the habit and inclination itself, or the volitions in which it is exercised; for these, in themselves considered, are agreeable: but against something else that attends them, or is their consequence; the opposition of the mind is leveled entirely against this; the volitions themselves are not at all opposed directly, and for their own sake; but only indirectly and remotely, on the account of something foreign.

III. Though the opposition of the Will itself, or the very want of Will to a thing commanded, implies a moral inability to that thing; yet, if it be, as has been already shown, that the being of a good state or act of will, is a thing most properly required by Command; then, in some cases, such a state or act of Will may properly be required, which at present is not, and which may also be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore those things may properly be commanded, for which men have a moral Inability.

Such a state or act of the Will, may be required by Command, as does not already exist. For if that volition only may be commanded to be, which already is, there could be no use of precept: Commands in all cases would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may such a Will be required, as is wanting before the Command is given, but also such as may possibles be wanting afterwards; such as the exhibition of the Command may not be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwise, no such thing as disobedience to a proper and rightful Command is possible in any case; and there is no case possible, wherein there can be a faulty disobedience. Which Arminians cannot affirm, consistently with their principle: for this makes obedience to just and proper Commands always necessary, and disobedience impossible. And so the Arminian would overthrow himself, yielding the very point we are upon, which he so strenuously denies, viz. that Law and Command are consistent with necessity.

If merely that Inability will excuse disobedience, which is implied in the opposition or defect of inclination, remaining after the Command is exhibited, then wickedness always carries that in it which excuses it. By how much the more wickedness there is in a man’s heart, by so much is his inclination to evil the stronger, and by so much the more, therefore, has he of moral Inability to the good required. His moral Inability consisting in the strength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedness consists; and yet, according to Arminian principles, it must be a thing inconsistent with wickedness; and by how much the more he has of it, by so much is he the further from wickedness.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifest, that moral Inability alone (which consists in disinclination) never renders any thing improperly the subject matter of Precept or Command, and never can excuse any person in disobedience, or want of conformity to a command.

Natural Inability, arising from the want of natural capacity, or external hindrance, (which alone is properly called Inability,) without doubt wholly excuses, or makes a thing improperly the matter of Command. If men are excused from doing or acting any good thing, supposed to be commanded, it must be through some defect or obstacle that is not in the Will itself, but either in the capacity of understanding, or body, or outward circumstances.-- Here two or three things may be observed,

1. As to spiritual acts, or any good thing in the state or imminent acts of the will itself, or of the affections, (which are only certain modes of the exercise of the Will,) if persons are justly excused, it must be through want of capacity in the natural faculty of understanding. Thus the same spiritual duties, or holy affections and exercises of heart, cannot be required of men, as may be of angels; the capacity of understanding being so much inferior. So men cannot be required to love those amiable persons, whom they have had no opportunity to see, or hear of, or know in any way agreeable to the natural state and capacity of the human understanding. But the insufficiency of motives will not excuse; unless their being insufficient arises not from the moral state of the Will or inclination itself, but from the state of the natural understanding. The great kindness and generosity of another may be a motive insufficient to excite gratitude in the person that receives the kindness, through his vile and ungrateful temper: in this case, the insufficiency of the motive arises from the state of the Will or inclination of heart, and does not at all excuse. But if this generosity is not sufficient to excite gratitude, being unknown, there being no means of information adequate to the state and measure of the person's faculties, this insufficiency is attended with a natural Inability, which entirely excuses it.

2. As to such motions of body, or exercises and alterations of mind, which do not consist in the iniminent acts or state of the Will itself -- but are supposed to be required as effects of the will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding that inability, and that only, excuses, which consists in want of connexion between them and the Will. If the will fully complies, and the proposed effect does not prove, according to the laws of nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excused; he has a natural Inability to the thing required. For the Will itself, as has been observed, is all that can be directly and immediately required by Command; and other things only indirectly, as connected with the Will. If therefore, there be a full compliance of Will, the person has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not criminally owing to him.

3. Both these kinds of natural Inability, and all Inability that excuses, may be resolved into one thing; namely, want of natural capacity or strength; either capacity of understanding, or external strength. For when there are external defects and obstacles, they would be no obstacles, were it not for the imperfection and limitations of understanding and strength.

Corol. If things for which men have a moral Inability may properly be the matter of Precept or Command, then they may also of invitation and counsel. Commands and invitations come very much to the same thing; the difference is only circumstantial: Commands are as much a manifestation of the will of him that speaks, as invitations, and as much testimonies of expectation of compliance. The difference between them lies in nothing that touches the affair in hand. The main difference between Command and invitation consists in the enforcement of the Will of him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his kindness, the goodness from which his Will arises: in the former it is his authority. But whatever be the ground of Will in him that speaks, or the enforcement of what he says, yet, seeing neither his Will, nor his expectation, is any more testified in the one case than the other; therefore, a person being directed by invitation, is no more an evidence of insincerity in him that directs -- in manifesting either a Will or expectation which he has not -- than a person being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed by command is an evidence of insincerity. So that all this grand objection of Arminians against the Inability of fallen men to exert faith in Christ, or to perform other spiritual duties, from the sincerity of God's counsels

and invitations, must be without force.

05.03.05. Part 3 sec 5

Part 3 sec 5 That Sincerity of Desires and Endeavours, which, is supposed to excuse in the non-performance of things in themselves good, particularly considered. Is is much insisted on by many, that some men, though they are not able to perform spiritual duties, such as repentance of sin, love to God, a cordial acceptance of Christ as exhibited and offered in the gospel, &c. yet may sincerely desire and endeavor after these things; and therefore must be excused; it being unreasonable to blame them for the omission of those things, which they sincerely desire and endeavour to do, but cannot. Concerning this matter, the following things may be observed.

1. What is here supposed, is a great mistake, and gross absurdity; even that men may sincerely choose and desire those spiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, rejection, &c. consisting in the exercise of the Will itself, or in the disposition and inclination of the heart; and yet not able to perform or exert them. This is absurd, because it is absurd to suppose that a man should directly, properly, and sincerely incline to have an inclination, which at the same time is contrary to his inclination: for that is to suppose him not to be inclined to that which he is inclined to. If a man, in the state and acts of his will and inclination, properly and directly falls in with those duties, he therein performs them: for the duties themselves consist in that very thing; they consist in the state and acts of the Will being so formed and directed. If the soul properly and sincerely falls in with a certain proposed act of Will or choice, the soul therein makes that choice its own. Even as when a moving body falls in with a proposed direction of its motion, that is the same thing as to move in that direction.

2. That which is called a Desire and Willingness for those inward duties, in such as do not perform them, has respect to these duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly so called; not only because (as was observed before) it respects those good volitions only in a distant view, and with respect to future time; but also because evermore, not these things themselves, but something else that is foreign, is the object that terminates these volitions and Desires. A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenness, being under the power of a violent appetite to strong drink, and without any love to virtue; but being also extremely covetous and close, and very much exercised and grieved at the diminution of his estate, and prospect of poverty, may in a sort desire the virtue of temperance; and though his present Will is to gratify his extravagant appetite, yet he may wish he had a heart to forbear future acts of intemperance, and forsake his excesses, through an unwillingness to part with his money: but still he goes on with his drunkenness; his wishes and endeavours are insufficient and ineffectual: such a man has no proper, direct, sincere Willingness to forsake this vice, and the vicious deeds which belong to it; for he acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to excess: his Desire is very improperly called a willingness to be temperate; it is no true Desire of that virtue; for it is not that virtue, that terminates his wishes; nor have they any direct respect at all to it. It is only the saving of his money, or the avoiding of poverty, that terminates and exhausts the whole strength of his Desire. The virtue of temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a necessary means of gratifying the vice of covetousness.

So, a man of an exceedingly corrupt and wicked heart, who has no love to God and Jesus Christ, but, on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greatest distaste of the things of religion, and enmity against them; yet being of a family, that, from one generation to another, have most of them died, in youth, of an hereditary consumption; and so having little hope of living long; and having been instructed in the necessity of a supreme love to Christ, and latitude for his death and sufferings, in order to his salvation from eternal misery; if under these circumstances he should, through fear of eternal torments, wish he had such a disposition; but his profane and carnal heart remaining, he continues still in his habitual distaste of; and enmity to God and religion, and wholly without any exercise of that love and gratitude, (as doubtless the very devils themselves, notwithstanding all the devilishness of their temper, would wish for a holy heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:) in this case, there is no sincere Willingness to love Christ and choose him as his chief good: these holy dispositions and exercises are not at all the direct object of the Will: they truly share no part of the inclination or desire of the soul; but all is terminated on deliverance from torment: and these graces and pious volitions, notwithstanding this forced consent, are looked upon as in themselves undesirable; as when a sick man desires a dose he greatly abhors, in order to save his life. From these things it appears,

3. That this indirect Willingness is not that exercise of the Will which the command requires; but is entirely a different one; being a volition of a different nature, and terminated altogether on different objects; wholly falling short of that virtue of Will, to which the command has respect,

4. This other volition, which has only some indirect concern with the duty required, cannot excuse for the want of that good will itself, which is commanded; being not the thing which answers and fulfils the command, and being wholly destitute of the virtue which the command seeks.

Further to illustrate this matter: If a child has a most excellent father that has ever treated him with fatherly kindness and tenderness, and has every way, in the highest degree, merited his love and dutiful regard, and is withal very wealthy; but the son is of so vile a disposition, that he inveterately hates his father; and yet, apprehending that his hatred of him is like to prove his ruin, by bringing him finally to those abject circumstances, which are exceedingly adverse to his avarice and ambition; he, therefore, wishes it were otherwise: but yet remaining under the invincible power of his vile and malignant disposition, he continues still in his settled hatred of his father. Now, if such a son's indirect willingness to love and honour his father, at all acquits or excuses before God, for his failing of actually exercising these dispositions towards him, which God requires, it must be on one of these accounts. (1.) Either, That it answers and fulfils the command. But this it does not by the supposition; because the thing commanded is love and honour to his worthy parent. If the command be proper and just, as is supposed, then it obliges to the thing commanded; and so nothing else but that can answer the obligation. Or, (2.) It must be at least, because there is that virtue or goodness in his indirect willingness, that is equivalent to the virtue required; and so balances or countervails it, and makes up for the want of it. But that also is contrary to the supposition. The willingness the son has merely from a regard to money and honour, has no goodness in it, to countervail the want of the pious filial respect required.

Sincerity and reality, in that indirect Willingness, which has been spoken of, does not make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called sincere; whether it be in virtue or vice. Some persons are sincerely bad; others are sincerely good; and others may be sincere and hearty in

things, which are in their own nature indifferent; as a man may be sincerely desirous of eating when he is hungry. But being sincere, hearty, and in good earnest, is no virtue, unless it be in a thing that is virtuous. A man may be sincere and hearty in joining a crew of pirates, or a gang of robbers. When the devils cried out, and besought Christ not to torment them, it was no mere pretense; they were very hearty in their desires not to be tormented: but this did not make their Will or Desire virtuous. And if men have sincere Desires, which are in their kind and nature no better, it can be no excuse for the want of any required virtue. And as a man's Sincerity in such an indirect Desire or willingness to do his duty, as has been mentioned, cannot excuse for the want of performance; so it is with Endeavours arising from such a Willingness. The Endeavours can have no more goodness in them, than the Will of which they are the effect and expression. And, therefore, however sincere and real, and however great a person's Endeavours are; yea, though they should be to the utmost of his ability; unless the Will from which they proceed be truly good and virtuous, they can be of no avail or weight whatsoever in a moral respect. That which is not truly virtuous is, in God's sight, good for nothing: and so can be of no value, or influence, in his account, to make up for any moral defect. For nothing can counterbalance evil, but good. If evil be in one scale, and we put a great deal into the other of sincere and earnest Desires, and many and great endeavours; yet, if there be no real goodness in all, there is no weight in it; and so it does nothing towards balancing the real weight, which is in the opposite scale. It is only like subtracting a thousand noughts from before a real number, which leaves the sum just as it was.

Indeed such Endeavours may have a negatively good influence. Those things, which have no positive virtue, have no positive moral influence; yet they may be an occasion of persons avoiding some positive evils. As if a man were in the water with a neighbor to whom he had ill will, and who could not swim, holding him by his hand; this neighbor was much in debt to him,-- the man is tempted to let him sink and drown -- but refuses to comply with the temptation; not from love to his neighbor, bet from the love of money, and because by his drowning he should lose his debt; that which he does in preserving his neighbor from drowning, is nothing good in the sight of God: yet hereby he avoids the greater guilt that would have been contracted, if he had designedly let his neighbor sink and perish. But when Arminians, in their disputes with Calvinists, insist so much on sincere Desires and Endeavours, as what must excuse men, must be accepted of God, &c. it is manifest they have respect to some positive moral weight or influence of those Desires and Endeavours. Accepting, justifying, or excusing on the account of sincere Endeavours, (as they are called,) and men doing what they can, &c. has relation to some moral value, something that is accepts as good, and as such, countervailing some defect. But there is a great and unknown deceit, arising from the ambiguity of the phrase, sincere Endeavours. Indeed there is a vast indistinctness and unfixedness in most, or at least very many of the terms used to express things pertaining to moral and spiritual matters. whence arise innumerable mistakes, strong prejudices, inextricable confusion, and endless controversy.-- The word sincere is most commonly used to signify something that is good: men are habituated to understand by it the same as honest and upright; which terms excite an idea of something good in the strictest and highest sense; good in the sight of him, who sees not only the outward appearance, but the heart. And, therefore, men think that if a person be sincere, he will certainly be accepted. If it be said that any one is sincere in his endeavours, this suggests, that his heart is good, that there is no defect of duty, as to virtuous inclination; he honestly and uprightly desires and endeavours to do as he is required; and this leads them to suppose, that it would be very hard and unreasonable to punish him, only because

he is unsuccessful in his endeavours, the thing endeavored after being beyond his power.--Whereas it ought to be observed, that the word sincere has these different significations.

1. Sincerity, as the word is sometimes used, signifies no more than reality of will and Endeavour, with respect to any thing that is professed or pretended; without any consideration of the nature of the principle or aim, whence this real Will and true endeavour arises. If a man has some real Desire either direct or indirect to obtain a thing, or does really endeavour after it, he is said sincerely to desire or endeavour, without any consideration of the goodness of the principle from which he acts, or any excellency or worthiness of the end for which he acts. Thus a man who is kind to his neighbour's wife, who is sick and languishing, and very helpful in her case, makes a show of desiring and endeavouring her restoration to health and vigor; and not only makes such a show, but there is a reality in his pretense, he does heartily and earnestly desire to have her health restored, and uses his true and utmost Endeavours for it: he is said sincerely to desire and endeavour after it, because he does so truly or really; though perhaps the principle he acts from, is no other than a vile and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vigor restored, that he may return to his criminal pleasures. Or,

2. By Sincerity is meant, not merely a reality of will and Endeavour of some sort, and from some consideration or other, but a virtuous Sincerity. That is, that in the performance of those particular acts, that are the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the matter, but the form and essence of virtue, consisting in the aim that governs the act, and the principle exercised in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that is as it were the body of the duty; but also the soul, which should properly belong to such a body. In this sense, a man is said to be sincere, when he acts with a pure intention; not from sinister views: he not only in reality desires and seeks the thing to be done, or qualification to be obtained, for some end or other; but he wills the thing directly and properly, as neither forced nor bribed; the virtue of the thing is properly the object of the Will. In the former sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to a mere pretense, and show of the particular thing to be done or exhibited, without any real Desire or Endeavour at all. In the latter sense, a man is said to be sincere, in opposition to that show of virtue there is in merely doing the matter of duty, without the reality of the virtue itself in the soul. A man may be sincere in the former sense, and yet in the latter be in the sight of God, who searches the heart, a vile hypocrite. In the latter kind of sincerity, only, is there any thing truly valuable or acceptable in the sight of God. And this is what in Scripture is called Sincerity, uprightness, integrity, "truth in the inward parts," and "heirs of a perfect heart." And if there be such a Sincerity, and such a degree of it as there ought to be, and there be any thing further that the man is not able to perform, or which does not prove to be connected with his sincere Desires and Endeavours, the man is wholly excused and acquitted in the sight of God; his Will shall surely be accepted for his deed: and such a sincere Will and Endeavour is all that in strictness is required of him, by any command of God, but as to the other kind of Sincerity of Desires and Endeavours, having no virtue in it, (as was observed before,) it can be of no avail before God, in any case, to recommend, satisfy, or excuse, and has no positive moral weight or influence whatsoever.

Corol. 1. Hence it may be inferred, that nothing in the reason and nature of things appears from the consideration of any moral weight in the former kind of Sincerity, leading us to suppose, that God has made any positive promises of salvation, or grace, or any saving assistance, or any spiritual benefit whatsoever, to any Desires, prayers, Endeavours, striving, or obedience of those,

who hitherto have no true virtue or holiness in their hearts; though we should suppose all the Sincerity, and the utmost degree of Endeavour, that is possible to be in person without holiness.

Some object against God requiring, as the condition of salvation, those holy exercises, which are the result of a supernatural renovation; such as a supreme respect to Christ, love to God, loving holiness for its own sake, &c. that these inward dispositions and exercises are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be sincere in their Endeavours, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this must be all that God requires, in order to their being received as the objects of his favour, and must be what God has appointed as the condition of salvation. Concerning this, I would observe, that in such manner of speaking as "men being accepted because they are sincere, and do as well as they can," there is evidently a supposition of some virtue, some degree of that which is truly good; though it does not go so far as were to be wished. For if men do what they can, unless their so doing be from some good principle, disposition, or exercise of heart, some virtuous inclination or act of the will; their so doing what they can, is in some respect not a whit better than if they did nothing at all. In such a case, there is no more positive moral goodness in a man doing what he can, than in a windmill doing what it can; because the action does no more proceed from virtue: and there is nothing in such Sincerity of Endeavour, or doing what we can, that should render it any more a fit recommendation to positive favour and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing; for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

Corol. 2. Hence also it follows, there is nothing that appears in the reason and nature of things, which can justly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the necessary means of salvation, or some way or other bestow true holiness and eternal life on those heathens, who are sincere (in the sense above explained) in their Endeavours to find out the Will of the Deity, and to please him, according to their light, that they may escape his future displeasure and wrath, and obtain happiness in the future state, through his favour

05.03.06. Part 3 sec 6

Part 3 sec 6

Liberty of indifference, not only not necessary to Virtue, but utterly inconsistent with it; and all, either virtuous or vicious habits or inclinations, inconsistent with Arminian notions of Liberty and moral Agency. To suppose such a freedom of will, as Arminians talk of, to be requisite to Virtue and Vice, is many ways contrary to common sense.

If Indifference belong to Liberty of Will, as Arminians suppose, and it be essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of Liberty, as they also suppose; it will follow, that it is essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of Indifference: and if it be performed in a state of indifference, then doubtless it must be performed in the time of Indifference. And so it will follow, that in order to the Virtue of an act, the heart must be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act performed, so much the better; because the act is performed with so much the greater Liberty. But is this agreeable to the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the notions which mankind in all ages have of Virtue, that it lies in what is contrary to Indifference, even in the tendency and inclination of the heart to virtuous action; and that the stronger the inclination, and so the further from Indifference, the more virtuous the heart, and so much the more praiseworthy the act which proceeds from it?

If we should suppose (contrary to what has been before demonstrated) that there may be an act of will in a state of Indifference; for instance, this act, viz. The will determining to put itself out of a state of Indifference, and to give itself a preponderation one way; then it would follow, on Arminian principles, that this act or determination of the will is that alone wherein Virtue consists, because this only is performed, while the mind remains in a state of Indifference, and so in a state of Liberty: for when once the mind is put out of its equilibrium, it is no longer in such a state; and therefore all the acts, which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, can have the nature neither of Virtue nor Vice. Or if the thing which the will can do, while yet in a state of Indifference, and so of Liberty, be only to suspend acting, and determine to take the matter into consideration; then this determination is that alone wherein Virtue consists, and not proceeding to action after the scale is turned by consideration. So that it will follow, from these principles, that whatever is done after the mind, by any means, is once out of its equilibrium, and arises from an inclination, has nothing of the nature of Virtue or Vice, and is worthy of neither blame or praise. But how plainly contrary is this to the universal sense of mankind, and to the notion they have of sincerely virtuous actions! Which is, that they proceed from a heart well disposed and well inclined; and the stronger, the more fixed and determined, the good disposition of the heart, the greater the sincerity of Virtue, and so the more of its truth and reality. But if there be any acts, which are done in a state of equilibrium, or spring immediately from perfect Indifference and coldness of heart, they cannot arise from any good principle or disposition in the heart; and, consequently, according to common sense, have no sincere goodness in them, having no Virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous

heart, is to have a heart that favours Virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it. And besides, the actions that are done in a state of Indifference, or that arise immediately out of such a state, cannot be virtuous, because, by the supposition, they are not determined by any preceding choice. For if there be preceding choice, then choice intervenes between the act and the state of Indifference; which is contrary to the supposition of the act arising immediately out of Indifference. But those acts which are not determined by preceding choice, cannot be virtuous or vicious, by Arminian principles, because they are not determined by the Will. So that neither one way, nor the other, can any actions be virtuous or vicious, according to those principles. If the action be determined by a preceding act of choice, it cannot be virtuous; because the action is not done in a state of Indifference, nor does immediately arise from such a state; and so is not done in a state of Liberty, If the action be not determined by a preceding act of choice, then it cannot be virtuous; because then the Will is not self-determined in it. So that it is made certain, that neither Virtue nor Vice can ever find any place in the universe!

Moreover, that it is necessary to a virtuous action that it be performed in a state of Indifference, under a notion of that being a state of liberty, is contrary to common sense; as it is a dictate of common sense, that indifference itself, in many cases, is vicious, and so to a high degree. As if when I see my neighbour or near friend, and one who has in the highest degree merited of me, in extreme distress, and ready to perish, I find an Indifference in my heart with respect to any thing proposed to be done, which I can easily do, for his relief. So if it should be proposed to me to blaspheme God, or kill my father, or do numberless other things, which might be mentioned; the being indifferent, for a moment, would be highly vicious and vile. And it may be further observed, that to suppose this Liberty of Indifference is essential to Virtue and vice, destroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinousness of the most flagitious, horrid iniquities; such as adultery, bestiality, murder, perjury, blasphemy, &c. For, according to these principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a stale of perfect Indifference with respect to these crimes; nay, it is absolutely necessary in order to any Virtue in avoiding them, or Vice in doing them. But for the mind to be in a state of Indifference with respect to them, is to be next door to doing them: it is then infinitely near to choosing, and so committing the fact: for equilibrium is the next step to a degree of preponderation; and one, even the least degree of preponderation (all things considered) is choice. And not only so, but for the Will to be in a state of perfect equilibrium with respect to such crimes, is for the mind to be in such a state, as to be full as likely to choose them as to refuse them, to do them as to omit them. And if our minds must be in such a state, wherein it is as near to choosing as refusing, and wherein it must of necessity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them, as to refrain from them; where is the exceeding heinousness of choosing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in such a state, where in the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other; then, according to the nature and laws of such a contingence, it may be expected, as an inevitable consequence of such a disposition of things, that we should choose them as often as reject them: that it should generally so fall out is necessary, as equality in the effect is the natural consequence of the equal tendency of the cause, or of the antecedent state of things from which the effect arises. Why then should we be so exceedingly to blame, if it does so fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the Arminian scheme of Liberty is utterly inconsistent with the being of any such things as either virtuous or vicious habits or dispositions. If Liberty of Indifference be essential to moral Agency, then there can be no Virtue in any habitual inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to Indifference, and imply in their nature the very destruction and exclusion of it. They suppose nothing can be virtuous in which no Liberty is exercised; but how absurd is it to talk of exercising Indifference under bias and preponderation! And if self-determining power in the will be necessary to moral Agency, praise, blame, &c. then nothing done by the will can be any further praiseworthy or blameworthy, than so far as the will is moved, swayed, and determined by itself, and the scales turned by the sovereign power the Will has over itself. And therefore the Will must not be out of its balance, preponderation must not be determined and effected before-hand; and so the self-determining act anticipated. Thus it appears another way, that habitual bias is inconsistent with that Liberty, which Arminians suppose to be necessary to Virtue or Vice; and so it follows, that habitual bias itself cannot be either virtuous or vicious. The same thing follows from their doctrine concerning the Inconsistence of Necessity with Liberty, praise, dispraise, &c. None will deny, that bias and inclination may be so strong as to be invincible, and leave no possibility of the Will determining contrary to it; and so be attended with Necessity. This Dr. Whitby allows concerning the Will of God, angels, and glorified saints, with respect to good; and the Will of devils, with respect to evil. Therefore, if Necessity be inconsistent with Liberty, then, when fixed inclination is to such a degree of strength, it utterly excludes all Virtue, Vice, praise, or blame. And, if so, then the nearer habits are to this strength, the more do they impede Liberty, and so diminish praise and blame. If very strong habits destroy Liberty, the lesser ones proportionably hinder it, according to their degree of strength. And therefore it will follow, that then is the act most virtuous or vicious, when performed without any inclination or habitual bias at all; because it is then performed with most Liberty.

Every prepossessing fixed bias on the mind brings a degree of moral inability for the contrary; because so far as the mind is biased and prepossessed, so much hindrance is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral inability be inconsistent with moral Agency, or the nature of Virtue and Vice, then, so far as there is any such thing as evil disposition of heart, or habitual depravity of inclination; whether covetousness, pride, malice, cruelty, or whatever else; so much the more excusable persons are; so much the less have their evil acts of this kind the nature of Vice. And on the contrary, whatever excellent dispositions and inclinations they have so much are they the less virtuous.

It is evident, that no habitual disposition of heart can be in any degree virtuous or vicious, or the actions which proceed from them at all praiseworthy or blameworthy. Because, though we should suppose the habit not to be of such strength, as wholly to take away all moral ability and self-determining power; or may be partly from bias, and in part from self-determination; yet in this case, all that is from antecedent bias must be set aside, as of no consideration; and in estimating the degree of Virtue or Vice, no more must be considered than what arises from self-determining power, without any influence of that bias, because Liberty is exercised in no more: so that all that is the exercise of habitual inclination is thrown away, as not belonging to the morality of the action. By which it appears, that no exercise of these habits, let them be stronger or weaker, can ever have any thing of the nature of either virtue or Vice.

Here if any one should say, that notwithstanding all these things, there may be the nature of Virtue and Vice in the habits of the mind; because these habits may be the effects of those acts, wherein the mind exercised Liberty; that however the forementioned reasons will prove that no habits, which are natural, or that are born or created with us, can be either virtuous or vicious; yet they will not prove this of habits, which have been acquired and established by repeated free acts. To such an objector I would say, that this evasion will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of Will be essential to the very nature of Virtue and Vice, then there is no Virtue or Vice but only in that very thing, wherein this Liberty is exercised. If a man in one or more things, that he does, exercises Liberty, and then by those acts is brought into such circumstances, that his Liberty ceases, and there follows a long series of acts or events that come to pass necessarily; those consequent acts are not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or punishable; but only the free acts that established this necessity; for in them alone was the man free. The following effects, that are necessary, have no more of the nature of Virtue or Vice, than health or sickness of body have properly the nature of Virtue or Vice, being the effects of a course of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than the good qualities of a clock are of the nature of Virtue, which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or the goodness and sweetness of the fruits of a garden are moral Virtues, being the effects of the free and faithful acts of the gardener. If Liberty be absolutely requisite to the morality of actions, and necessity wholly inconsistent with it, as Arminians greatly insist; then no necessary effects whatsoever, let the cause be never so good or bad, can be virtuous or vicious; but the Virtue or Vice must be only in the free cause. Agreeably to this, Dr. Whitby supposes, the necessity that attends the good and evil habits of the saints in heaven, and damned in hell, which are the consequence of their free acts in their state of probation, are not rewardable or punishable. On the whole, it appears, that if the notions of Arminians concerning Liberty and moral Agency be true, it will follow, that there is no virtue in any such habits or qualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, gratitude, generosity, heavenly-mindedness; nothing at all praiseworthy in loving Christ above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love to enemies, universal benevolence to mankind: and, on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of dispraise, in the most sorid, beastly, malignant, devilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God, and things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. For all these things are dispositions and inclinations of the heart. And in short, there is no such thing as any virtuous or vicious quality of mind; no such thing as inherent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin: and the stronger those habits or dispositions are, which used to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent men’s lusts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude, and maliciousness, still the further are they from being blameworthy. If there be a man that by his own repeated acts, or by any other means, is come to be of the most hellish disposition, desperately inclined to treat his neighbours with injuriousness, contempt, and malignity; the further they should be from any disposition to be angry with him, or in the least to blame him. So, on the other hand, if there be a person, who is of a most excellent spirit, strongly inclining him to the most amiable actions, admirably meek, benevolent,&c. so much is he further from any thing rewardable or commendable. On which principles, the man Jesus Christ was very far from being praiseworthy for those acts of holiness and kindness which he performed, these propensities being strong in his heart. And above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God is infinitely remote from any thing commendable, his good inclinations being infinitely strong, and he,

therefore, at the utmost possible distance from being at Liberty. And in all cases, the stronger the inclinations of any are to Virtue, and the more they love it, the less virtuous, and the more they love wickedness, the less vicious they are.---Whether these things are agreeable to Scripture, let every Christian, and every man who has read the Bible, judge: and whether they are agreeable to common sense, let every one judge, that has human understanding in exercise.

And, if we pursue these principles, we shall find that Virtue and Vice are wholly excluded out of the world; and that there never was, nor ever can be, any such thing as one or the other; either in God, angels, or men. No propensity, disposition, or habit can be virtuous or vicious, as has been shown; because they, so far as they take place, destroy the freedom of the will, the foundation of all moral Agency, and exclude all capacity of either Virtue or Vice. ---And if habits and dispositions themselves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the exercise of these dispositions be so: for the exercise of bias is not the exercise of free self-determining will, and so there is no exercise of Liberty in it. Consequently, no man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad disposition. And whether this bias or disposition be habitual or not, if it exists but a moment before the act of Will which is the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necessity of the effect. Or if there be no previous disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the act, then it is not choice that determines it: it is therefore a contingence, that happens to the man, arising from nothing in him; and is necessary, as to any inclination or choice of his; and, therefore, cannot make him either the better or worse; any more than a tree is better than other trees, because it oftener happens to be lighted upon by a nightingale; or a rock more vicious than other rocks, because rattle-snakes have happened oftener to crawl over it. So, that there is no Virtue nor vice in good or bad dispositions, either fixed or transient; nor any Virtue or Vice in acting from any good or bad previous inclination; nor yet any Virtue or Vice in acting wholly without any previous inclination. Where then shall we find room for Virtue or Vice?

05.03.07. Part 3 sec 7

Part 3 sec 7

Arminian notions of moral Agency inconsistent with all Influence of Motive and Inducement, in either virtuous or vicious actions. As Arminian notions of that liberty which is essential to virtue or vice, are inconsistent with common sense, in their being inconsistent with all virtuous or vicious habits and dispositions; so they are no less inconsistent with all influence of motives in moral actions.-- Such influence equally against those notions of liberty, whether there be, previous to the act of choice, a preponderancy of the inclination, or a preponderancy of those circumstances, which have a tendency to move the inclination. And, indeed, it comes to just the same thing: to say, the circumstances of the mind are such as tend to sway and turn its inclination one way, is the same thing, as to say, the inclination of the mind, as under such circumstances, tends that way. Or if any think it most proper to say, that Motives do alter the inclination, and give a net bias to the mind, it will not alter the case, as to the present argument. For if Motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, then they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, and laying it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy the Arminian freedom: it is not to leave the will to its own self-determination, but to bring it into subjection to the power of something extrinsic, which operates upon it, sways and determines it, previous to its own determination. So that what is done from Motive, cannot he either virtuous or vicious. Besides, if the acts of the will are excited by Motives, those Motives are the causes of those acts of the Will; which makes the acts of the will necessary; as effects necessarily follow the efficiency of the cause. And if the influence and power of the Motive causes the volition, then the influence of the motive determines volition, and volition does not determine itself; and so is not free, in the sense of Arminians, (as has been largely shown already,) and consequently can be neither virtuous nor vicious. The supposition which has already been taken notice of as an insufficient evasion in other cases, would be, in like manner, impertinently alleged in this case; namely, the supposition that liberty consist in a power of suspending action for the present, in order to deliberation. If it should be said, Though it be true, that the Will is under a necessity of finally following the strongest Motive; yet it may, for the present, forbear to act upon the Motive presented, till there has been opportunity thoroughly to consider it, and compare its real weight with the merit of other Motives. I answer as follows:

Here again, it must be remembered, that if determining thus to suspend and consider, be that act of the will, wherein alone liberty is exercised, then in this all virtue and vice must consist; and the acts that follow this consideration, and are the effects of it, being necessary, are no more virtuous or vicious than some good or bad events, which happen when they are fast asleep, and are the consequences of what they did when they were awake. Therefore, I would here observe two things:

1. To suppose, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consists in determining, whether to take time for consideration or not, is not agreeable to common sense, For, according to such a supposition, the most horrid crimes, adultery, murder, sodomy, blasphemy, &c. do not at all consist in the horrid

nature of the things themselves, but only in the neglect of thorough consideration before they were perpetrated, which brings their viciousness to a small matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be said, that neglect of consideration, when such heinous evils are proposed to choice, is worse than in other cases: I answer, this is inconsistent, as it supposes the very thing to be, which, at the same time, is supposed not to be; it supposes all moral evil, all viciousness and heinousness, does not consist merely in the want of consideration. It supposes some crimes in. themselves, in their own nature, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to consideration, or inconsideration, which lays the person under a previous obligation to consider in some cases more than others.

2. If it were so, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consisted only in the act of the will, whereby it determines Whether to consider or no, it would not alter the case in the least, as to the present argument. For still in this act of the Will on this determination, it is induced by some Motive, and necessarily follows the strongest Motive; and so is necessarily, even in that act wherein alone it is either virtuous or vicious.

One thing more I would observe, concerning the inconsistence of Arminian notions of moral Agency with the Influence of Motives.-- I suppose none will deny, that it is possible for such powerful Motives to be set before the mind, exhibited in so strong a light, and under such advantageous circumstances, as to be invincible; and such as the mind cannot but yield to. In this case, Arminians will doubtless say, liberty is destroyed. And if so, then if Motives are exhibited with half so much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their strength, and go halfway towards destroying it. If a thousand degrees of Motive abolish all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of motive does not at all infringe or diminish liberty, then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is still nothing. And if two degrees do not diminish the Will's liberty, no more do four, eight, sixteen, or six thousand. For nothing however multiplied comes to but nothing. If there be nothing in the nature of Motive or moral suasion, that is at all opposite to liberty, then the greatest degree of it cannot hurt liberty. But if there be somewhat, in the nature of the thing, against liberty, then the least degree of it hurts in some degree; and consequently diminishes virtue. If invincible Motives to that action which is good, take away all the freedom of the act, and so all the virtue of it; then the more forcible the Motives are, so much the worse, so much the less virtue; and the weaker the Motives are, the better for the cause of virtue; and none is best of all.

Now let it be considered, whether these things are agreeable to common sense. If it should be allowed, that there are some instances wherein the soul chooses without any motive, what virtue can there be in such a choice? I am sure there is no prudence or wisdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end; being made for no end at all. If it were for any end, the view of the end would be the motive exciting to the act; and if the act be for no good end, and so from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it: and, therefore, according to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the smoke, which is driven to and fro by the wind, without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor wherefore, it is moved.

Corol. 1. By these things it appears, that the argument against the Calvinists, taken from the use of counsels, exhortations, invitations, expostulations, &c. so much insisted on by Arminians, is truly against themselves. For these thing's can operate no other way to any good effect, than as in

them is exhibited Motive and Inducement, tending to excite and determine the acts of the will. But it follows, on their principles, that the acts of will excited by such causes, cannot be virtuous; because, so far as they are from these, they are not from the Will's self-determining power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth while to offer any arguments to persuade men to any virtuous volition or voluntary action; it is in vain to set before them the wisdom and amiableness of ways of virtue, or the odiousness and folly of way of vice. This notion of liberty and moral Agency frustrates all endeavours to draw men to virtue by instruction or persuasion, precept or example: for though these things may induce them to what is materially virtuous, yet at the same time they take away the form of virtue, because they destroy liberty; as they, by their own power, put the Will out of its equilibrium, determine and turn the scale, and take the work of self- determining power out of its hands. And the clearer the instructions given, the more powerful the arguments used, and the more moving the persuasions or examples, the more likely they are to frustrate their own design; because they have so much the greater tendency to put the Will out of its balance, to hinder its freedom of self-determination; and so to exclude the very form of virtue, and the essence of whatsoever is praiseworthy. So it clearly follows, from these principles, that God has no hand in any man's virtue, nor does at all promote it, either by a physical or moral influence; that none of the moral methods he uses with men to promote virtue in the world, have any tendency to the attainment of that end; that all the instructions he has given men, from the beginning of the worked to this day, by prophets or apostles, or by his Son Jesus Christ; that all his counsels, invitations, promises, threatenings, warnings, and expostulations; that all means he has used with men, in ordinances, or providences; yea, all influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no tendency at all to excite any one virtuous act of the mind, or to promote any thing morally good and commendable, in any respect.-- For there is no way that these or any other means can promote virtue, but one of these three. Either, (1.) By a physical operation on the heart. But all effects that are wrought in men in this way, have no virtue in them, by the concurring voice of all Arminians. Or, (2.) Morally, by exhibiting Motives to the understandings, to excite good acts in the Will. But it has been demonstrated, that volitions excited by Motives, are necessary, and not excited by a self-moving power; and therefore, by their principles, there is no virtue in them. Or, (3.) By merely giving the Will an opportunity to determine itself concerning the objects proposed, either to choose or reject, by its own uncaused, unmoved, uninfluenced self-determination. And if this be all, then all those means do no more to promote virtue than vice: for they do nothing but give the Will opportunity to determine itself either way, either to good or bad, without laying it under any bias to either: and so there is really as much of an opportunity given to determine in favour of evil, as of good.

Thus that horrid blasphemous consequence will certainly follow from the Arminian doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconsistent part in using so many counsels, warnings, invitations, entreaties, &c. with sinners, to induce them to forsake sin, and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are insincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does these things when he knows, at the same time, that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect he seems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconsistent with such an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of insincerity would this fix on him, who is infinitely holy and true! -- So that theirs is the doctrine which, if pursued in its consequences, does horribly reflect on the Most High, and fix on him the charge of hypocrisy; and not the doctrine of the Calvinist, according to their frequent and

vehement exclamations and invectives.

Corol 2. From what has been observed in this section, it again appears, that Arminian principles and notions, when fairly examined and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out of the world, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such thing, in any case; or that any such thing should ever be conceived of. For, by these principles, the very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and contradiction. For it is absurd in itself, and contrary to common sense, to suppose a virtuous act of mind without any good intention or aim; and, by their principles, it is absurd to suppose a virtuous act with a good intention or aim; for to act for an end, is to act from a Motive. So that if we rely on these principles, there can be no virtuous act with a good design and end; and it is self-evident, there can be none without: consequently there can be no virtuous act at all.

Corol. 3. It is manifest, that Arminian notions of moral Agency, and the being of a faculty of Will, cannot consist together; and that if there can be any such thing as either a virtuous or vicious act, it cannot be an act of the Will; no Will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without Motive, without end, must be performed without any concern of the Will. To suppose an act of the Will without these, implies a contradiction. If the soul in its act has no motive or end; then, in that act (as was observed before) it seeks nothing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclination to any thing; and this implies, that in that act it desires nothing, and chooses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: and that is as much as to say, there is no act of Will in the case. Which very effectually shuts all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; inasmuch as, according to this, there can be no vicious or virtuous act wherein the Will is concerned: and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of Arminians themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the Will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.

Corol. 4. If none of the moral actions of intelligent beings are influenced by either previous inclination or motives, another strange thing will follow; and this is, that God not only cannot foreknow any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable guess concerning them. For all conjecture in things of this nature must depend on some discerning or apprehension of these two things, previous Disposition and Motive, which, as has been observed, Arminian notions of moral Agency, in their real consequence, altogether exclude.

05.04.01. Part 4 sec 1

Part 4 sec 1 The Essence Of The Virtue and Vice Of Dispositions Of the Heart and Acts of the Will, Lies Not In Their Cause, But Their Nature.

One main foundation of the reasons Which are brought to establish the fore-mentioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, &c. is a supposition, that the virtuousness of the dispositions, or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of these dispositions or acts, but wholly in the origin or cause of them: so that if the disposition of the mind, or acts of the will, be never so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiseworthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the will, in its inclination or acts, be never so bad, yet unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blameworthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonstration, or self- evidence, against any virtue and commendableness, or vice and blameworthiness, of those habits or acts of the Will, which are not from some virtuous or vicious determination of the will itself. Now, if this matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a mistake, yea, a gross absurdity; and that it is most certain, that if there be any such things as a virtuous or vicious disposition, or volition of mind, the virtuousness or viciousness of them consists not in the origin or cause of these things, but in the nature of them. If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness, and of viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature of the dispositions or acts of mind, which are said to be our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is certain it lies no where at all. Thus, for instance, if the vice of a vicious act of will lies not in the nature of the act, but the cause; so that its being of a bad nature will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of ours, as its cause, or something in us that is our fault; then, for the same reason, neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing itself, but in its cause: that evil determination of ours is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blameworthiness lie in the nature of this cause but in the cause of that. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, in infinitum; and that is thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence any where in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil cannot exist in any thing that is an effect; because fault does not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their cause: therefore the cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie only in that cause, which is a cause only, and no effect of anything. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of ours, nor anything faulty in us, which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and has no cause. And thus he that will maintain it is not the nature of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and, in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it. This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their nature, or

from any thing inherent in them, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be on account of the badness of the cause: a bad effect in the will must be bad, because the cause is bad, or of an evil nature, or has badness as a quality inherent in it: and a good effect in the will must be good, by reason of the goodness of the cause, or its being of a good kind and nature. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the nature of the thing, but the cause, contradicts itself, and does at least resolve the essence of virtue and vice into the nature of things, and supposes it originally to consist in that.-- And if a caviler has a mind to run from the absurdity, by saying, "No, the fault of the thing, which is the cause, lies not in this, that the cause itself is of an evil nature, but that the cause is evil in that sense, that it is from another bad cause," -- still the absurdity will follow him; for if so, then the cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher cause, and must consist inthat's being evil, or of an evil nature. So now we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blameworthy, to the nature of the thing, and not to the cause. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and ascend from step to step, till he is come to that which is the first cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, all the blame lies in that; then, at last, he must be forced to own, that the faultiness of the thing which he supposes alone blameworthy, lies wholly in the nature of the thing, and not in the original or cause of it; for the supposition is, that it has no original, it is determined by no act of ours, is caused by nothing faulty in us, being absolutely without any cause. And so the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight! It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankind, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deservings, consists in a certain deformity in the nature of certain dispositions of the heart and acts of the will; and not in the deformity of something else, diverse from the very thing itself; which deserves abhorrence, supposed to be the cause of it;--- which would be absurd, because that would be to suppose a thing that is innocent and not evil, is truly evil and faulty, because another thing is evil. It implies a contradiction; for it would be to suppose, the very thing which is morally evil and blameworthy, is innocent and not blameworthy; but that something else, which is its cause, is only to blame. To say, that vice does not consist in the thing which is vicious, but in its cause, is the same as to say, that vice does not consist in vice, but in that which produces it. It is true a cause may be to blame for being the cause of vice: it may be wickedness in the cause that it produces wickedness. But it would imply a contradiction, to suppose that these two are the same individual wickedness. The wicked act of the cause in producing wickedness, is one wickedness; and the wickedness produced, if there be any produced, is another. And therefore the wickedness of the latter does not lie in the former, but is distinct from it; and the wickedness of both lies in the evil nature of the things which are wicked. The thing which makes sin hateful, is that by which it deserves punishment; which is but the expression of hatred. And that which renders virtue lovely, is the same with that on the account, of which, it is fit to receive praise and reward; which are but the expressions of esteem and love. But that which makes vice hateful, is its hateful nature; and that which renders virtue lovely, is its amiable nature. It is a certain beauty or deformity that are inherent in that good or evil will, which is the soul of virtue and vice (and not in the occasion of it), which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise, or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind. If the cause or occasion of the rise of a hateful disposition or act of will, be also hateful, suppose another antecedent evil will; that is entirely another sin, and, deserves punishment by itself, under a distinct consideration. There is worthiness of dispraise in the nature of an evil volition, and not wholly in some foregoing act, which is its cause; otherwise the evil volition, which is the effect, is no moral

evil, any more than sickness, or some other natural calamity, which arises from a cause morally evil. Thus, for instance, ingratitude is hateful and worthy of dispraise, according to common sense; not because something as bad, or worse than ingratitude, was the cause that produced it; but because it is hateful in itself, inherent deformity. So, the love of virtue is amiable and worthy of praise, not merely because something else went before this love of virtue in our minds, which caused it to take place there; -- for instance, our own choice; we choose to love virtue, and, by some method or other, wrought ourselves into the love of it; -- but because of the amiableness and condescendency of such a disposition and inclination of heart. If that was the case, that we did choose to love virtue, and so produced that love in ourselves, this choice itself could be no otherwise amiable or praiseworthy, than as love to virtue, or soma other amiable inclination, was exercised and implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all, it must be so on account of some amiable quality in the nature of the choice. If we chose to love virtue, not in love to virtue, or any thing that was good and exercised no sort of good disposition to the choice, the choice itself was not virtuous nor worthy of any praise, according to common sense, because the choice was not of a good nature. It may not be improper here to take notice of something said by an author, that has lately made a mighty noise in America. "A necessary holiness (says he) is no holiness. Adam could not be originally created in righteousness and true holiness, because he must choose to be righteous, before he could be righteous. And therefore he must exist, he must be created; yea, he must exercise thought and reflection, before he was righteous." There is much more to the same effect in that place, and also in pp. 437, 438, 439, 440. If these things are so, it will certainly follow, that the first choosing to be righteous is no righteous choice; there is no righteousness or holiness in it, because no choosing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly speaks of choosing to be righteous, as what must go before righteousness; and that which follows the choice, being the effect of the choice, cannot be righteousness or holiness; for an effect is a thing necessary, and cannot prevent the influence or efficacy of its cause; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the cause; and he says a necessary holiness is no holiness. So that neither can a choice of righteousness be righteousness or holiness, nor can any thing that is consequent on that choice, and the effect of it, be righteousness or holiness; nor can any thing that is without choice, be righteousness or holiness. So that by this scheme, all righteousness and holiness is at once shut out of the world, and no door left open by which it can ever possibly enter into the world.

I suppose the way that men came to entertain this absurd inconsistent notion, with respect to internal inclinations and volitions themselves (or notions that imply it,) viz. that the essence of their moral good or evil lies not in their nature, but their cause, was, that it is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that it is so with respect to all outward actions and sensible motions of the body; that the moral good or evil of them does not lie at all in the motions themselves, which, taken by themselves, are nothing of a moral nature; and the essence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, lies in those internal dispositions and volitions which are the cause of them. Now, being always used to determine this, without hesitation or dispute, concerning external actions, which are the things that, in the common use of language, are signified by such phrases as men’sactions, or their doings; hence, when they came to speak of volitions, and internal exercises of their inclinations, under the same denomination of their actions, or what they do, they unwarily determined the case must also he the same with these as with external actions; not considering the vast difference in the nature of the case.

If any shall still object and say, why is it not necessary that the cause should be considered, in order to determine whether any thing be worthy of blame or praise is it agreeable to reason and common sense, that a man is to be praised or blamed for that which he is not the cause or author of, and has no hand in?

I answer: Such phrases as being the cause, being the author, having a hand, and the like, are ambiguous. They are most vulgarly understood for being the designing voluntary cause, or cause by antecedent choice; and it is most certain, that men are not, in this sense, the causes or authors of the first act of their wills, in any case, as certain as any thing is or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain than that a thing is not before it is, nor a thing of the same kind before the first thing of that kind, and so no choice before the first choice.-- As the phrase, being the author, may be understood, not of being the producer by an antecedent act of will, but as a person maybe said to be the author of the act of will itself, by his being the immediate agent, or the being that is acting, or in exercise in that act; if the phrase of being the author is used to signify this, then doubtless common sense requires men's being the authors of their own acts of will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of praise or dispraise, on account of them. And common sense teaches, that they must be the authors of external actions, in the former sense, namely, their being the causes of them by an act of will or choice, in order to their being justly blamed or praised: but it teaches no such thing with respect to the acts of the will themselves. But this may appear more manifest by the things which will be observed in the following section.

05.04.02. Part 4 sec 2

Part 4 sec 2 The Falseness and Inconsistence of that Metaphysical Notion of Action and Agency Which Seems to be Generally Entertained by the Defenders of the Arminian Doctrine concerning Liberty, Moral Agency, &c.

One thing, that is made very much a ground of argument and supposed demonstration by Arminians, in defense of the fore-mentioned principles concerning moral agency, virtue, vice, &c., is their metaphysical notion of agency and action. They say, unless the soul has a self-determining power, it has no power of action; if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be the soul's own acts; and that the soul cannot be active, but must be wholly passive, in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination.

Mr Chubb lays the foundation of his scheme of liberty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in this position, that man is an agent, and capable of action,-- which doubtless is true: but self-determination belongs to his notion of action, and is the very essence of it; whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing that is an action, can be the effect of the action of another: and he insists, that a necessary agent, or an agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a plain contradiction. But those are a precarious sort of demonstrations, which men build on the meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a word; especially when that meaning is abstruse, inconsistent, and entirely diverse from the original sense of the word in common speech. That the meaning of the word action, as Mr Chubb and many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and inconsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their notion of an action, that it is something wherein is no passion or passiveness; that is, (according to their sense of passiveness,) it is under the power, influence, or action of no cause. And this implies, that action has no cause, and is no effect; for to be an effect implies passiveness, or the being subject to the power and action of its cause. And yet they hold, that the mind's action is the effect of its own determination; yea, the mind's free and voluntary determination, which is the same with free choice. So that action is the effect of something preceding, even a preceding act of choice: and consequently, in this effect, the mind is passive, subject to the power and action of the preceding cause, which is the foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So that here we have this contradiction, that action is always the effect of foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be action; because it is passive to the power of that preceding causal choice; and the mind cannot he active and passive in the same thing, at the same time. Again, they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with action, and a necessary action is a contradiction; and so their notion of action implies contingence, and excludes all necessity. And, therefore, their notion of action implies, that it has no necessary dependence or connection with any thing foregoing; for such a dependence or connection excludes contingence, and implies necessity. And yet their notion of action implies necessity, and supposes that it is necessary, and cannot he contingent. For they suppose, that whatever is properly called action, must be determined by the will and free choice; and this is as much as to say, that it must he necessary,

being dependent upon, and determined by, something foregoing, namely, a foregoing act of choice. Again, it belongs to their notion of action, of that which is a proper and mere act, that it is the beginning of motion, or of exertion of power, but yet it is implied in their notion of action, that it is not the beginning of motion or exertion of power, but is consequent and dependent on a preceding exertion of power, viz. the power of will andchoice; for they say there is no proper action but what is freely chosen, or, which is the same thing, determined by a foregoing act of free choice. But if any of them shall see cause to deny this, and say they hold no such thing, as that every action is chosen or determined by a foregoing choice, but that the very first exertion of will only, undetermined by any preceding act, is properly called action; then I say, such a man's notion of action implies necessity; for what the mind is the subject of, without the determination of its own previous choice, it is the subject of necessarily, as to any hand that free choice has in the affair, and without any ability the mind has to prevent it by any will or election of its own; because, by the supposition, it precludes all previous acts of will or choice in the case, which might prevent it. So that it is again, in this other way, implied in their notion of act, that it is both necessary and not necessary, Again, it belongs to their notion of an act, that it is no effect of a predetermining bias or preponderation, but springs immediately out of indifference; and this implies, that it cannot be from foregoing choice, which is foregoing preponderation: if it be not habitual, but occasional, yet if it cause the act, it is truly previous, efficacious, and determining. And yet, at the same time, it is essential to their notion of the act, that it is what the agent is the author of, freely and voluntarily, and that is by previous choice and design. So that, according to their notion of the act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it; viz. That it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should he the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself, of its own will, and can produce or prevent, according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, precluding all previous choice in the affair. So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea; it is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words, without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute nonentity; and that in two respects.

(1.) There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things which must belong to its description, according to what they suppose to be essential to it. And

(2,) there neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to answer the word, as they use and explain it. For, if we should suppose any such notion, it would many ways destroy itself. But it is impossible any idea or notion should subsist in themind, whose very nature and essence which constitutes it, destroys it. If some learned philosopher, who had been abroad, in giving an account of the curious observations he had made in his travels, should say, "he had been in Terra del Fuego, and there had seen an animal, which he calls by a certain name, that begat and brought forth itself, and yet had a sire and dam distinct from itself; that it bad an appetite, and was hungry before it had a being; that his master, who led him, and governed him at his pleasure, was always governed by him, and driven by him where he pleased; that when he moved, he always took a step before the first step; that he went with his head first, and yet always went tail foremost; and

this, though he had neither tail nor head:" it would be no impudence at all to tell such a traveler, though a learned man, that he himself had no notion or idea of such an animal as he gave an account of, and never had, nor ever should have. As the fore-mentioned notion of action is very inconsistent, so it is wholly diverse from the original meaning of the word. The more usual signification of it, in vulgar speech, seems to be some motion or exertion of power, that is voluntary, or that is the effect of the will, and is used in the same sense as doing; and most commonly it is used to signify outward actions. So thinking is often distinguished from acting, and desiring and willing from doing.

Besides this more usual and proper signification of the word action, there are other ways in which the word is used that are less proper, which yet have place in common speech. Oftentimes it is used to signify some motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation to some object and effect. So, the spring of a watch is said to act upon the chain and wheels; the sunbeams, to act upon plants and trees; and the fire, to act upon wood. Sometimes the word is useful to signify motions, alterations, and exertions of power, which are seen in corporeal things, considered absolutely; especially when these motions seem to arise from some internal cause which is hidden; so that they have a greater resemblance of those motions of our bodies which are the effects of natural volition, or invisible exertions of will. So, the fermentation of liquor, the operations of the loadstone, and of electrical bodies, are called the action of these things. And sometimes, the word action is used to signify the exercise of thought, or of will and inclination: so meditating, loving, hating, inclining, disinclining, choosing, and refusing, may be sometimes called acting; though more rarely (unless it be by philosophers and metaphysicians) than in any of the other senses. But the word is never used in vulgar speech in that sense which Arminian divines use it in, namely, for the self-determinate exercise of the will, or an exertion of the soul, that arises without any necessary connection with any thing foregoing. If a man does something voluntarily, or as the effect of hischoice, then, in the most proper sense, and as the word is most originally and commonly used, he is said to act; But whether that choice or volition be self-determined, or no; whether it be connected with foregoing, habitual bias; whether it be the certain effect of the strongest motive, or some intrinsic cause, never comes into consideration in the meaning of the word. 180 And if the word action is arbitrarily used by some men otherwise, to suit some scheme of metaphysics or morality, no argument can reasonably be founded on such a use of this term, to prove any thing but their own pleasure. For divines and philosophers strenuously to urge such arguments, as though they were sufficient to support and demonstrate a whole scheme of moral philosophy and divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on the sand, or rather on a shadow. And though it may now perhaps, through custom, have become natural for then to use the word in this sense, (if that may be called a sense or meaning, which is inconsistent with itself,) yet this does not prove that it is agreeable to the natural notions men have of things, or that there can be any thing in the creation that should answer such a meaning. And though they appeal to experience, yet the truth is, that men are so far from experiencing any such thing, that it is impossible for them to have any conception of it.

If it should be objected, that action and passion are doubtless wordsof a contrary sanification; but to suppose that the agent, in its action, is under the power and influence of something intrinsic, is to confound action and passion, and make them the same thing:

I answer, that action and passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, words of opposite signification; but not as signifying opposite existences, but only opposite relations. The words cause and effect are terms of opposite signification; but, nevertheless, if I assert that, the same thing may, at the same time, in different respects and relations, be both cause and effect, this will not prove that I confound the terms. The soul may be both active and passive in the same thing in different respects; active with relation to one thing, and passive with relation to another. The word passion, when set in opposition to action, or rather activeness, is merely a relative: it signifies no effect or cause, nor any proper existence; but is the same with passiveness, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by something. Which is a mere relation of a thing to some power or force exerted by some cause, producing some effect in it or upon it. And action, when set properly in opposition to passion, or passiveness, is no real existence; it is not the same with an action, but is a mere relation: it is the activeness of something on another thing, being the opposite relation to the other, viz. a relation of power, or force, exerted by some cause towards another thing, which is the subject of the effect of that power. Indeed, the word action is frequently used to signify something not merely relative, but more absolute, and a real existence; as when we say an action; when the word is not used transitively, but absolutely, for some motion or exercise of body or mind, without any relation to any object or effect: and as used thus, it is not properly the opposite of passion, which ordinarily signifies nothing absolute, but merely the relation of being acted upon. And therefore, if the word action be useful in the like relative sense, then action and passion are only two contrary relations. And it is no absurdity to suppose, that contrary relations may belong to the same thing, at the same time, with respect to different things. So, to suppose that there are acts of the soul by which a man voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and produces effects which yet themselves are effects of something else, and wherein the soul itself is the object of something acting upon, and influencing that, does not at all confound action and passion. The words may nevertheless be properly of opposite signification: there may be as true and real a difference between acting and being caused to act, though we should suppose the soul to be both in the same volition, as there is between living and being quickened, or made to live. It is no more a contradiction, to suppose that action may be the effect of some other cause besides the agent or being that acts, than to suppose, that life may be the effect of some other cause, besides the liver, or the being that lives, in whom life is caused to be. The thing which has led men into this inconsistent notion of action, when applied to volition, as though it were essential to this internal action, that the agent should be self-determined in it, and that the will should be the cause of it, its probably this,-- that, according to the sense of mankind, and the common use of language, it is so, with respect to men’s external actions, which are what originally, and according to the vulgar use and most proper sense of the word, are called actions. Men in these are self-directed, self-determined, and their wills are the cause of the motions of their bodies, and the external things that are done; so that unless men do them voluntarily, and of choice, and the action be determined by their antecedent volition, it is no action or doing of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been led unwarily, but exceeding absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that that also must be determined by the will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies. But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical distinction between action and passion, (though long since become common and the general vogue,) due care has not been taken to conform language to the nature of things, or to any distinct, clear ideas; -- as it is in innumerable other philosophical, metaphysical terms, used in

these disputes; which has occasioned inexpressible difficulty, contention, error, and confusion. And thus probably it came to be thought that necessity was inconsistent with action, as these terms are applied to volition. First, these terms, action and necessity, are changed from their original meaning, as signifying external voluntary action and constraint, (in which meaning they are evidently inconsistent,) to signify quite other things, viz. volition itself, and certainty of existence. And when the change of signification is made, care is not taken to make proper allowances and abatements for the difference of sense; but still the same things are unwarily attributed to action and necessity, in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belonged to them in their first sense; and on this ground, maxims are established without any real foundation, as though they were the most certain truths, and the most evident dictates of reason.

But, however strenuously it is maintained, that what is necessary cannot he properly called action, and that a necessary action is a contradiction, yet it is probable there are few Arminian divines, who, if thoroughly tried, would stand to these principles. They will allow, that God is, in the highest sense, an active being, and thee highest fountain of life and action; and they would not probably deny, that those that are called God’s acts of righteousness, holiness, and faithfulness, are truly and properly God’s acts, and God is really a holy agent in them; and yet, I trust, they will not deny, that God necessarily acts justly and faithfully, and that it is impossible for Him to act unrighteously and unholy.

05.04.03. Part 4 sec 3

Part 4 sec 3 The Reasons Why Some Think It Contrary To Common Sense, To Suppose Those Things Which Are Necessary, To Be Worthy of Either Praise Or Blame.

It is abundantly affirmed and urged by Arminian writers, that it is contrary to common sense, and the natural notions and apprehensions of mankind, to suppose otherwise than that necessity (making no distinction between natural and moral necessity) is inconsistent, with virtue and vice, praise and blame, reward and punishment. And their arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many, who have been friendly to the truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures: it has seemed to them indeed difficult, to reconcile Calvinistic doctrines with the notions men commonly have of justice and equity. And the true reasons of it seem to be these that follow.

I. It is indeed a very plain dictate of common sense, that natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just praise or blame. If men do things which in themselves are very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy effects, properly against their wills, and cannot help it; or do them from a necessity that is without their wills, or with which their wills have no concern or connection; then it is a plain dictate of common sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor any moral good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praised, or at all esteemed, honoured, or loved on that account. And, on the other hand, that if, from like necessity, they do those things which in themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them because they cannot help it; the necessity is such, that it is all one whether they will them or no; and the reason why they are done, is from necessity only, and not from their wills: it is a very plain dictate of common sense, that they are not at all to blame; there is no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done; nor are they who are thus necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that account. In like manner, if things, in them selves good and desirable, are absolutely impossible, with a natural impossibility, the universal reason of mankind teaches, that this wholly and perfectly excuses persons in their not doing them. And it is also a plain dictate of common sense, that if the doing things inthemselves good, or avoiding things in themselves evil, is not absolutely impossible, with such a natural impossibility, but very difficult, with a natural difficulty, that is, a difficulty prior to, and not at all consisting in, will and inclination itself, and which would remain the same, let the inclination be what it will; then a person’s neglect or omission is excused in some measure, though not wholly; his sin is less aggravated than if the thing to be done were easy. And if instead of difficulty and hindrance, there be a contrary natural propensity in the state of things to the thing to be done, or effect to he brought to pass, abstracted from any consideration of the inclination of the heart; though the propensity be not so great as to amount to a natural necessity, yet being some approach to it, so that the doing the good thing be very much from this natural tendency in the state of things, and but little from a good inclination; then it is a, dictate of common sense, that there is so much the less virtue in what is done; and so it is less praiseworthy and rewardable. The reason is easy, viz. because such a natural propensity or tendency is an approach to natural necessity; and the greater the propensity, still so much the nearer is the

approach to necessity. And, therefore, as natural necessity takes away or shuts out all virtue, so this propensity approaches to an abolition of virtue; that is, it diminishes it. And, on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the state of things, is an approach to natural impossibility. And as the latter, when it is complete and absolute, wholly takes away blame, so such difficulty takes away some blame, or diminishes blame; and makes the thing done to be less worthy of punishment.

II. Men, in their first use of such phrases as these, must, cannot,cannot help it, cannot avoid it, necessary, unable, impossible, unavoidable, irresistible, &c., use them to signify a necessity of constraint or restraint, a natural necessity or impossibility; or some necessity that the will has nothing to do in; which may be, whether men will or no; and which may be supposed to be just the same, let men's inclinations and desires be what they will. Such kind of terms, in their original use, I suppose, among all nations, are relative; carrying in their signification (as was before observed) a reference or respect to some contrary will, desire, or endeavour, which, it is supposed, is, or may be, in the case. All men find, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are innumerable things that cannot be done, which they desire to do; and innumerable things, which they are averse to, that must be,-- they cannot avoid them, they will be, whether they choose them or no. It is to express this necessity, which men so soon and so often find, and which so greatly and early affects them in innumerable cases, that such terms and phrases are first formed; and it is to signify such a necessity, that they are first used, and that they are most constantly used, in the common affairs of life; and not to signify any such metaphysical, speculative, and abstract notion, as that connection in the nature or course of things, which is between the subject and predicate of a proposition, and which is the foundation of the certain truth of that proposition; to signify which, they who employ themselves in philosophical inquiries into the first origin and metaphysical relations and dependencies of things, have borrowed these terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our cradles in a use of such terms and phrases entirely different from this, and carrying a sense exceeding diverse from that in which they are commonly used in the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists. And it being, as was said before, a dictate of the universal sense of mankind, evident to us as soon as we begin to think, that the necessity signified by these terms, in the sense in which we first learn them, does excuse persons and free them from all fault or blame; hence our idea of excusableness or faultlessness is tied to these terms and phrases by a strong habit, which is begun in childhood, as soon as we begin to speak, and grows up with us, and is strengthened by constant use and custom, the connection growing stronger and stronger. The habitual connection which is in men's minds between blamelessness and those forementioned terms, must, cannot, unable, necessary, impossible, unavoidable, &c. becomes very strong; because as soon as ever men begin to use reason and speech, they have occasion to excuse themselves, from the natural necessity signified by these terms, in numerous instances -- I cannot do it; I could not help it. And all mankind have constant and daily occasion to use such phrases in this sense, to excuse themselves aud others, in almost all the concerns of life, with respect to disappointments and things that happen, which concern and affect ourselves and others, that are hurtful, or disagreeable to us or them, or things desirable, that we or others fail of. That a being accustomed to an union of different ideas, from early childhood, makes the habitual connection exceeding strong, as though such connection were owing to nature, is manifest in innumerable instances. It is altogether by such an habitual connection of ideas, that men judge of the bigness or distance of the objects of sight, from their appearance. Thus, it is owing to such a connection early established, and growing up with a person, that he judges a mountain, which he sees at ten

miles distance, to be bigger than his nose, or further off than the end of it. Having been used so long to join a considerable distance and magnitude with such an appearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural sense: whereas, it would be quite otherwise with one that had his eyes newly opened, who had been born blind: he would have the same visible appearance, but natural sense would dictate no such thing, concerning the magnitude or distance of what appeared.

III. When men, after they had been so habituated to connect ideas of innocency or blamelessness with such terms, that the union seems to be the effect of mere nature, come to hear the same terms used, and learn to use them themselves, in the fore-mentioned new and metaphysical sense, to signify quite another sort of necessity, which has no such kind of relation to a contrary supposable will and endeavour; the notation of plain and manifest blamelessness, by this means, is, by a strong prejudice, insensibly and unwarily transferred to a case to which it by no means belongs: the change of the use of the terms, to a signification which is very diverse, not being taken notice of, or adverted to. And there are several reasons why it is not. l. The terms, as used by philosophers, are not very distinct and clear in their meaning: few use them in a fixed, determined sense. On the contrary, their meaning is very vague and confused,-- which is what commonly happens to the words used to signify things intellectual and moral, and to express what Mr Locke calls mixed modes. If men had a clear and distinct understanding of what is intended by these metaphysical terms, they would be able more easily to compare them with their original and common sense; and so would not be so easily led into delusion by any sort of terms in the world, as by words of this sort.

2. The change of the signification of the terms, is the more insensible, because the things signified, though indeed very different, yet do in some generals agree. In necessity, that which is vulgarly so called, there is a strong connection between the thing said to be necessary, and some thing antecedent to it in the order of nature; so there is also in philosophical necessity. And though in both kinds of necessity the connection cannot be called by that name, with relation to an opposite will or endeavour, to which it is superior; which is the case in vulgar necessity; yet, in both the connection is prior to will and endeavour, and so, in some respect, superior. In both kinds of necessity, there is a foundation for some certainty of the proposition that affirms the event.-- The terms used being the same, and the things signified agreeing in these and some other general circumstances; and the expressions, as used by philosophers, being not well defined, and so of obscure and loose signification; hence persons are not aware of the great difference and the notions of innocence or faultiness, which were so strongly associated with them, and were strictly united in their minds, ever since they can remember, remain united with them still, as if the union were altogether natural and necessary; and they that go about to make a separation, seem to them to do great violence, even to nature itself.

IV. Another reason why it appears difficult to reconcile it with reason, that men should be blamed for that which is necessary with a moral necessity, which, as was observed before, is a species of philosophical necessity) is, that for want of due consideration, men inwardly entertain that apprehension, that this necessity may be against men’s wills and sincere endeavors. They go away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wish, and strive, that it may be otherwise, but that invincible necessity stands in the way. And many think thus concerning themselves: some, that are wicked men, think they wish that they were good, that they love God and holiness; but yet do not find that their wishes produce the effect.-- The reasons why men think so, are as follow:

(1.) They find what may be called an indirect willingness to have a better will, in the manner before observed. For it is impossible, and a contradiction, to suppose the will to be directly and properly against itself. And they do not consider, that this indirect willingness is entirely a different thing from properly willing the thing that is the duty and virtue required; and that there is no virtue in that sort of willingness which they have. They do not consider, that the volitions which a wicked man may have that he loved God, are no acts of the will at all against the moral evil of not loving God; but only some disagreeable consequences. But the making the requisite distinction requires more care of reflection and thought than most men are used to. And men, through a prejudice in their own favour, are disposed to think well of their own desires and dispositions, and to account them good and virtuous, though their respect to virtue be only indirect and remote, aud it is nothing at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations.

(2.) Another thing that insensibly lends and beguiles men into a supposition that this moral necessity or impossibility is, or may be, against men's wills and true endeavors, is the derivation and formation of the terms themselves, that are often used to express it, which is such as seems directly to point to, and holds this forth. Such words, for instance, as unable, unavoidable, impossible, irresistible, which carry a plain reference to a supposable posable exerted, endeavors used, resistance made, in opposition to the necessity; and the persons that hear them, not considering nor suspecting but that they are used in their proper sense; that sense being therefore understood, there does naturally, and as it inhere necessarily, arise in their minds a supposition, that it may be so indeed, that true desires and endeavors may take place, but that invincible necessity stands in the way,and renders them vain and to no effect.

V. Another thing, which makes persons more ready to suppose it to be contrary to reason, that men should be exposed to the punishments threatened to sin, for doing those things which are morally necessary, or not doing those things morally impossible, is, that imagination strengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the power and influence of the seeming reasons against it, from the greatness of that punishment. To allow that they may be justly exposed to a small punishment, would not be so difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reason in the case, if it were truly a dictate of reason, that such necessity was inconsistent with faultiness, or just punishment, the demonstration would be equally certain with respect to a small punishment, or any punishment at all, as a very great one; but it is not equally easy to the imagination. They that argue against the justice of damning men for those things that are thus necessary, seem to make their argument the stronger, by setting forth the greatness of the punishment in strong expressions: --" That a man should be cast into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity, for those things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing."

05.04.04. Part 4 sec 4

Part 4 sec 4

It Is Agreeable To Common sense, And The Natural Notions of Mankind, To Suppose Moral Necessity To Be Consistent With Praise And Blame, Reward And Punishment.

Whether the reasons that have been given, why it appears difficult to some persons to reconcile with common sense the praising or blaming, rewarding or punishing those things which are morally necessary, are thought satisfactory, or not; yet it most evidently appears, by the following things, that if this matter be rightly understood, setting aside all delusion arising from the impropriety and ambiguity of terms, this is not at all inconsistent with the natural apprehensions of mankind, and that sense of things which is found every where in the common people, who are furthest from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphysical and philosophical subtleties; but, on the contrary, altogether agreeable to, and the very voice and dictate of, this natural and vulgar sense.

1. This will appear, if we consider what the vulgar notion of blameworthiness is. The idea which the common people, through all ages and nations, have of faultiness, I suppose to be plainly this; a person’s being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleasure; containing these two things:

1. His doing wrong when he does as he pleases:

2. His pleasures being wrong.

Or, in other words, perhaps more intelligibly expressing their notion, a person’s having his heart wrong; and doing wrong from his heart.And this is the sum total of the matter. The common people do not ascend up in their reflections and abstractions to the metaphysical sources, relations, and dependencies of things, in order to form their notion of faultiness or blameworthiness. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what first determines the will; whether it be determined by something extrinsic or intrinsic; whether volition determines volition, or whether the understanding determines the will; whether there be any such thing as metaphysicians mean by contingence (if they have any meaning); whether there be a sort of a strange, unaccountable sovereignty in the will, in the exercise of which, by its own sovereign acts, it brings to pass all its own sovereign acts. They do not take any part of their notion of fault or blame from the resolution of any such question. If this were the case, there are multitudes, yea, the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would live and die without having any such notion as that of fault ever entering into their heads, or without so much as one having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be sure it would be a long time before men came to have such notions. Whereas it is manifest, they are some of the first notions that appear in children; who discover, as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational creatures, a sense of desert. And certainly, in forming their notion of it, they make no use of metaphysics. All the ground they go upon consists in these two things, experience, and a natural sensation of a certain fitness or agreeableness which there is in uniting

such moral evil as is above described, viz, a being or doing wrong with the will, and resentment in others, and pain inflicted on the person in whom this moral evil is. Which natural sense is what we call by the name of conscience.

It is true, the common people and children, in their notion of any faulty act or deed, of any person, do suppose that it is the person's own act and deed. But this is all that belongs to what they understand by a thing's being a person's own deed or action; even that it is something done by him of choice. That some exercise or motion should begin of itself, does not belong to their notion of an action or doing. If so, it would belong to their notion of it, that it is something which is the cause of its own beginning; and that is as much as to say, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their notion of an action, some motion or exercise that begins accidentally, without any cause or reason; for that is contrary to one of the prime dictates of common sense, namely, that every thing that begins to be, has some cause or reason why it is. The common people, in their notion of a faulty or praiseworthy deed or work done by any one, do suppose that the man does it in the exercise of liberty. But then their notion of liberty is only a person's having opportunity of doing as he pleases. They have no notion of liberty consisting in the will's first acting, and so causing its own acts; and determining, and so causing its own determinations; or choosing, and so causing its own choice. Such a notion of liberty is what none have, but those that have darkened their own minds with confused metaphysical speculation, and abstruse and ambiguous terms. If a man is not restrained frown acting as his will determines, or constrained to act otherwise, then he has liberty, according to common notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand contradiction of all, the determinations of a man's free will being the effects of the determinations of his free will.-- Nor have men commonly any notion of freedom consisting in indifference. Fox if so, then it would he agreeable to their notion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas the reverse is true. He that, in acting, proceeds with the fullest inclination, does what he does with the greatest freedom, according to common sense. And so far is it from being agreeable to common sense, that such liberty as consists in indifference is requisite to praise or blame, that, on the contrary, the dictate of every man's natural sense through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in His acting good or evil, and the more he does either with full and strong inclination, the more is he esteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconsistent with the common sense of mankind, that men should be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions they have or fail of, in case of moral necessity or impossibility; then it would surely also be agreeable to the same sense and reason of mankind, that the nearer the case approaches to such a moral necessity or impossibility, either through a strong antecedent moral propensity, on the one hand or a great antecedent opposition and difficulty on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that acts exerted with such preceding propensity, would be worthy of proportionably less praise; and when omitted, the act being attended with such difficulty, the omission would be worthy of less blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural necessity and impossibility, propensity and difficulty: as it is a plain dictate of the sense of all mankind, that natural necessity and impossibility take away all blame and praise; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to these, through previous propensity or difficulty, so praise and blame are proportionably diminished. And if it were as much a dictate of commonsense, that moral necessity of doing or impossibility of avoiding takes away all praise and blame, as that natural necessity or impossibility does this; then, by a perfect

parity of reason, it would be as much the dictate of common sense, that an approach to moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, diminishes praise and blame, as that an approach to natural necessity and impossibility does so. It is equally the voice of common sense, that persons are excusable in part in neglecting things difficult against their wills, as that they are excusable wholly in neglecting things impossible against their wills. And if it made no difference, whether the impossibility were natural and against the will, or moral lying in the will, with regard to excusableness; so neither would it make any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to necessity, be natural against the will, or moral, lying in the propensity of the will. But it is apparent, that the reverse of these things is true. If there be an approach to a moral necessity in a man's exertion of good acts of will, they being the exercise of a strong propensity to good, and a very powerful love to virtue; it is so far from being the dictate of common sense, that he is less virtuous, and the less to be esteemed, loved, and praised; that it is agreeable to the natural notions of all mankind, that he is so much the better man, worthy of greater respect, and higher commendation. And the stronger the inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to necessity in that respect; or to impossibility of neglecting the virtuous act, or of doing a vicious one; still the more virtuous, and worthy of higher commendation. And, on the other hand, if a man exerts evil acts of mind; as for instance, acts of pride or malice, from a rooted and strong habit or principle of haughtiness and maliciousness, and a violent propensity of heart to such acts; according to the natural sense of men, he is so far from being the less hateful and blameable on that account, that he is so much the more worthy to be detested and condemned by all that observe him.

Moreover, it is manifest that it is no part of the notion, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or praiseworthy act of the will, that it is an act which is not determined by an antecedent bias or motive, but by the sovereign power of the will itself; because, if so, the greater hand such causes have in determining any acts of the will, so much the less virtuous or vicious would they be accounted; and the less hand, the more virtuous or vicious. Whereas the reverse is true: men do not think a good act to be the less praiseworthy for the agent's being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive, but the more. And if good inclination or motive has but little influence in determining the agent, they do not think his act so much the more virtuous, but the less. And so concerning evil acts, which are determined by evil motives or inclinations.

Yea, if it be supposed, that good or evil dispositions are implanted in the hearts of men by nature itself; (which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable cases,) yet it is not commonly supposed, that men are worthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions; although what is natural is undoubtedly necessary, nature being prior to all acts of the will whatsoever. Thus, for instance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious disposition, and is supposed to be so by his natural temper, it is no vulgar notion, no dictate of the common sense and apprehension of men, that such dispositions are no vices or moral evils, or that such persons are not worthy of disesteem, or odium and dishonour; or that the proud or malicious acts which flow from such natural dispositions, are worthy of no resentment. Yea, such vile natural dispositions, and the strength of them, will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation of the wicked acts that come from such a fountain, than an extenuation of them. Its being natural for men to act thus, is often observed by men in the height of their indignation: they will say, "It is his very nature; he is of a vile natural temper; it is as natural to him to act so, as it is to breathe; he cannot help serving the devil," &c. But it is not thus with regard to hurtful, mischievous things, that any are the subjects or

occasions of, by natural necessity, against their inclinations. In such a case, the necessity, by the common voice of mankind, will be spoken of as a full excuse.-- Thus, it is very plain, that common sense makes a vast difference between these two kinds of necessity, as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and desert of men's actions. And these dictates of men's minds are so natural and necessary, that it may be very much doubted whether, the Arminians themselves have ever got rid of them; yea, their greatest doctors, that have gone furthest in defense of their metaphysical notions of liberty, and have brought their arguments to their greatest strength, and, as they suppose, to a demonstration, against the consistence of virtue and vice with any necessity; it is to be questioned, whether there is so much as one of them, but that, if he suffered very much from the injurious acts of a man under the power of an invincible haughtiness and malignancy of temper, would not, from the fore-mentioned natural sense of mind, resent it far otherwise, than if as great sufferings came upon him from the wind that blows, and fire that burns, by natural necessity; and otherwise than he would, if he suffered as much from the conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though he first brought his distraction upon him some way by his own fault.

Some seem to disdain the distinction that we make between natural and moral necessity, as though it were altogether impertinent in this controversy: "that which is necessary (say they) is necessary; it is that which must be, and cannot be prevented. And that which is impossible, isimpossible, and cannot be done: and therefore none can be to blame for not doing it," And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a man to walk who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man who is shut up in a strong prison, to come forth, &c. But, in these things, Arminians are very unreasonable. Let common sense determine whether there be not a great difference between these two cases; the one, that of a man who has offended his prince, and is cast into prison; and after he has laid there a while, the king comes to him, calls him to come forth to him; and tells him, that if he will do so, and will fall down before him, and humbly beg his pardon, he shall be forgiven and set at liberty, and also be greatly enriched, and advanced to honour; the prisoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedness of his offence against his prince, is thoroughly disposed to abase himself, and accept of the king's offer; but is confined by strong walls, with gates of brass, and bars of iron. The other case is, that of a man who is of a very unreasonable spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful disposition; and, moreover, has been brought up in traitorous principles, and has his heart possessed with an extreme and inveterate enmity to his lawful sovereign; and for his rebellion is cast into prison, and lies long there, loaded with heavy chains, and in miserable circumstances. At length the compassionate prince comes to the prison, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his prison-doors to be set wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he will come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and ask his forgiveness, he shall be forgiven, set at liberty, and set in a place of great dignity and profit in his court. But he is stout and stomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer: his rooted strong pride and malice have perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart: the opposition of his heart has the mastery over him, having an influence on his mind far superior to the king's grace and condescension, and to all his kind offers and promises. Now, is it agreeable to common sense to assert, and stand to it, that there is no difference between these two cases, as to any worthiness of blame in the prisoners; because, forsooth, there is a necessity in both, and the required act in each case is impossible? It is true, a man's evil dispositions may be

as strong and immoveable as the bars of a castle. But who cannot see, that when a man, in the latter case, is said to be unable to obey the command, the expression is used improperly, and not in the sense it has originally, and in common speech; and that it may properly be said to be in the rebel's power to come out of prison, seeing he can easily do it if he pleases; though by reason of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impossible that it should please him?

Upon the whole, I presume there is no person of good understanding, who impartially considers the things which have been observed, but will allow, that it is not evident, from the dictates of the common sense, or natural notions of mankind, that moral necessity is inconsistent with praise and blame. And, therefore, if the Arminians would prove any such inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical arguments, and not common sense.

There is a grand illusion in the pretended demonstration of Arminians from common sense. The main strength of all these demonstrations lies in that prejudice, that arises through the insensible change of the use and meaning of such terms as liberty, able, unable, necessary, impossible, unavoidable, invincible, action, &c. from their original and vulgar sense, to a metaphysical sense, entirely diverse; and the strong connection of the ideas of blamelessness, &c. with some of these terms, by a habit contracted and established while these terms were used in their first meaning. This prejudice and delusion is the foundation of all those positions they lay down as maxims, by which most of the Scriptures, which they allege in this controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonstrations from Scripture and reason depend. From this secret delusion and prejudice they have almost all their advantages; it is the strength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons. And this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbours in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as weak bigots, men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition, perversely set, obstinately shutting their eyes against the noon-day light, enemies to common sense, maintaining the first-born of absurdities, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things which have been observed in the preceding parts of this Inquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whose doctrine is indeed absurd, abstruse, self-contradictory, and inconsistent with common sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind.

Corol. From things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common sense to suppose that the glorified saints have not their freedom at all diminished in any respect: and that God himself has the highest possible freedom according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is, in the highest possible respect, an agent and active in the exercise of his infinite holiness; though he acts therein, in the highest degree necessarily: and his actions of this kind, are in the highest, most absolutely perfect manner, virtuous and praiseworthy; and are so, for that very reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

05.04.05. Part 4 sec 5

Part 4 sec 5

Concerning Those Objections, That This Scheme Of Necessity Renders All Means and Endeavours For The Avoiding Of Sin, Or The Obtaining Virtue And Holiness, Vain And To No Purpuse; And That It makes Men No More Than Mere Machines In Affairs Of Morality And Religion

Arminians say, if it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connection of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any means or endeavours to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavours can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a, connection already established. But I desire that this matter may be fully considered; and that it may be examined with a thorough strictness, whether it will follow, that endeavours and means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, must be more in vain, on the supposition of such a connection of antecedents and consequents than if the contrary be supposed. For endeavours to be in vain, is for them not to be successful; that is to say, for them not eventually to be the means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be but in one of these two ways; either, first, That although the means are used, yet the event aimed at does not follow; or, secondly, If the event does follow, it is not because of the means, or from any connection or dependence of the event on the means: the event would have come to pass as well without the means as with them. If either of these two things is the case, then the means are not properly successful, and are truly in vain. The successfulness or unsuccessfulness of means, in order to an effect, or their being in vain or not in vain, consists in those means being connected or not connected with the effect, in such a manner as this, viz. that the effect is with the means, and not without them; or, that the being of the effect is, on the one band, connected with means, and the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connected with the want of the means. If there he such a connection, as this between means and end, the means are not in vain; the more there is of such a connection, the further they are from being in vain; and the less of such a connection, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the question to be answered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this doctrine of the necessary connection between foregoing things and consequent ones, that means used in order to any effect are more in vain than they would be otherwise), is, whether it follows from it that there is less of the forementioned connection between means and effect; that is, whether, on the supposition of there being a real and true connection between means and effect, than on the supposition of there being no fixed connection between antecedent things and consequent ones; and the very stating of this question is sufficient to answer it. It must appear to every one that will open his eyes, that this question cannot be affirmed without the grossest absurdity and inconsistence. Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things. And if there were no connection between foregoing things and following ones, there could be no connection between means and end; and so all means would be wholly vain and fruitless. For it is

by virtue of some connection only, that they become successful. It is some connection observed or revealed, or otherwise known, between antecedent things and following ones, that is what directs in the choice of means. And if there were no such thing as an established connection, there could be no choice as to means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect than another; there would he no such thing as tendency in the case. All those things which are successful means of other things, do therein prove connected antecedents of them; and therefore, to assert that a fixed connection between antecedents and consequents makes means vain and useless, or stands in the way to hinder the connection between means and end, is just as ridiculous as to say, that a connection between antecedents and consequents stands in the way to hinder a connection between antecedents and consequents. Nor can any supposed connection of the succession or train of antecedents and consequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connection being made already sure and necessary, either by established laws of nature, or by these together with a decree of sovereign immediate interpositions of Divine power, on such and such occasions, or any other way (if any other there be); I say, no such necessary connection of a series of antecedents and consequents can in the least tend to hinder, but that the means we use may belong to the series; and so may be some of those antecedents which are connected with the consequents we aim at in the established course of things. Endeavours which we use, are things that exist; and therefore they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are supposed to be connected; and so endeavours are supposed to be connected with some effects, or some consequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be those which we aim at, and which we choose, because we judge them most likely to have a connection with those events from the established order and course of things which we observe, or from something in Divine revelation.

Let us suppose a real and true connection between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day-light, with good organs of sight, and seeing; so that seeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not seeing with his not opening his eyes; and also the like connection between such a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it: the supposed established connection between these antecedents and consequents, let the connection be never so sure and necessary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain for a man in such circumstances to attempt to open his eyes, in order to seeing: his aiming at that event, and the use of the means, being the effect of his will, does not break the connection, or hinder the success. So that the objection we are upon does not lie against the doctrine of the necessity of events by a certainty of connection and consequence; on the contrary, it is truly forcible against the Arminian doctrine of contingence and self-determination; which is inconsistent with such a connection. If there be no connection between those events wherein virtue and vice consist, and any thing antecedent; then there is no connection between these events and any means or endeavours used in order to them; and if so, then those means must be in vain. The less there is of connection between foregoing things and following ones, so much the less there is between means and end, endeavours and success; and in the same proportion are means and endeavours ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from Arminian principles that there is no degree of connection between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing; or, in other words, that the determination of the existence of virtue or vice does not in the least depend on the influence of any thing that comes to pass antecedently, from which the determination of its existence is, as its cause, means, or ground;

because so far as it is so, it is not from self-determination; and, therefore, so far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And so it follows, that virtue and vice are not at all, in any degree, dependent upon, or connected with, any foregoing event or existence, as its cause, ground, or means. And if so, then all foregoing means must be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any consistence with the Arminian scheme, be any reasonable ground of so much as a conjecture concerning the consequence of any means and endeavours, in order to escaping vice, or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of means, as having a greater probability of success by some than others; either from any natural connection or dependence of the end on the means, or through any divine constitution, or revealed way of God's bestowing or bringing to pass these things, in consequence of any means, endeavours, prayers, or deeds. Conjectures in this latter ease, depend on a supposition, that God himself is the giver, or determining cause, of the events sought; but if they depend on self-determination, then God is not the determining or disposing author of them; and if these things are not of his disposal, then no conjecture can be made, frown any revelation he has given, concerning any way or method of his disposal of them.

Yea, on these principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reasonable ground of judgment or conjecture that their means and endeavours to obtain virtue, or avoid vice, will be successful, but they may be sure they will not; they may be certain that they will be in vain; and that if ever the thing, which they seek, comes to pass, it will not be at all owing to the means they use. For means and endeavours can have no effect at all, in order to obtain the end, but in one of those two ways; either (1.) Through a natural tendency and influence to prepare and dispose the mind more to virtuous acts, either by causing the disposition of the heart to be more in favour of such acts, or by bringing the mind more into the view of powerful motives and inducements; or, (2) By putting persons more in the way of God's bestowment of the benefit. But neither of these can he the case. Not the latter; for, as has been just observed, it does not consist with the Arminian notion of self-determination, which they suppose essential to virtue, that God should be the bestower, or (which is the same thing) the determining disposing author of virtue. Not the form; for natural influence aud tendency supposes causality and connection, and supposes necessity of event, which is inconsistent with Arminian liberty. A tendency of means, by biasing the heart in favour of virtue, or by bringing the will under the influence and power of motives in its determinations, are both inconsistent with Arminian liberty of will, consisting in indifference, and sovereign self-determination, as has been largely demonstrated. But for the more full removal of this prejudice against the doctrineof necessity, which has been maintained, as though it tended to encourage a total neglect of all endeavours as vain; the following things may be considered: -- The question is not, Whether men may not thus improve this doctrine,-- we know that many true and wholesome doctrines are abused; but, whether the doctrine gives any just occasion for such an improvement; or whether, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrine, such a use of it would be unreasonable? If any shall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature of the doctrine is such as gives just occasion for it, it must be on this supposition; namely, that such an invariable necessity of all things already settled, must render the interposition of all means, endeavours, conclusions, or actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any future end whatsoever, perfectly insignificant; because they cannot in the least alter or vary the ourse and series of things, in any event or circumstance; all being already fixed unutterably by necessity; and that therefore it is folly

for men to use any means for any end; but their wisdom to save themselves the trouble of endeavours, and take their ease. No person can draw such all inference from this doctrine, and come to such a conclusion, without contradicting himself, and going counter to the very principles he pretends to act upon; for he comes to a conclusion and takes a course, in order to an end, even his case, or the saving himself from trouble he seeks something future, and uses means in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up that conclusion, that he will seek nothing, and use no means in order to any thing in future; he seeks his future ease, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. If prior necessity, that determines all things, makes vain, all actions or conclusions of ours, in order to any thing future; then it makes vain all conclusions and conduct of ours, in order to our future ease. The measure of our ease, with the time, manner, and every circumstance of it, is already fixed, by all-determining necessity, as much as any thing else. If he says within himself, "What future happiness or misery I shall have, is already, in effect, determined by the necessary course and connection of things; therefore, I will save myself the trouble of labor and diligence which cannot add to my determined degree of happiness, or diminish my misery; but will take my ease, and will enjoy the comfort of sloth and negligence," -- such a man contradicts himself; he says, the measure of his future happiness and misery is already fixed, and he will not try to diminish the one, nor add to the other; but yet, in his very conclusion, he contradicts this; for, he takes up this conclusion, to add to his future happiness, by the ease and comfort of his negligence, and to diminish his future trouble and misery by saving himself the trouble of using means and taking pains.

Therefore, persons cannot reasonably make this improvement of the doctrine of necessity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of means for their own happiness. For the principles they must go upon, in order to this, are inconsistent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine; for to make some improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to some voluntary conclusion, in regard to their own conduct, with some view or aim; but this, as has been shown, is inconsistent with the principles they pretend to act upon. In short, the principles are such as cannot be acted upon at all, or, in any respect, consistently. And therefore, in every pretense of acting upon them, or making any improvement at all of them, there is a self-contradiction. As to that objection against the doctrine, which I have endeavoured to prove, that it makes men no more than mere machines; I would say, that notwithstanding this doctrine, man is entirely, perfectly, and unspeakably different from a mere machine, in that he has reason and understanding, and has a faculty of will, and is so capable of volition and choice; and in that his will is guided by the dictates or views of his understanding; and in that his external actions and behavior, and in many respects also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, are subject to his will; so that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleases; and, by means of these things, is capable of moral habits and moral acts, such inclinations and actions, as, according to the common sense of mankind, are worthy of praise, esteem, love, and reward; or, on the contrary, of disesteem, detestation, indignation, and punishment. In these things is all the difference from mere machines, as to liberty and agency, that would be any perfection, dignity, or privilege, in any respect; all the difference that can be desired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretensions of the Arminians themselves come to, as they are forced often to explain themselves. (Though their explications overthrow and abolish the things asserted, and pretended to be explained,) For they are forced to explain a self-determining power of will, by a power in the soul to determine as it chooses or wills; which comes to no more than this, that a man has a power of choosing, and in

many instances, can do as he chooses,-- which is quite a different thing from that contradiction, his having power of choosing his first act of choice in the case.

Or, if their scheme makes any other difference than this between men and machines, it is for the worse; it is so far from supposing men to have a dignity and privilege above machines, that it makes the manner of their being determined still more unhappy. Whereas machines are guided by an understanding cause, by the skillful hand of the workman or owner; the will of man is left to the guidance of nothing but absolute blind contingence.

05.04.06. Part 4 sec 6

Part 4 sec 6

Concerning That Objection Against The Doctrine Which Has Been Maintained, That It Agrees With The Stoical Doctrine O Faith, And The Opinions of Mr. Hobbes. WHEN Calvinists oppose the Arminian notion of the freedom of will, and contingence of volition, and insist that there are no acts of the will, nor any other event whatsoever, but what are attended with some kind of necessity; their opposers cry out of them, as agreeing with the ancient Stoics in their doctrine of fate, and with Mr Hobbes in his opinion of necessity.

It would not be worth while to take notice of so impertinent an objection, had it not been urged by some of the chief Arminian writers. There were many important truths maintained by the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, and especially the Stoics, that are never the worse for being held by them. The Stoic philosophers, by the general agreement of Christian divines, and even Arminian divines, were the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous of all the heathen philosophers; and in their doctrine and practice came the nearest to Christianity of any of their sects. How frequently are the sayings of these philosophers, in many of the writings and sermons, even of Arminian divines, produced, not as arguments of the falseness of the doctrines which they delivered, but as a confirmation of some of the greatest truths of the Christian religion, relating to the unity and perfections of the Godhead, a future state, the duty and happiness of mankind, &c., as observing how the light of nature, and reason, in the wisest and best of the heathen, harmonized with and confirms the gospel of Jesus Christ. And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr Whitby, that although he alleges the agreement of the Stoics with us, wherein he supposes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument against the truth of our doctrine; yet this very Dr Whitby alleges the agreement of the Stoics with the Arminians, wherein he supposes they taught the same doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine. So that, when the Stoics agree with them, this (it seems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as showing that our opinions are contrary to the natural sense and common reason of mankind: nevertheless, when the Stoics agree with us, it argues no such thing in our favour; but, on the contrary, is a great argument against, us, and shows our doctrine to be heathenish.

It is observed by some Calvinistic writers, that the Arminians symbolise with the Stoics in some of those doctrines wherein they are opposed by the Calvinists; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man’s ability to make himself truly virtuous and conformed to God; and in some other doctrines.

It may be further observed, it is certainly no better objection against our doctrine, that it agrees, in some respects, with the doctrine of the ancient Stoic philosophers, than it is against theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in some respects, with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers, the followers of Epicurus, that father of atheism and licentiousness, and with the doctrine of the Sadducees and Jesuits.

I am not much concerned to know precisely what the ancient Stoic philosophers held concerning fate, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a sure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It seems that they differed among themselves; and probably the doctrine of fate, as maintained by most of them, was, in some respects, erroneous. But whatever their doctrine was, if any of them held such a fate as is repugnant to any liberty, consisting in our doing as we please I utterly deny such a fate. If they held any such fate as is not consistent with the common and universal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice; I disclaim any such thing, and think I have demonstrated that the scheme I maintain is no such scheme. If the Stoics, by fate, meant any thing of such a nature as can be supposed to stand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the use of means and endeavours, or make it less worth the while for men to desire and seek after any thing wherein their virtue and happiness consists; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any such inconvenience, any more than any other scheme whatsoever; and by no means so much as the Arminian scheme of contingence; as has been shown. If they held any such doctrine of universal fatality as is inconsistent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege or benefit, or any thing desirable, in any respect, for any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is possible or conceivable; I embrace no such doctrine. If they held any such doctrine of fate as is inconsistent with the world's being in all things subject to the disposal of an intelligent wise Agent, that presides, not as the soul of the world, but as the sovereign Lord of the universe, governing all things by proper will, choice, and design, in the exercise of the most perfect liberty conceivable, without subjection to any constraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above, or without himself; I wholly renounce any such doctrine. As to Mr Hobbes's maintaining the same doctrine concerning necessity; I confess it happens I never read Mr Hobbes. Let his opinion be what it will, we need not reject all truth which is demonstrated by clear evidence, merely because it was once held by some had man. This great truth, that Jesus is the Son of God, was not spoiled because it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the devil. If truth is so defiled, because it is spoken by the mouth, or written by the pen, of some ill-minded mischievous man, that it must never be received, we shall never know when we hold any of the most precious and evident truths by a sure tenure, And if Mr Hobbes has made a bad use of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuse the best things to vile purposes. I might also take notice of its having been observed, that the Arminians agree with Mr. Hobbes in many more things than the Calvinists; -- as, in what he is said to hold concerning original sin, in denying the necessity of supernatural illumination, in denying infused grace, in denying the doctrine of justification by faith alone; and other things.

05.04.07. Part 4 sec 7

Part 4 sec 7 Concerning The Necessity Of The Divine Will

Some may possibly object against what has been supposed of the absurdity and inconsistence of a self-determining power in the will, and the impossibility of its being otherwise than that the will should be determined in every case by some motive, and by a motive which (as it stands in the view of the understanding) is of superior strength to any appearing on the other side; that if these things are true, it will follow, that not only the will of created minds, but the will of God himself, is necessary in all its determinations. Concerning which, says the author of the Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and in the Creature, (pp. 85, 86) "What strange doctrine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion of God? does it not destroy the glory of his liberty of choice, and take away from the Creator and Governor and Benefactor of the world, that most free and sovereign agent, all the glory of this sort of freedom? does it not seem to make him a kind of mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr Hobbe's doctrine of fatality and necessity into all things that God hath to do with? Does it not seem to represent the blessed God as a being of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, but still to leave him without a will to choose among all the objects within his view? In short, it seems to make the blessed God a sort of almighty minister of fate, under its universal and supreme influence; as it was the professed sentiment of some of the ancients, that fate was above the gods." This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men's imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reason. But I would calmly endeavour to consider, whether there be any reason in this frightful representation.-- But before I enter upon a particular consideration of the matter, I should observe this: that it is reasonable to suppose, it should be much more difficult to express or conceive things according to exact metaphysical truth, relating to the nature and manner of the existence of things in the Divine understanding and will, and the operation of these faculties (if I may so call them) of the Divine mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our view, and nearer to a proportion to the measure of our comprehension, and more commensurate to the use and import of human speech. Language is indeed very deficient in regard of terms to express precise truth concerning our own minds, and their faculties and operations. Words were first formed to express external things; and those that are applied to express things internal and spiritual, are almost all borrowed, and used in a sort of figurative sense. Whence they are, most of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedness in their signification, occasioning innumerable doubts, difficulties, and confusions, in inquiries and controversies about things of this nature. But language is much less adapted to express things in the mind of the incomprehensible Deity precisely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly of the nature of our own souls. And notwithstanding all the progress which has been made, in past and present ages, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphysics, as it relates to these things, is brought to greater perfection than once it was; yet, here is still work enough left for future inquiries and researches, and room for progress still to be made, for many ages and generations. But we had need to be infinitely able metaphysicians, to conceive with clearness, according to strict, proper, and perfect truth,

concerning the nature of the Divine Essence, and the modes of the action and operation of the powers of the Divine Mind. And it may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of some things in God as consequent and dependent on others, and of some things pertaining to the Divine nature and will as the foundation of others, and so before others in the order of nature; as, we must conceive of the knowledge and holiness of God as prior, in the order of nature, to his happiness; the perfection of his understanding, as the foundation of his wise purposes and decrees; the holiness of his nature, as the cause and reason of his holy determinations. And yet, when we speak of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent, fundamental and dependent, determining aud determined, in the first Being, who is self-existent, independent, of perfect and absolute simplicity and immutability, and the first cause of all things; doubtless there must be less propriety in such representations, than when we speak of derived dependent beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and succession.

Having premised this, I proceed to observe concerning the fore-mentioned author's exclamation about the necessary determination of God's will, in all things, by what he sees to be fittest and best. That all the seeming force of such objections and exclamations must arise from an imagination that there is some sort of privilege or dignity in being without such a moral necessity as will make it impossible to do any other than always choose what is wisest and best; as though there were some disadvantage, meanness, and subjection, in such a necessity; a thing by which the will was confined, kept under, and held in servitude by something, which, as it were, maintained a strong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held him fast, and that he could, by no means, deliver himself from. Whereas, this must be all mere imagination and delusion. It is no disadvantage or dishonour to a being, necessarily to act in the most excellent and happy manner, from the necessary perfection of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority, or dependence, nor any avant of dignity, privilege, or ascendancy. It is not inconsistent with the absolute and most perfect sovereignty of God. The sovereignty ofGod is his ability and authority to do whatever pleases him; whereby "he doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?" -- The following things belong to the sovereignty of God: viz.

(1.) Supreme, universal, and infinite power: whereby he is able to do what he pleases, without control, without any confinement of that power, without any subjection, in the least measure, to any other power; and so without any hindrance or restraint, that it should be either impossible, or at all difficult, for him to accomplish his will; and without any dependance of his power on any other power, from whence it should be derived, or which it should stand in any need of; so far from this, that all other power is derived from him, and is absolutely dependent on him.

(2.) That he has supreme authority; absolute and most perfect right to do what he wills, without subjection to any superior authority, or any derivation of authority from any other, or limitation by any distinct independent authority, either superior, equal, or inferior; he being the head of all dominion, and fountain of all authority; and also without restraint by any obligation, implying either subjection, derivation, or dependence, or proper limitation.

(3.) That his will is supreme, underived, and independent on any thingwithout himself; being in every thing determined by his own counsel, having no other rule but his own wisdom; his will not being subject to, or restrained by, the will of any other, and other wills being perfectly subject to

his.

(4.) That his wisdom, which determines his will, is supreme, perfect,underived, self-sufficient, and independent; so that it may be said, as in Isaiah 40:1, ' With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? --There is no other Divine sovereignty but this; and this is properly absolute sovereignty: no other is desirable; nor would any other be honourable or happy and, indeed, there is no other conceivable or possible: It is the glory and greatness of the Divine Sovereign, that Goal's will is determined by his own infinite, all-sufficient wisdom in every thing; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferior wisdom, or by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arbitrariness,determining and acting without reason, design, or end.

If God's will is steadily and surely determined in every thing by supreme wisdom, then it is in every thing necessarily determined to that which is most wise. And, certainly, it would he a disadvantage and indignity to be otherwise. For if the Divine will was not necessarily determined to that which, in every case, is wisest and best, it must be subject, to some degree of undesigning contingence; aud so in the same degree liable to evil. To suppose the Divine will liable to be carried hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingence, which is guided by no wisdom, no motive, no intelligent dictate whatsoever, (if any such thing were possible,) would certainly argue a great degree of imperfection and meanness, infinitely unworthy of the Deity. If it be a disadvantage for the Divine will to be attended with this moral necessity, then the more free from it, and the more left at random, the greater dignity and advantage. And, consequently, to be perfectly free from the direction of understanding, and universally and entirely left to senseless, unmeaning contingence, to act absolutely at random, would he the supreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's will, that his supremely wise volition is necessary, than it argues a dependence of his being, that his existence is necessary. If it be something too low for the Supreme Being to have his will determined by moral necessity, so as necessarily, in every case, to will in the highest degree holy and happily; then why is it not also something too low for him to have his existence, and the infinite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happiness, determined by necessity? It is no more to God's dishonour to be necessarily wise, than to be necessarily holy. And if neither of them be to his dishonour, then it is not to his dishonour necessarily to act holily and wisely. And if it be not dishonorable to be necessarily holy and wise, in the highest possible degree, no more is it mean and dishonorable, necessarily to act holily and wisely in the highest possible degree; or, which is the same thing, to do that, in every case, which, above all other things, is wisest and best. The reason why it is not dishonorable to be necessarily most holy, is, because holiness in itself is an excellent and honourable thing. For the same reason, it is no dishonour to be necessarily most wise, and, in every case, to act most wisely, or do the thing which is the wisest of all; for wisdom is also in itself excellent and honourable. The fore-mentioned author of the "Essay on the Freedom of Will," &c. as has been observed, represents that doctrine of the Divine will's being in every thing necessarily determined by a superior fitness, as making the blessed God a kind of almighty minister and mechanical medium of fate; and he insists, (pp. 93, 94,) that this moral necessity and impossibility is, in effect, the same thing with physical and natural necessity and impossibility; and in pp. 54, 55, he says, "The scheme which determines the will always and certainly by the understanding, and understanding by the appearance of things, seems to take away the true nature of vice and virtue. For the

sublimest of virtues, and the vilest of vices, seem rather to be matters of fate and necessity, flowing naturally and necessarily from the existence, the circumstances, and present situation of persons and things; for this existence and situation necessarily makes such an appearance to the mind; from this appearance flows a necessary perception and judgment concerning these things: this judgment necessarily determines the will; and thus, by this chain of necessary causes, virtue and vice would lose their nature, and become natural ideas, and necessary things, instead of moral and free actions." And yet this same author allows, (pp. 30, 31,) that a perfectly wise being will constantly and certainly choose what is most fit; aud says, pp. 102, 103, "I grant, and always have granted, that wheresoever there is such antecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according to it, so as never to contradict it; and, particularly, in all his judicial proceedings as a governor, and distributor of rewards and punishments." Yea, he says expressly, (p. 42,) "That it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness and goodness in things." So that, according to this author, putting these several passages of this essay together, there is no virtue, nor any thing of a moral nature, in the most sublime and glorious acts and exercises of God's holiness, justice, and faithfulness; and he never does any thing which is in itself supremely worthy, and, above all other things, fit and excellent, but only as a king of mechanical medium of fate; and in what he does as the judge and moral governor of the world, he exercises no moral excellency, exercising no freedom in these things, because he acts by moral necessity, which is, in effect, the same with physical or natural necessity; and therefore he only acts by an Hobbistical fatality; "as a being indeed of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency, (as he said before,) but without a will to choose, being a kind of almighty administer of fate, acting under its supreme influence." For he allows, that in all these things, God's will is determined constantly and certainly by a superior fitness, and that it is not possible for him to act otherwise. And if these things are so, what glory or praise belongs to God for doing holily and justly; or taking the most fit, holy, wise, and excellent course, in any one instance? Whereas, according to the Scriptures, and also the common sense of mankind, it does not, in the least, derogate from the honour of any being, that through the moral perfection of his nature he necessarily acts with supreme wisdom and holiness; but on the contrary, his praise is the greater; herein consists the height of his glory. The same author (p. 56) supposes that herein appears the excellent "character of a wise and good man, that though he can choose contrary to the fitness of things, yet he does not; but suffers himself to be directed by fitness;" and that, in this conduct, "he imitates the blessed God." And yet he supposes it is contrariwise with the blessed God; not that he suffers himself to be directed by fitness, when he can choose, contrary to the fitness of things, but that he cannot choose contrary to the fitness of things; as he says, (p. 42,) "that it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things." Yea, he supposes, (p. 31,) that if a man "were perfectly wise and good, he could not do otherwise than be constantly and certainly determined by the fitness of things."

One thing more I would observe, before I conclude this section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God to be necessarily determined by superior fitness in some things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of such necessity, as at all detracting from God's freedom, independence, absolute supremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, state, or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, restraint, or subjection. And if the thing be such as well consists with God's glory, and has nothing tending at all to detract from it; then we need not be afraid of ascribing it to God in too many things, lest thereby we should

detract from God’s glory too much.

06.01. CHAPTER I.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH--PARENTAGE--EARLY RELIGIOUS ADVANTAGES--SERIOUS IMPRESSIONS AND ACCOUNT OF HIS EXPERIENCE.

Few individuals ever appeared in the church of God who have merited, and actually received, higher tributes of respect than Jonathan Edwards. His intellectual powers were of no common order, and his industry in the cultivation of those powers is strongly marked in that wide extent of most important knowledge which he possessed. If we consider him as ranking with Hartley, Locke, and Bacon, in the scale of intellect, we shall have little apprehension of his title to such distinction being disputed. His mighty mind grasped with ease those subjects at which others faltered. He saw truth almost intuitively, and was equally keen in the detection of error in all its varied shades.--This distinguished man claims admiration, not merely on the ground of uncommon strength of intellectual powers, and intense application of mind, rewarded by proportionate acquirements, but also as a most humble and devoted servant of Christ; bringing all he had received into his service, and living only to him. His soul was indeed a temple of the Holy Spirit, and his life uniformly manifested all the simplicity, purity, disinterestedness, and elevated character of the gospel of Christ. The glory of God was his supreme object, whether engaged in his devotional exercises, his studies, his social intercourse, the discharge of his public ministry, or in the publication of his writings. All inferior motives seem to have been without any discernible influence upon him. He entered fully into the expressive language of Paul--"The love of Christ constraineth me." "For me to live is Christ." His personal example will long instruct, excite, and encourage, and his writings will necessarily be most highly esteemed so long as the love of truth prevails.

It has been justly observed, "The number of those men, who have produced great and permanent changes in the character and condition of mankind, and stamped their own image on the minds of succeeding generations, is comparatively small; and, even of this small number, the great body have been indebted for their superior efficiency, at least in part, to extraneous circumstances, while very few can ascribe it to the simple strength of their own intellect. Yet here and there an individual can be found, who, by his mere mental energy, has changed the course of human thought and feeling, and led mankind onward in that new and better path which he had opened to their view. Such an individual was Jonathan Edwards. Born in an obscure colony, in the midst of a wilderness, and educated at a seminary just commencing its existence; passing the better part of his life as the pastor of a frontier village, and the residue as an Indian missionary in a still humbler hamlet; he discovered, and unfolded, a system of the divine moral government, so new, so clear, so full, that while at its first disclosure it needed no aid from its friends and feared no opposition from its enemies, it has at length constrained a reluctant world to bow in homage to its truth." [1]

Jonathan Edwards was born on the 5th of October, 1703, at Windsor, on the banks of the Connecticut. His father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards, was minister of that place about 60 years. [2]

He died in January, 1758, in the 89th year of his age, not two months before this his only son. He was a man of great piety and usefulness. On November 6th, 1694, he married Esther Stoddard, daughter of the reverend and celebrated Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, in the 23rd year of her age. They lived together in the married state above sixty-three years. Mrs. Edwards, our author's mother, was born June 2nd, 1672, and lived to about ninety years of age, (some years after her son,) a remarkable instance of the small decay of mental powers at so advanced an age. This venerable couple had eleven children; one son, the subject of these memoirs, and ten daughters, four of whom were older, and six younger, than himself. From the highly spiritual character and intellectual attainments of his parents, it might naturally be expected that his early education would be attended with no common advantages; this was the fact. Many were the prayers presented by parental affection that this only and beloved son might be filled with the Holy Spirit; from a child know the Holy Scriptures; and be great in the sight of the Lord. They who thus fervently and constantly commended him to God, manifested equal diligence in training him up for God. Prayer excited to exertion, and exertion again was encouraged by prayer. The domestic circle was a scene of supplication, and it was a scene of instruction. In the abode of such exemplary servants of God, instruction abounded; that which the eye saw, as well as that which the ear heard, formed a lesson. There was nothing in the example of those who taught to diminish the force of instruction; there was nothing in social habits which counteracted the lessons of wisdom, and infused those principles which in after-years produced the fruit of folly and sin. On the contrary, there was every thing to enlarge, to purify, and to elevate the heart, and at the same time to train the mind, to those exercises of thought from which alone eminent attainments can be expected. The faithful religious instructions of his parents "rendered him when a child familiarly conversant with God and Christ, with his own character and duty, with the way of salvation, and with the nature of that eternal life which, begun on earth, is perfected in heaven." Their prayers were not forgotten, and their efforts did not remain without effect. In the progress of childhood he was in several instances the subject of strong religious impressions. "This was particularly true some years before he went to college, during a powerful revival of religion in his father's congregation. He, and two other lads of his own age, who had the same feelings with himself, erected a booth in a very retired spot in a swamp, for an oratory, and resorted to it regularly for social prayer. This continued for a long period; but the impressions ultimately disappeared, and in his own view, were followed by no permanent effects of a salutary nature." The precise period when he regarded himself as entering on a religious life he no where mentions, nor has any record been found of the time when he made a publick profession of religion. Even the church with which he became connected would not certainly be known, were it not that on one occasion he alludes to himself as a member of the church in East Windsor. From various circumstances, it seems that the time of his uniting himself to it was not far from the time of his leaving college. Of the views and feelings of his mind, on this most important subject, both before and after this event, there is a most satisfactory and instructive account which was found among his papers in his own hand-writing, and which was written near twenty years afterwards for his own private benefit. It is as follows:

"I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but I had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy some years before I went to college, [3] at a time of remarkable awakening in my

father’s congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul’s salvation; and was abundant in religious duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious conversation with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure, and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I, with some of my school-mates, joined together and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. [4] And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when I engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

"But, in progress of time, my convictions and affections wore off, and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant preference of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed, I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college, when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties, but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflection. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought it after a miserable manner which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation, in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued, and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper, to express that concern by the name of terror.

"From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life; and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God’s Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening whom he will. God’s absolute sovereignty and justice,

with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceedingly pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

"The first instance, that I remember, of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Timothy 1:17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven; and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and as it were singing, over these words of Scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him; and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do, with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature, in this.

"From about that time I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward, sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these subjects. Those words Song of Solomon 2:1 used to be abundantly with me, I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. The words seemed to me sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me, and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found from time to time an inward sweetness, that would carry me away in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning my heart, an ardour of soul, that I know not how to express.

"Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking upon the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God, as I know not how to express.--I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together: it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

"After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity, and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for a long time; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things: in the mean time singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning: formerly nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, if I may so speak, at the first appearance of a thunderstorm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunders, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural for me to sing or chant forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

"I felt then great satisfaction as to my good estate; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, wherewith my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the psalmist, Psalms 119:28. My soul breaketh for the longing it hath. I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceedingly different kind from those before mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what then I had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colours. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating, and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there was in them. My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, till I went to preach at New York; which was about a year and a half after they began: and while I was there I felt them very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly, Christianity appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be, in every thing, a complete Christian; and conformed to the blessed image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife, day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should be more holy, and live more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely

ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength; which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there was in my heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more holiness and conformity to Christ.

"The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within I could not express as I desired. The inward ardour of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

"I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, `I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes.' It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness--a divine beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement in comparison of it.

"Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature-holiness that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this--to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be all, that I might become as a little child.

"While at New York, I sometimes was much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then: and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

"On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had, to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how

much I have failed of answering my obligation.

"I had, then, abundance of sweet religious conversation, in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith, and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayers used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favourable aspect on the interests of Christ's kingdom, my soul eagerly catched at it, and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news-letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favourable to the interest of religion in the world.

"I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place on the banks of Hudson's river, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the Holy Scriptures of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food communicated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

"I came away from New York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me, at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Wethersfield by water; and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night, after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at West Chester, where we went ashore to lodge: and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept the sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season walking alone in the fields.

"After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind as when at New York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how secretly will the mutual lovers join together, to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease, but will last to all eternity!"

Thus deep, decided, and powerful were the operations of divine grace upon the mind of this eminent servant of Christ. That his understanding was much enlightened in the things of God, and

his heart deeply affected by them, are circumstances which will immediately strike the attention of every serious observer. There was in him a holy anxiety to obtain the most satisfactory testimony to a change of heart: for this purpose he closely and diligently examined himself; he had no inclination to shun this self-inquiry. Personal examination seems to have been considered by him as a pleasing as well as a momentous exercise. Many professors revolt at the thought of such inward survey; they content themselves with looking (and that hastily) at external matters, but they will not look within, though this neglect be at the peril of eternal good. The feelings with which men regard the duty of personal examination, may justly be viewed as an accurate criterion of their spiritual state, for in proportion to their concern for eternity, will be their disposition to try themselves; or in other words, in the same measure in which grace exists, will there be a desire of fully ascertaining its existence and progress. Upon a review of the statement given by Mr. Edwards as to his early religious experience, it is evident that he was not one who could satisfy himself upon any insufficient grounds: not a symptom of carelessness or of presumption can be discerned; he looked upon himself with a holy jealousy; he thought, he read, he conversed, and above all he prayed, that he might be enabled more accurately to search his own heart, and thus escape the danger of self-deception, and be convinced by proofs which would stand the test of the judgment of God, that he was a child of light, a subject of holiness, and an heir of glory. And thus studying himself under the penetrating light of the word, and the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, he acquired that exact knowledge of the various inward exercises and outward displays of the christian character, which enabled him in after-years, with such skill, to separate delusive appearances from those which are solid, and to mark the strong difference between the mere professor of the name of Christ, and the actual partaker of the power of the gospel. It was in these early years of his life that those correct views were formed which afterwards expanded in his admirable treatise on Religious Affections.

_____ [1] Life prefixed to the American edition of the Works of Jonathan Edwards, 1830.

[2] Appendix. No. I.

[3] As he entered college at twelve years of age, this was probably when he was sever or eight.

[4] The place where the booth was built is known at East Windsor

06.02. CHAPTER II.

CHAPTER II.

INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS--EARLIEST PRODUCTIONS--ENTRANCE AT COLLEGE--MENTAL HABITS. A Statement has been given principally from the pen of Mr. Edwards himself of his religious views in youth, and it will be proper before that subject be resumed, to advert to his intellectual progress at the same period. It is delightful to contemplate the simultaneous advancement of knowledge in the mind and of piety in the heart None can reasonably imagine that there is an opposition between these things; and all whose minds are open to conviction will be persuaded, that the growth of piety is most conducive to the increase of the best treasures of earthly wisdom. Religion strengthens the powers of man; it never enfeebles them. It at once cuts off those guilty pleasures, and those unworthy pursuits, which not merely impede the progress of the understanding, but in many cases are absolutely fatal to its energies; and it forms those mental habits, as well as produces that outward propriety of conduct, which are most favourable to the cultivation of man’s noblest faculties. It would be easy to record a lengthened list of names enrolled with never-fading honour, both in the schools of science, and in the church of God. The gospel of Christ has uniformly been the friend of solid learning, nor are those persons the judicious friends of the gospel, who are disposed to disparage the exertions and acquirements of intellect. The christian church dreads the veil of darkness, but it rejoices in the light. The same parental kindness and wisdom, which, under God, guided the mind of Jonathan Edwards to the knowledge and love of things eternal, were also much discovered in the direction of his powers to useful objects of earthly science. When only six years of age, the study of the Latin language engaged his attention under the care of his father, and occasionally that of his elder sisters. No account is preserved of his progress in his studies at that early period, but his high standing as a scholar on his admission to college, as well as afterwards, and his thorough knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, prove at once his own diligence as a student at this time, and the accuracy and fidelity of his father’s instructions.

"From his remaining manuscripts, it is evident that his father’s family were fond of the use of the pen, and that he and his sisters were early encouraged by their parents to make attempts, not only in letter writing, but in other species of composition. This course, though rarely pursued with children, is eminently advantageous; and in the case before us, was obviously followed by the best results. While it increased the mutual affection of the brother and the sisters, it also served to strengthen their minds, and to impart exactness both of thought and expression. The earliest effort of his pen appears to have been written on the following occasion. Some one in the vicinity, probably an older boy than himself, had advanced the opinion, that the soul was material, and remained with the body till the resurrection; and had endeavoured to convince him of its correctness. Struck with the absurdity of the notion, he sat down and wrote the following reply; which, as a specimen both of wit and reasoning in a child of about ten years of age, may fairly claim to be preserved. It is without date, and without pointing, or any division into sentences; and has every appearance of having been written by a boy just after he had learned to write.

"I am informed that you have advanced a notion, that the soul is material, and attends the body till the resurrection; as I am a professed lover of novelty, you must imagine I am very much entertained by this discovery; (which, however old in some parts of the world, is new to us;) but suffer my curiosity a little further. I would know the manner of the kingdom before I swear allegiance: 1st, I would know whether this material soul keeps with (the body) in the coffin, and if so, whether it might not be convenient to build a repository for it; in order to which I would know what shape it is of, whether round, triangular, or four-square; or whether it is a number of long fine strings reaching from the head to the foot; and whether it does not live a very discontented life. I am afraid when the coffin gives way, the earth will fall in and crush it; but if it should choose to live above-ground, and hover about the grave, how big is it?--whether it covers all the body; what it does when another body is laid upon it: whether the first gives way; and if so where is the place of retreat. But suppose that souls are not so big but that ten or a dozen of them may be about one body; whether they will not quarrel for the highest place; and, as I insist much upon my honour and property, I would know whether I must quit my dear head, if a superior soul comes in the way: but above all, I am concerned to know what they do, where a burying-place has been filled twenty, thirty, or an hundred times. If they are a-top of one another, the uppermost will be so far off, that it can take no care of the body. I strongly suspect they must march off every time there comes a new set. I hope there is some other place provided for them but dust. The undergoing so much hardship, and being deprived of the body at last, will make them ill-tempered. I leave it with your physical genius to determine, whether some medicinal applications might not be proper in such cases, and subscribe your proselyte, when I can have solution of these matters." The following letter to one of his sisters, written at twelve years of age, is the earliest dated effort of his pen which has been discovered.

"To Miss Mary Edwards, at Hadley.

"Windsor, May 10, 1716.

"Dear sister,

"Through the wonderful goodness and mercy of God, there has been in this place a very remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God. It still continues, but I think I have reason to think is in some measure diminished, yet I hope not much. Three have joined the church since you last heard; five now stand propounded for admission; and I think above thirty persons come commonly on Mondays to converse with father about the condition of their souls. It is a time of general health here. Abigail, Hannah, and Lucy have had the chicken pox and are recovered. Jerusha is almost well. Except her, the whole family is well.

"Sister, I am glad to hear of your welfare so often as I do, I should be glad to hear from you by letter, and therein how it is with you as to your crookedness.

"Your loving brother, "jonathan e."

He was educated, until he entered college, at home, and under his father’s personal instruction; while his older sisters were daily pursuing their respective branches of study in his immediate presence. Their father having been distinguished as a scholar, was able to give them, and actually gave them, a superior education. In all their various pursuits, the mind of their brother, as it opened, would of course be more and more interested; and thus at length he would easily and

insensibly acquire a mass of information far beyond his years. The course of his education may in this way have been less systematic, indeed, and less conformed to rule, than that ordinarily given in the school. At the same time it was more safe; forming him to softer manners, gentler feelings, and purer affections. In his circumstances, also, it was obviously more comprehensive and universal; and while it brought him acquainted with many things which are not usually communicated until a later period, it also served to unfold the original traits of his mind, and to give it that expansion, which is the result of information alone. One characteristic, of which he has not generally been suspected, but which he possessed in an unusual degree, was a fondness minutely and critically to investigate the works of nature. This propensity was not only discovered in youth and manhood, but was fully developed in childhood, and at that early period was encouraged and cherished by the fostering hand of parental care.

He entered Yale college in New-Haven, in September, 1716, before he was thirteen years of age. The college was then in its infancy, and various untoward circumstances had greatly impeded its growth. It was first planted at Saybrook, and then partially removed to Kenilworth, to the house of its first rector, until his death in 1707. From that time the Rev. Mr. Andrews, of Milford, one of the trustees, was rector pro tempore, upwards of twelve years; and the location of the college was a constant theme of contention between the towns of New-Haven, Saybrook, Wethersfield, and Hartford, until 1716; when the vote of the trustees, the donation of Mr. Yale, and the vote of the legislature of the colony, fixed it permanently at New-Haven. In the collegiate year 1716-1717, thirteen of the students resided at New-Haven, fourteen at Wethersfield, and four at Saybrook. The temporary presidency of Mr. Andrews continued until 1719; and as he was the acting minister of Milford, his oversight of the college, and his influence over the students, must of course have been exceedingly imperfect. The government of the institution, virtually and necessarily, was chiefly in the hands of the tutors: who, as young men without experience and a knowledge of mankind, could not usually be found qualified for so difficult a trust. Some time in the year 1717, the extreme unpopularity of one of the tutors occasioned a general insurrection of the students, who were at New-Haven, against the government of the college: and in one body they withdrew from New-Haven, and joined their companions at Wethersfield. At the commencement in that year, eight of the senior class returned to New-Haven, to receive their degrees of the regular college government; while five received theirs irregularly at Wethersfield. There is no evidence that Jonathan Edwards took part in these disturbances. He went however with his companions to Wethersfield, and continued there until 1719. While there, he gained a high character and standing in his class. His father, writing to one of his daughters, under date of Jan. 27, 1718, says, "I have not heard but that your brother Jonathan is also well. He has a very good name at Wethersfield, both as to his carriage and his learning." While at Wethersfield, he wrote to one of his sisters the following letter; which, as it is a document relating to an interesting event in the history of the college, may not improperly be preserved.

"To Miss Mary Edwards at Northampton.

"Wethersfield, March 26, 1719 "dear sister,

"Of all the many sisters I have, I think I never had one so long out of my hearing as yourself; inasmuch as I cannot remember, that I ever heard one tittle from you, from the time you last went up the country, until the last week, by Mr. B. who then came from Northampton. When he came in,

I truly rejoiced to see him, because I fully expected to receive a letter from you by him. But being disappointed, and that not a little, I was willing to make that, which I hoped would be an opportunity of receiving, the same of sending. For I thought it was a pity, that there should not be the least correspondence between us, or communication from one to another, when at no farther distance. I hope also that this may be a means of exciting the same in yourself; and so, having more charity for you than to believe that I am quite out of your mind, or that you are not at all concerned for me, I think it fit that I should give you some account of my condition, relative to the school. I suppose you are fully acquainted with our coming away from New-Haven, and the circumstances of it. Since then we have been in a more prosperous condition, as I think, than ever. But the council and trustees, having lately had a meeting at New-Haven concerning it, have removed that which was the cause of our coming away, viz. Mr. Johnson, from the place of a tutor, and have put in Mr. Cutler, pastor of Canterbury, president; who, as we hear, intends very speedily to be resident at Yale college, so that all the scholars belonging to our school expect to return there, as soon as our vacancy after the election is over.

"I am your loving brother in good health, "jonathan edwards."

While a member of college, he was distinguished for the uniform sobriety and correctness of his behaviour, for diligent application to his studies, and for rapid and thorough attainments in learning. In the second year of his collegiate course, while at Wethersfield, he read Locke on the Human Understanding, with peculiar pleasure. The uncommon strength and penetration of his mind, which admirably qualified him for profound thought and metaphysical investigation, began to be discovered and exerted even at this early age. From his own account of the subject, he was inexpressibly entertained and delighted with that profound work, when he read it at the age of fourteen, enjoying a far higher pleasure in the perusal of its pages, "than the most greedy miser finds, when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold, from some newly discovered treasure." To studies of this class he from that time devoted himself, as to those in which he felt the most intense interest. Still, however, he applied himself, with so much diligence and success, to the performance of his assigned duties, as to sustain the first standing in his class, and to secure the highest approbation of his instructors.

Mr. Cutler went to New-Haven early in June 1719, at the opening of the summer term, to enter on the duties of his office as rector; and the students, among whom was Jonathan Edwards, returned to the college. The following letter from the rector to his father, will show the character which he had acquired while at Wethersfield, and the trying circumstances of the college.

"New-Haven, June 30, 1719.

"rev. sir,

"Your letter came to my hands by your son. I congratulate you upon his promising abilities and advances in learning. He is now under my care, and probably may continue so, and doubtless will so do if he should remain here, and I be settled in the business I am now in. I can assure, Rev. Sir, that your good affection to me in this affair, and that of the ministers around you, is no small inducement to me; and if I am prevailed on thereby, it shall be a strong motive to me to improve my poor abilities, in the service of such hopeful youths as are with us. They may suffer much from my weakness, but they shall not from my neglect. I am no party man, but shall carry it, with an

equal hand and affection, to the whole college; and I doubt not, but the difficulty and importance of the business will secure me your prayers, and those of all good men, which I do much value and desire.

"I remain, under the earnest hope and expectation of your prayers, "Your humble servant "t. cutler." The following characteristical letter, written to his father in his third collegiate year, will not be uninteresting to the reader.

"To the Rev. Timothy Edwards, Pastor of the Church at East Windsor.

"New-Haven, July 21, 1719.

"ever honoured sir,

"I received, with two books, a letter from yourself, bearing the date of July 7th; and therein I received, with the greatest gratitude, your wholesome advice and counsel; and I hope I shall, God helping of me, use my utmost endeavours to put the same in practice. I am sensible of the preciousness of my time, and am resolved it shall not be through any neglect of mine, if it slips without the greatest advantage. I take very great content under my present tuition, as all the rest of the scholars seem to do under theirs. Mr. Cutler is extraordinarily courteous to us, has a very good spirit of government, keeps the school in excellent order, seems to increase in learning, is loved and respected by all who are under him; and when he is spoken of in the school or town, he generally has the title of President. The scholars all live in very good peace with the people of the town, and there is not a word said about our former carryings on, except now and then by aunt Mather. I have diligently searched into the circumstances of Stiles's examination, which was very short, and as far as I can understand, was to no other disadvantage than that he was examined in Tully's Orations; in which, though he had never construed before he came to New-Haven, yet he committed no error in that or any other book, whether Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, except in Virgil, wherein he could not tell the preteritum of requiesco. He is very well treated among the scholars, and accepted in the college as a member of it by every body, and also as a freshman; neither, as I think, is he inferior, as to learning, to any of his classmates. I have inquired of Mr. Cutler what books we shall have need of the next year. He answered, he would have me to get against that time, Alstead's Geometry and Gassendus's Astronomy; with which I would entreat you to get a pair of dividers, or mathematician's compasses, and a scale, which are absolutely necessary in order to learning mathematics; and also the Art of Thinking, which, I am persuaded, would be no less profitable, than the other necessary, to me who am "Your most dutiful son, "jonathan edwards."

"P. S. What we give a week for our board is £0 5s. d."

"The habits of study, which Edwards formed in very early youth, were not only strict and severe, and this in every branch of literature, but in one respect peculiar. Even while a boy, he began to study with his pen in his hand; not for the purpose of copying off the thoughts of others, but for the purpose of writing down, and preserving, the thought suggested to his own mind, from the course of study which he was pursuing. This most useful practice he commenced in several branches of study very early; and he steadily pursued it in all his studies through life. His pen appears to have been in a sense always in his hand. From this practice steadily persevered in, he derived the very great advantages of thinking continually during each period of study; of thinking accurately; of

thinking connectedly; of thinking habitually at all times; of banishing from his mind every subject, which was not worthy of continued and systematic thought; of pursuing each given subject of thought as far as he was able, at the happy moment when it opened spontaneously on his mind; of pursuing every such subject afterwards, in regular sequence, starting anew from the point where he had previously left off, when again it opened upon him in some new and interesting light; of preserving his best thoughts, associations, and images, and then arranging them under their proper heads, ready for subsequent use; of regularly strengthening the faculty of thinking and reasoning, by constant and powerful exercise; and above all, of gradually moulding himself into a thinking being--a being, who instead of regarding thinking and reasoning as labour, could find no high enjoyment but in intense, systematic, and certain thought. In this view of the subject, when we remember how few students comparatively, from want of this mental discipline, think at all; how few of those who think at all, think habitually; how few of those who think habitually, think to purpose; and how few of those who think to purpose, attain to the fulness of the measure of the stature, to which, as thinking beings, they might have attained; it will not I think be doubted, that the practice in question was the principal means of the ultimate development of his mental superiority." [5] _____

[5] For a specimen of the early papers of Jonathan Edwards, see Appendix, No. IV.

06.03. CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY RELIGIOUS PRODUCTIONS--"MISCELLANIES"--NOTES ON THE SCRIPTURES--COMMENCEMENT OF HIS PREACHING--RESOLUTIONS. A Conscientious regard to duty appeared greatly in the early as well as in the latter days of Jonathan Edwards. As a child, the spirit of love and obedience uniformly guided him; and as a pupil, he discovered every disposition honourable to himself, encouraging to those who anxiously watched over his progress, and which was justly considered as the earnest of uncommon attainments. The child, the youth, the man, all presented to view the same superior mind, in different degrees of advancement, but still alike indicative of the same general excellencies.

While at college, he paid a most assiduous and successful attention to his assigned duties, and particularly to the study of mental and physical philosophy; yet he still found time for pursuits of a more elevated and spiritual character. His whole education from early infancy, and the counsels of his parents, as well as his own feelings, prompted him to these pursuits. "To read the Bible daily, and to read it in connexion with other religious books, diligently and attentively, on the sabbath, was made, in the earlier days of New England, the habitual duty of every child; and his father’s family, though not inattentive to the due cultivation of mind and manners, had lost none of the strictness, or conscientiousness, which characterized the pilgrims. The books which he found in his father’s house, the conversation of ministers often resorting to the house, the custom of the times, as well as the more immediate influence of parental instruction and example, naturally prompted a mind like his to the early contemplation and investigation of many of the truths and principles of theology. He had also witnessed in his father’s congregation, before his admission to college, several extensive revivals of religion; and in two of them the impressions made on his own mind had been unusually deep and solemn. The name familiarly given by the plain people of New England to these events--"A religious attention," and " A general attention to religion"--indicates their nature; and those personally acquainted with them need not be informed, that during their progress, the great truths of religion, as taught in the Scriptures, and as explained in the writings of theologians, become the objects of general and intense interest, and of close practical study; or that the knowledge, acquired by a whole people at such a time, in a comparatively little period, often exceeds the acquisitions of many previous years. With all these things in view, it is not surprising, that, to these two kinds of reading, he devoted himself early, with great diligence and with great success."

Two of his early "Resolutions" relate to this subject, in which he proposes "to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same." He never lost sight of this resolution. On the 8th of June, 1723, he also proposes, whenever he finds himself in a dull, listless frame, to read over his own "Remarks and Reflections of a Religious Nature," in order to quicken him in his duty. These "Remarks and Reflections" were very numerous. The first manuscript of his "Miscellanies" is in folio, and consists

of forty-four sheets of foolscap, written separately, and stitched together. When he began the work, he had obviously no suspicion of the size to which it was to grow, nor had he formed his ultimate plan of arrangement. He headed his first article, "Of Holiness;" and having finished it, and drawn a line of separation across the page, he commenced the second, "Of Christ's mediation and satisfaction." The same is done with the third and fourth. The fifth he writes, without a line of separation, in larger letters, "Spiritual Happiness." After that the subject of each new article is printed, or written, in larger letters. His first article was written on the second page of a loose sheet of paper; and having written over the second, third, and fourth pages, he went back to the first. He began to number his articles by the letters of the alphabet, a, b, c, and having gone through, he commenced with a double alphabet, aa, bb, cc; when this was finished, finding his work enlarge, he took the regular Numbers 1:1-54; Numbers 2:1-34; Numbers 3:1-51, &c. and this plan, both as to subjects and numbers, is afterwards continued. The beginning of the work is written in a remarkably small round hand, nearly the same with that in which his earliest productions are written. This extends through about the first 150 articles, and is soon after perceptibly changed, into a hand somewhat more formed and flowing. These appear obviously to have been written during the last years of his college life, and the two years of his residence at college as Bachelor of Arts. Large extracts from this work will be found in the present edition of his Works, and a number of them from the earlier articles. Such are the Miscellaneous Observations, and the Miscellaneous Remarks, vol. ii. page 459. and the Miscellanies, page 525. In these will be found many of his most original and most profound thoughts and discussions on theological subjects.

"His regular and diligent study of the sacred Scriptures, led him early to discover, that they opened before him an almost boundless field of investigation and inquiry. Some passages he found to be incorrectly rendered; many were very obscure, and difficult in explanation; in many there were apparent inconsistencies and contradictions; many had been long employed, as proofs of doctrines and principles, to which they had no possible reference; the words and phrases, as well as the sentiments and narratives, on one part, he saw illustrated, and interpreted those of another. The Old Testament, in its language, history, doctrines, and worship, in its allusions to manners and customs, in its prophecies, types, and images, he perceived to be introductory and explanatory of the New; while the New, by presenting the full completion of the whole plan and design of their common Author, unfolded the real drift and bearing of every part of the Old. Regarding the sacred volume with the highest veneration, he appears to have resolved, while a member of college, that he would, as far as possible, possess himself, in every part of it which he read, of the true meaning of its Author. With this view he commenced his "Notes on the Scriptures;" obviously making it his standing rule, to study every passage which he read which presented the least difficulty to his own mind, or which he had known to be regarded as difficult by others, until such difficulty was satisfactorily removed. The result of his investigations he regularly, and at the time, committed to writing; at first in separate half-sheets, folded in 4to; but having found the inconvenience of this in his other juvenile writings, he soon formed small pamphlets of sheets, which were ultimately made into volumes. A few of the articles, to the number of about fifty, appear to have been written while he was in college; the rest, while preparing for the ministry, and during his subsequent life. That he had no suspicion when he began of the size to which the work would grow, is plain, and whether he afterwards formed the design of publishing it, as an illustration of the more difficult and obscure passages of the Bible, perhaps cannot be determined with certainty. A few of the articles of an historical or mythological nature, are marked as quotations from the writings of others, and are

omitted in the present edition of his Works. The reader, after perusing the work, will be satisfied that they are the fruit of his own investigations; and that his mode of removing difficulties was,--not as it too often is, by disguising or misstating them, but by giving them their full force, and meeting them with fair argument. Perhaps no collection of notes on the Scriptures so entirely original can be found. From the number prefixed to each article, it will be found easy to select those which were the result of his early labours. Such a plan of investigating and explaining the difficulties of the sacred volume, at so early a period of life, was probably never formed in any other instance, and evinces a maturity of intellectual and moral attainments, not often paralleled. Among the most interesting and able of these investigations, will be found the discussion of the sacrifice of the daughter of Jephtha, Judges 11:29; and that on the principle advanced by Paul, in Romans 8:28. That all things work together for good to them that love God; which as being contained in his letter to Mr. Gillespie, of Sept. 4, 1747, is omitted in the notes on the Scriptures." The class of which Edwards was a member, finished their regular collegiate course, in Sept. 1720, before he was seventeen years of age. At that period, and for a long time afterwards, the only exercise, except the Latin Theses, given at the public commencement, to the class of Bachelors, was the Salutatory, which was also a Valedictory, Oration in Latin. This exercise was awarded to Edwards, as sustaining the highest rank as a scholar among the members of the class.

He resided at college nearly two years after he took his first degree, preparing himself for the work of the ministry; after which, having passed the customary trials, he received a licence to preach: this was in the nineteenth year of his age. In consequence of an application from a number of ministers in New England, who were intrusted to act in behalf of the presbyterians in New York, he went to that city in the beginning of August, 1722, and preached there with great acceptance, about eight months. While there he found a most happy residence in the house of a Mrs. Smith; whom, as well as her son Mr. John Smith, he regarded as persons of uncommon piety and purity of life, and with whom he formed an intimate christian friendship. There also he found a considerable number of persons, among the members of that church, exhibiting the same character; with whom he enjoyed, in a high degree, all the pleasures and advantages of christian intercourse. His personal attachment to them became strong; and their interest in him as a man and a preacher was such, that they warmly solicited him to remain with them for life. To decline their candid invitation was most distressing to his feelings; but on account of the smallness of that congregation, and some peculiar difficulties which attended it, he did not think there was a rational prospect of usefulness and comfort. After a most painful parting with the kind friends, under whose hospitable roof he had so long and happily resided, he left the city on Friday, the 26th of April, by water, and reached his father’s house on Wednesday, the 1st of May. Here he spent the summer in close study, during which he was again earnestly requested, by the congregation in New York, to return to that city, and settle among them; but his former views were not altered; and therefore, though strongly inclined from his own feelings to gratify them, he could not comply with their wishes. Probably in no part of his life had he higher advantage for spiritual contemplation and enjoyment, than in the period first mentioned. He went to New York in a delightful frame of mind. He found there a little flock of Christ, constrained from a sense of their own weakness to "dwell together in unity," and to feel a practical sense of their dependence on God. He was in the midst of a family, whose daily influence served only to refresh and to sanctify. He had also much leisure for religious reading, meditation, and prayer. In these circumstances the presence of the Comforter appears to have been a daily reality; the evidence of which he found in that purity of heart which

enables its possessor to see God, in the peace which passeth all understanding, and the joy with which a stranger intermeddleth not.

During his preparation for the ministry, his residence in New York, and his subsequent residence in his father's house, he formed a series of resolutions, to the number of seventy, intended obviously for himself alone, to regulate his own heart and life, but fitted also, from their christian simplicity and spiritual-mindedness, to be eminently useful to others. Of these the first thirty-four [6] were written before Dec. 18, 1722, the time in which his Diary, as it now exists, commences. The particular time and occasion of making many of the rest, will be found in that most interesting narrative, in which also are many other rules and resolutions, intended for the regulation of his own affections, of perhaps equal excellence. It should be remembered they were all written before he was twenty years of age. As he was wholly averse to all profession and ostentation; and as these resolutions themselves were plainly intended for no other eye than his own, except the eye that is omniscient; they may be justly considered as the basis of his conduct and character, the plan by which he governed the secret as well as the publick actions of his life. As such they will deeply interest the reader, not only as they unfold the inmost mind of their author, but as they also show, in a manner most striking and convincing to the conscience, what is the true foundation of great and distinguished excellence.

He was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, even where the intentions are most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly, or from a reliance on his own strength. He therefore in the outset looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of the best means, and in the intended accomplishment of the best purposes. This he places at the head of all his other important rules, that his whole dependence was on the grace of God, while he still proposes to recur to a frequent and serious perusal of them, in order that they might become the habitual directory of his life.

RESOLUTIONS

"Being sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God's help, I do humbly entreat him, by his grace, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

Remember to read over these Resolutions once a week.

1. Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God, and my own good, profit, and pleasure, in the whole of my duration; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence. Resolved, to do whatever I think to be my duty, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general. Resolved, so to do, whatever difficulties I meet with, how many soever, and how great soever.

2. Resolved, To be continually endeavouring to find out some new contrivance and invention to promote the forementioned things.

3. Resolved, If ever I shall fall and grow dull, so as to neglect to keep any part of these Resolutions, to repent of all I can remember, when I come to myself again.

4. Resolved, Never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God, nor be, nor suffer it, if I can possibly avoid it.

5. Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly Song of Solomon 6:1-13. Resolved, To live with all my might, while I do live.

7. Resolved, Never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

8. Resolved, To act, in all respects, both speaking and doing, as if nobody had been so vile as I, and as if I had committed the same sins, or had the same infirmities or failings, as others; and that I will let the knowledge of their failings promote nothing but shame in myself, and prove only an occasion of my confessing my own sins and misery to God. Vid. July 30.

9. Resolved, To think much, on all occasions, of my dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

10. Resolved, when I feel pain, to think of the pains of martyrdom, and of hell.

11. Resolved, When I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.

12. Resolved, If I take delight in it as a gratification of pride, or vanity, or on any such account, immediately to throw it by.

13. Resolved, To be endeavouring to find out fit objects of liberality and charity.

14. Resolved, Never to do any thing out of revenge.

15. Resolved, Never to suffer the least motions of anger towards irrational beings.

16. Resolved, Never to speak evil of any one, so that it shall tend to his dishonour, more or less, upon no account except for some real good.

17. Resolved, That I will live so, as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, To live so, at all times, as I think is best in my most devout frames, and when I have the clearest notions of the things of the gospel, and another world.

19. Resolved, Never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do, if I expected it would not be above an hour before I should hear the last trump.

20. Resolved, To maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Resolved, Never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

22. Resolved, To endeavour to obtain for myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigour, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.

23. Resolved, Frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done, for the glory of God, and trace it back to the original intention, designs, and ends of it; and if I find it not to be for God’s glory, to repute it as a breach of the fourth Resolution.

24. Resolved, Whenever I do any conspicuously evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then, both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all

my might against the original of it.

25. Resolved, To examine carefully and constantly, what that one thing in me is, which causes me in the least to doubt of the love of God; and so direct all my forces against it.

26. Resolved, To cast away such things as I find do abate my assurance.

27. Resolved, Never wilfully to omit any thing, except the omission be for the glory of God; and frequently to examine my omissions.

28. Resolved, To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive, myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

29. Resolved, Never to count that a prayer, nor to let that pass as a prayer, nor that as a petition of a prayer, which is so made, that I cannot hope that God will answer it; nor that as a confession which I cannot hope God will accept.

30. Resolved, To strive every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

31. Resolved, Never to say any thing at all against any body, but when it is perfectly agreeable to the highest degree of christian honour, and of love to mankind, agreeable to the lowest humility, and sense of my own faults and failings, and agreeable to the golden rule; often, when I have said any thing against any one, to bring it to, and try it strictly by, the test of this Resolution.

32. Resolved, To be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that that, in Proverbs 20:6. `A faithful man, who can find?' may not be partly fulfilled in me.

33. Resolved, To do always what I can towards making, maintaining, and preserving peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects. Dec. 26, 1722.

34. Resolved, In narrations, never to speak any thing but the pure and simple verity.

35. Resolved, Whenever I so much question whether I have done my duty, as that my quiet and calm is thereby disturbed, to set it down, and also how the question was resolved. Dec. 18, 1722.

36. Resolved, Never to speak evil of any, except I have some particular good call to it. Dec. 19, 1722.

37. Resolved, To inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent,--what sin I have committed,--and wherein I have denied myself;--also, at the end of every week, month, and year. Dec. 22 and 26, 1722.

38. Resolved, Never to utter any thing that is sportive, or matter of laughter, on a Lord's day. Sabbath evening, Dec. 23, 1722.

39. Resolved, Never to do any thing, of which I so much question the lawfulness, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or not; unless I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

40. Resolved, To inquire every night before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the best way I possibly could, with respect to eating and drinking. Jan. 7, 1723.

41. Resolved, to ask myself, at the end of every day, week, month, and year, wherein I could possibly, in any respect, have done better. Jan. 11, 1723.

42. Resolved, Frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism, which I solemnly renewed when I was received into the communion of the church, and which I have solemnly re-made this 12th day of January, 1723.

43. Resolved, Never, henceforward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's; agreeably to what is to be found in Saturday, Jan. 12th. Jan. 12, 1723.

44. Resolved, That no other end but religion shall have any influence at all on any of my actions; and that no action shall be, in the least circumstance, any otherwise than the religious end will carry it. Jan. 12, 1723.

45. Resolved, Never to allow any pleasure or grief, joy or sorrow, nor any affection at all, nor any degree of affection, nor any circumstance relating to it, but what helps religion. Jan. 12 and 13, 1723.

46. Resolved, Never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved, to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it with respect to any of our family.

47. Resolved, To endeavour, to my utmost, to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented and easy, compassionate and generous, humble and meek, submissive and obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable and even, patient, moderate, forgiving, and sincere, temper; and to do, at all times, what such a temper would lead me to; and to examine strictly, at the end of every week, whether I have so done. Sabbath morning, May 5, 1723.

48. Resolved, Constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or not; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of. May 26, 1723.

49. Resolved, That this never shall be, if I can help it.

50. Resolved, That I will act so, as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world. July 5, 1723.

51. Resolved, That I will act so, in every respect, as I think I shall wish I had done, if I should at last be damned. July 8, 1723.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, That I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age. July 8, 1723.

53. Resolved, To improve every opportunity, when I am in the best and happiest frame of mind, to cast and venture my soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust and confide in him, and consecrate myself wholly to him; that from this I may have assurance of my safety, knowing that I confide in my Redeemer. July 8, 1723.

54. Resolved, Whenever I hear anything spoken in commendation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, that I will endeavour to imitate it. July 8, 1723.

55. Resolved, To endeavour, to my utmost, so to act, as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven and hell torments. July 8, 1723.

56. Resolved, Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken, my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, When I fear misfortunes and adversity, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it and let the event be just as Providence orders it. I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin. June 9, and July 13, 1723.

58. Resolved, Not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness, and anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness, and benignity. May 27, and July 13, 1723.

59. Resolved, When I am most conscious of provocations to ill nature and anger, that I will strive most to feel and act good-naturedly; yea, at such times, to manifest good nature, though I think that in other respects it would be disadvantageous, and so as would be imprudent at other times. May 12, July 11, and July 13.

60. Resolved, Whenever my feelings begin to appear in the least out of order, when I am conscious of the least uneasiness within, or the least irregularity without, I will then subject myself to the strictest examination. July 4 and 13, 1723.

61. Resolved, That I will not give way to that listlessness which I find unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on religion, whatever excuse I may have for it--that what my listlessness inclines me to do, is best to be done, &c. May 21, and July 13, 1723.

62. Resolved, Never to do any thing but my duty, and then, according to Ephesians 6:6-8 to do it willingly and cheerfully, as unto the Lord, and not to man: knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord. June 25, and July 13, 1723.

63. On the supposition, that there never was to be but one individual in the world, at any one time, who was properly a complete Christian, in all respects of a right stamp, having Christianity always shining in its true lustre, and appearing excellent and lovely, from whatever part and under whatever character viewed: Resolved, To act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, who should live in my time. Jan. 14, and July 13, 1723.

64. Resolved, When I find those "groanings which cannot be uttered," of which the apostle speaks, and those "breathings of soul for the longing it hath," of which the psalmist speaks, Psalms 119:20 that I will promote them to the utmost of my power; and that I will not be weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires, nor of the repetitions of such earnestness. July 23, and Aug. 10, 1723.

65. Resolved, Very much to exercise myself in this, all my life long, viz. with the greatest openness of which I am capable, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him, all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton’s Sermon on Psalms 119:1-176. July 26, and Aug. 10, 1723.

66. Resolved, That I will endeavour always to keep a benign aspect, and air of acting and speaking, in all places, and in all companies, except it should so happen that duty requires otherwise.

67. Resolved, After afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them; what good I have got by them; and, what I might have got by them.

68. Resolved, To confess frankly to myself, all that which I find in myself, either infirmity or sin; and, if it be what concerns religion, also to confess the whole case to God, and implore needed help. July 23, and August 10, 1723.

69. Resolved, Always to do that, which I shall wish I had done when I see others do it. Aug. 11, 1723.

70. Let there be something of benevolence in all that I speak. Aug. 17, 1723."

Such were the excellent Resolutions formed by Jonathan Edwards at an early period of life, and which in succeeding years were regarded by him, not as unimportant records, but as containing the great principles of the spiritual life. A deep and extensive knowledge of the heart is manifest in these Resolutions, a conviction of its defects, a lively apprehension of its dangers, and an intense concern that all its tendencies should be towards God, and towards every thing required by his holy will. There is a remarkable tenderness of conscience discovered in every particular which has been stated. The man who could thus write, was not one who could easily trifle with sin, or who could enter any of its paths without the immediate reproofs of an offended conscience. This holy man trembled even at the distant view of sin; he could not willingly come near and survey its enticements. Accustomed to breathe in a holy atmosphere, the least taint of corruption immediately affected his spiritual frame. He knew no happiness except that connected with a conscience void of offence. All these rules were the suggestions of a conscience of a highly enlightened character.--They also indicate a constant sense of the presence and exact observations of the Searcher of all hearts. The writer lived as seeing him who is invisible; he set the Lord always before him; encouraging upon all occasions an earnest concern for the glory of God, the grand object for which he desired to live both upon earth and in heaven, an object compared with which all other things seemed in his view but trifles. If this were attained, all his desires were satisfied; but if this were lost or imperfectly gained, his soul was filled with anguish. These Resolutions afford ample testimony how much the author had entered into the spirit of 1 Corinthians 10:31. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. They also illustrate his views of the importance of consistency of character. He was not content with accurate views of truth, or any kind of outward profession, apart from holy consistency of character. He studied, he admired, and he exhibited the influence of the gospel; a walk "worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called" was the elevated object at which he ardently aimed. He well knew that the followers of Christ are required "to hold forth the word of life," to shine as lights in the world, to instruct by their examples as well as by their words; and he desired to honour God by presenting to the view of the members of the spiritual kingdom, and also of the world, an example which might declare the reality and the beauty of religion. It is further manifest from these Resolutions, that his mind was most anxious for daily advancement in every branch of holiness. An active spiritual principle existed in him, which caused him to press forward, whatever might be the obstacles in his way. He could not be contented while one sin remained in him, while one

grace was defective, or a single duty engaged in but imperfectly. He longed for the holy perfection of the heavenly world, and anticipated with joy that day when he should awake with the Divine likeness. It cannot be a matter of surprise, that with these sentiments and feelings he attained an exaltation of character seldom equalled and perhaps never surpassed. The Resolutions which have given rise to these reflections are probably, "to persons of every age, but especially to the young, the best uninspired summary of christian duty, the best directory to high attainment in evangelical virtue, which the mind of man has hitherto been able to form." They disclose the writer's own character, and they are admirably calculated to improve the character of every reader who fears to sin, and rejoices in the purity of the Divine will.

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[6] The first twenty-one were written at once; as were the next ten, at a subsequent sitting. The rest were written occasionally. They are all on two detached pieces of paper.

06.04. CHAPTER IV.

CHAPTER IV. HIS DIARY. The views and practices of men of equal excellence have differed considerably in regard to the keeping of a diary. Many have never attempted it; some who at one period of life commenced it have afterwards from various causes declined it; and others have steadily adhered to a custom which certainly has the sanction of some of the most eminent names in the church of God. It is at once admitted that many diaries have been kept in the most injudicious manner, and it is still more an object of deep regret that these records have in some instances been published, not merely to the grief of serious and intelligent minds, but to the injury of religion itself, and the exciting a prejudice against all similar records. There are, however, some published journals of excellent men which evince so much solid judgment as well as fervent piety, and have been the sources of so much usefulness, that a more than equal balance is presented against works in part of an opposite description. No one is disposed to lament the publication of parts of the Diaries of Philip and Matthew Henry, Brainerd, Doddridge, or Joseph Williams and some others; writings which illustrate the inward and outward power of godliness, reflect honour upon the individuals themselves, and yield a powerful and holy stimulus to the minds of other Christians. The Diary of Jonathan Edwards corresponds in its excellencies with those to which reference is thus made, and will be perused with the same feelings, and lead it is hoped to the like beneficial effects.--This Diary begins Dec. 18, 1722, when he was nineteen years of age. As far as to Jan. 15th, at night, it is written on two detached slips of paper; and the remainder in a book. [7] As it commences abruptly, and as near as possible to the top of that paper, the beginning of it is undoubtedly lost; and it is not improbable, that, as he originally wrote it, it may have reached back, at least to the period of his preparation for the ministry. It was intended, as will at once be perceived, for his own private use exclusively; and had it been with him at the close of life, it is not unlikely it might have been destroyed. "Still, whatever is calculated to do good, and is perfectly consistent with an author’s real reputation, may be published with honour, whatever his design might be while writing. The best of men, indeed, have thoughts, and opinions, and feelings, which are perfectly proper and right in themselves, which yet it would be wholly improper for them to disclose to others. But a man of sound discretion will take care that nothing of this nature is placed within the reach of accident. What Mr. Edwards wished to have concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in short hand; and on one occasion, after having written to a considerable extent in that character, he adds this remark in his customary hand, `Remember to act according to Proverbs 12:23. A prudent man concealeth knowledge.’

[8] "The reader, while perusing the Diary in its various parts, will be struck with it as possessing the following characteristics. It consists of facts; and of solid thought, dictated by deep religious feeling; and not of the mere expressions of feeling, or of common-place moral reflections or exhortations. It was intended for his own eyes exclusively; and not chiefly for those of his friends and of the public. It is an exhibition of the simple thinking, feeling, and acting of a man, who is unconscious how he appears, except to himself and to God; and not the remarks of one, who is desirous of being thought humble, respecting his own humility. If we suppose a man of christian

simplicity and godly sincerity to bring all the secret movements of his own soul under the clear, strong light of heaven, and there to survey them with a piercing and an honest eye, and a contrite heart, in order to humble himself, and make himself better; it is just the account which such a man would write." diary.--December, 1722

"Dec. 18. This day made the 35th Resolution. The reason why I in the least question my interest in God's love and favour, Isaiah,--1. Because I cannot speak so fully to my experience of that preparatory work, of which divines speak:--2. I do not remember that I experienced regeneration, exactly in those steps, in which divines say it is generally wrought:--3. I do not feel the christian graces sensibly enough, particularly faith. I fear they are only such hypocritical outside affections, which wicked men may feel as well as others. They do not seem to be sufficiently inward, full, sincere, entire, and hearty. They do not seem so substantial, and so wrought into my very nature, as I could wish.--4. Because I am sometimes guilty of sins of omission and commission. Lately I have doubted, whether I do not transgress in evil speaking. This day, resolved, No.

Dec. 19. This day made the 36th Resolution. Lately I have been very much perplexed, by seeing the doctrine of different degrees in glory questioned; but now have almost got over the difficulty.

Dec. 20. This day somewhat questioned, whether I had not been guilty of negligence yesterday, and this morning; but resolved, No.

Dec. 21, Friday. This day and yesterday, I was exceedingly dull, dry, and dead.

Dec. 22, Saturday. This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit; affected with the sense of the excellency of holiness; felt more exercise of love to Christ, than usual. Have, also, felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night made the 37th Resolution.

Sabbath night, Dec. 23. Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, Dec. 24. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ and his kingdom.--Concluded to observe, at the end of every month, the number of breaches of resolutions, to see whether they increase or diminish, to begin from this day, and to compute from that the weekly account my monthly increase, and out of the whole, my yearly increase, beginning from new-year days.

Wednesday, Dec. 26. Early in the morning yesterday, was hindered by the head-ache all day; though I hope I did not lose much. Made an addition to the 37th Resolution, concerning weeks, months, and years.--At night. Made the 33d Resolution.

Saturday, Dec. 29. About sunset this day, dull and lifeless.

1722-23, Tuesday, Jan. 1. Have been dull for several days. Examined whether I have not been guilty of negligence to-day; and resolved, No.

Wednesday, Jan. 2. Dull. I find, by experience, that, let me make resolutions, and do what I will, with never so many inventions, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God; for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow, but should languish, and miserably fade away. I

perceive, if God should withdraw his Spirit a little more, I should not hesitate to break my resolutions, and should soon arrive at my old state. There is no dependence on myself. Our resolutions may be at the highest one day, and yet, the next day, we may be in a miserable dead condition, not at all like the same person who resolved. So that it is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God. For, if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next. I find also by experience, that there is no guessing out the ends of Providence, in particular dispensations towards me--any otherwise than as afflictions come as corrections for sin, and God intends when we meet with them, to desire us to look back on our ways, and see wherein we have done amiss, and lament that particular sin, and all our sins, before him:--knowing this, also, that all things shall work together for our good; not knowing in what way, indeed, but trusting in God.

Saturday evening, Jan. 5. A little redeemed from a long dreadful dulness, about reading the Scriptures. This week, have been unhappily low in the weekly account:--and what are the reasons of it?--abundance of listlessness and sloth; and if this should continue much longer, I perceive that other sins will begin to discover themselves. It used to appear to me, that I had not much sin remaining; but now, I perceive that there are great remainders of sin. Where may it not bring me to, if God should leave me? Sin is not enough mortified. Without the influences of the Spirit of God, the old serpent would begin to rouse up himself from his frozen state, and would come to life again. Resolved, that I have been negligent in two things:--in not striving enough in duty; and in not forcing myself upon religious thoughts.

Sabbath, Jan. 6. At night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, and even to weary myself thereby as long as I am in this world, and never to expect or desire any worldly ease or pleasure.

Monday, Jan. 7. At night, made the 40th Resolution.

Tuesday, Jan. 8. In the morning, had higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance of sin therefrom.

Wednesday, Jan. 9. At night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, that I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I find now and then that abominable corruption, which is directly contrary to what I read of eminent Christians. I do not seem to be half so careful to improve time, to do every thing quick, and in as short a time as I possibly can, nor to be perpetually engaged to think about religion, as I was yesterday and the day before, nor indeed as I have been at certain times, perhaps a twelvemonth ago. If my resolutions of that nature, from that time, had always been kept alive and awake, how much better might I have been than I now am! How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon doth it weaken!

Thursday, Jan. 10. About noon. Recovering. It is a great dishonour to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition; or when I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them, the world is smooth to them, and they are very happy in many respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honour; to grudge them their prosperity, or envy them on account of it, or to be in the least uneasy at it, to wish and long for the same prosperity, and to desire that is should ever be so with me. Wherefore, concluded always to rejoice in every one’s prosperity, and not to pretend to expect or desire it for myself; and to expect

no happiness of that nature, as long as I live; but to depend on afflictions, and to betake myself entirely to another happiness.--I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous, every morning to consider my business and temptations, and the sins to which I shall be exposed on that day, and to make a resolution how to improve the day, and avoid those sins; and so at the beginning of every week, month, and year. I never knew before what was meant, by not setting our hearts on those things. It is, not to care about them, nor to depend upon them, nor to afflict ourselves with the fear of losing them, nor to please ourselves with the expectation of obtaining them, or with the hopes of their continuance.--At night. Made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, Jan. 12. In the morning. I have, this day, solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was taken into the communion of the church. I have been before God, and have given myself, all that I am and have, to God; so that I am not, in any respect, my own. I can challenge no right in this understanding, this will, these affections, which are in me. Neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members--no right to this tongue, these hands, these feet; no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell, or this taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I gave myself to God in my baptism, and I have been this morning to him, and told him, that I gave myself wholly to him. I have given every power to him; so that, for the future, I'll challenge no right in myself, in no respect whatever. I have expressly promised him, and I do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law, for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life; and that I did believe in Jesus Christ, and did receive him as a Prince and Saviour; and that I would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, however hazardous and difficult the confession and practice of it may be; and that I did receive the blessed Spirit as my Teacher, Sanctifier, and only Comforter, and cherish all his motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This, I have done; and I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication, and to receive me now as entirely his own, and to deal with me, in all respects, as such, whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth, I am not to act, in any respect, as my own.--I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, and do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business:--if I murmur in the least at affliction; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am in any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge them; if I do any thing purely to please myself, or if I avoid any thing for the sake of my own ease; if I omit any thing because it is great self-denial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of the good that I do, or that God doth by me; or if I am in any way proud. This day, made the 42nd and 43rd Resolutions.--Whether or no, any other end ought to have any influence at all on any of my actions; or whether any action ought to be any otherwise, in any respect, than it would be, if nothing else but religion had the least influence on my mind. Wherefore I make the 44th Resolution.

Query: Whether any delight or satisfaction ought to be allowed, because any other end is obtained beside a religious one.--In the afternoon. I answer, Yes, because, if we should never suffer ourselves to rejoice, but because we have obtained a religious end, we should never rejoice at the

sight of friends, we should not allow ourselves any pleasure in our food, whereby the animal spirits would be withdrawn, and good digestion hindered. But the query is to be answered thus:--We never ought to allow any joy or sorrow, but what helps religion. Wherefore, I make the 45th Resolution. The reason why I so soon grow lifeless, and unfit for the business I am about, I have found out, is only because I have been used to suffer myself to leave off, for the sake of ease, and so I have acquired a habit of expecting ease; and therefore, when I think I have exercised myself a great while, I cannot keep myself to it any longer, because I expect to be released, as my due and right. And then I am deceived, as if I were really tired and weary, whereas, if I did not expect ease, and was resolved to occupy myself by business as much as I could, I should continue with the same vigour at my business, without vacation time to rest. Thus I have found it in reading the Scriptures; and thus I have found it in prayer; and thus I believe it to be in getting sermons by heart, and in other things. At night. This week, the weekly account rose higher than ordinary. It is suggested to me, that too constant a mortification, and too vigorous application to religion, may be prejudicial to health; but nevertheless, I will plainly feel it and experience it, before I cease on this account. It is no matter how much tired and weary I am, if my health is not impaired.

Sabbath day, Jan. 13. I plainly feel, that if I should continue to go on, as from the beginning of the last week hitherto, I should continually grow and increase in grace. After the afternoon meeting, made an addition to the 45th Resolution.--At noon. I remember I thought that I loved to be a member of Christ, and not any thing distinct, but only a part, so as to have no separate interest or pleasure of my own.--At night. Resolved to endeavour fully to understand 1 Corinthians 7:29-32 and to act according to it.

Monday, Jan. 14. About 10 o'clock in the morning made this book, and put these papers in it. [9] The dedication, which I made of myself to God on Saturday last, has been exceedingly useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the Scriptures, when reading the Romans 8:1-39, than ever before.--At night. Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin; hard blows, which make him stagger and reel. We thereby get strong ground and footing against him, he is the weaker ever after, and we have easier work with him the next time. He grows cowardly; and we can easily cause him to give way, until at length we find it easy work with him, and can kill him at pleasure. While we live without great instances of mortification and self-denial, the old man keeps about where he was; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. This, without doubt, is one great reason why many Christians do not sensibly increase in grace. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Wrote the 63rd Resolution. Such little things as Christians commonly do, will not evince much increase of grace. We must do great things for God.--It will be best, when I find that I have lost any former ancient good motions or actions, to take notice of it, if I can remember them.

Tuesday, Jan. 15. About two or three o'clock. I have been all this time decaying. It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height. But alas! how soon do I decay! O how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing of myself! What a poor inconsistent being! What a miserable wretch, without the assistance of the Spirit of God! While I stand, I am ready to think that I stand by my own strength, and upon my own legs; and I am ready to triumph over my spiritual enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee:--when alas! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me. And so I laugh, as though

I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself! O let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ! The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?--The occasion of my decaying, is a little melancholy. My spirits are depressed, because I fear that I lost some friendship the last night; and, my spirits being depressed, my resolutions have lost their strength. I differ to-day from yesterday in these things: I do not resolve anything to-day half so strongly. I am not so perpetually thinking of renewing my resolutions as I was then. I am not half so vigorous as I was then; nor am I half so careful to do every thing with vigour. Then, I kept continually acting; but now, I do things slowly, and satisfy myself by thinking of religion in the mean time. I am not so careful to go from one business to another.--I felt humiliation about sun-set. What shall I do, in order that I may, with a good grace, fall into christian discourse and conversation?--At night. The next time I am in such a lifeless frame, I will force myself to go rapidly from one thing to another, and to do those things with vigour, in which vigour would ever be useful. The things which take off my mind, when bent on religion, are commonly some remarkable change or alteration--journeys, change of place, change of business, change of studies, and change of other circumstances; or something that makes me melancholy; or some sin.

Thursday, Jan. 17. About three o’clock, overwhelmed with melancholy.

Friday, Jan. 18. At night. Beginning to endeavour to recover out of the death I have been in for these several days.

Sabbath day, Jan. 20. At night. The last week I was sunk so low, that I fear it will be a long time before I am recovered. I fell exceedingly low in the weekly account. I find my heart so deceitful, that I am almost discouraged from making any more resolutions.--Wherein have I been negligent in the week past; and how could I have done better, to help the dreadful low estate in which I am sunk?

Monday, Jan. 21 Before sunrise, answered the preceding questions thus: I ought to have spent my time in bewailing my sins, and in singing psalms--especially psalms or hymns of penitence; these duties being most suited to the frame I was in. I do not spend time enough in endeavouring to affect myself with the glories of Christianity.--Fell short in the monthly account. It seems to me, that I am fallen from my former sense of the pleasantness of religion.

Tuesday, Feb. 5. At night. I have thought that this being so exceedingly careful, and so particularly anxious, to force myself to think of religion at all times, has exceedingly distracted my mind, and made me altogether unfit for that and every thing else. I have thought that this caused the dreadful low condition I was in on the 15th of January. I think that I stretched myself further than I could bear, and so broke.--But now it seems to me, though I know not why, that I do not do enough to prepare for another world. I do not seem to press forward, to fight and wrestle, as the apostles used to speak. I do not seem so greatly and constantly to mortify and deny myself, as the mortification of which they speak represents. Therefore, wherein ought I to do more in this way?--I answer: I am again grown too careless about eating, drinking, and sleeping--not careful enough about evil-speaking.

Saturday, Feb. 16. I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel prescribes.--At night. For the time past of my life, I have been negligent, in that I have not sufficiently kept up that part of divine worship. singing the praise of God in secret and with company.--I have been negligent this month past, in these three things: I have not been watchful enough over my appetites, in eating and drinking; in rising too late in the morning; and in not applying myself with sufficient application to the duty of secret prayer.

Sabbath day, Feb. 17. Near sunset. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God for my whole portion, and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever prosperity upon any account I see others enjoy and I am denied. To this I have lately acted contrary.

Thursday, Feb. 21. I perceive that I never yet have adequately known what was meant by being weaned from the world, by not laying up treasure on earth, but in heaven, by not having our portion in this life, by making the concerns of another life our whole business, by taking God for our whole portion. I find my heart in great part yet adheres to the earth. O that it might be quite separated from thence. I find when I have power and reputation as others, I am uneasy, and it does not satisfy me to tell me, that I have chosen God for my whole portion, and that I have promised to rest entirely contented with him.

Saturday, Feb. 23. I find myself miserably negligent, and that I might do twice the business that I do, if I were set upon it. See how soon my thoughts of this matter will be differing from what they are now. I have been indulging a horrid laziness a good while, and did not know it. I can do seven times as much in the same time now, as I can at other times, not because my faculties are in better tune; but because of the fire of diligence that I feel burning within me. If I could but always continue so, I should not meet with one quarter of the trouble. I should run the christian race much better, and should go out of the world a much better man.

Saturday, March 2. O how much more base and vile am I, when I feel pride working in me, than when I am in a more humble disposition of mind! How much, how exceedingly much, more lovely is an humble than a proud disposition! I now plainly perceive it, and am really sensible of it. How immensely more pleasant is an humble delight, than a high thought of myself! How much better do I feel, when I am truly humbling myself, than when I am pleasing myself with my own perfections! O how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures of humility are really the most refined, inward, and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm, that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived poor worm am I, when pride works.--At night. I have lately been negligent as to reading the Scriptures. Notwithstanding my resolutions on Saturday was se'night, I have not been sedulous and diligent enough.

Wednesday, March 6. Near sunset. Regarded the doctrines of election, free grace, our inability to do any thing without the grace of God, and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of the Spirit of God, with greater pleasure than ever before.

Thursday, March 7. I think I now suffer from not forcing myself enough on religious thoughts.

Saturday night, March 24. I intend, if I am ever settled, to concert measures, and study methods, of doing good in the world, and to draw up rules of acting in this matter, in writing, of all the methods I can possibly devise, by which I can in any respect do good.

Saturday night, March 31. This week I have been too careless about eating.

Monday morning, April 2. I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the faults, follies, and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 7. This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know, O Lord, that without thy help I shall fall, innumerable times, not withstanding all my resolutions, how often soever repeated.

Saturday night, April 14. I could pray more heartily this night for the forgiveness of my enemies, than ever before.--I am somewhat apt, after having asked one petition over many times, to be weary of it; but I am now resolved not to give way to such a disposition.

Wednesday forenoon, May 1. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New York.

I have always in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought that the troubles and difficulties of that state were greater than those of any other state that I proposed to be in; and when I have altered, with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same, yea that the difficulties of that state are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw thoughts, affections, desires, and expectations entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of this love without ever parting; and where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will those, who thus mutually love, join together in singing the praises of God and the Lamb. How full will it fill us with joy, to think that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease or come to an end, but will last to all eternity. Remember after journeys, removals, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to reflect and consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible respecting my soul; and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2. Afternoon. I observe this, that when I was at New York, when I meditated on things of a religious nature, I used to conceive of myself as walking in the fields at home; but now I am at home, I conceive of myself as walking in the fields which I used to frequent at New York. I think it a very good way, to examine dreams every morning when I awake; what are the nature, circumstance, principles, and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them; in order to discern what are my prevailing inclinations, &c.

Saturday night, May 4. Although I have, in some measure, subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination, which is not agreeable to christian sweetness of temper and conversation: either too much dogmaticalness or too much egotism; a disposition to manifest my own dislike and scorn, and my own freedom from those which are innocent, sinless, yea common infirmities of men, and many other such like things. O that God would help me to discover all the

flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them; and that he would grant me so full a measure of vital Christianity, that the foundation of all those disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary sweetnesses and beauties may of themselves naturally follow.

Sabbath morning, May 5. Made the 47th Resolution.

Monday morning, May 6. I think it best commonly to come before God three times in a day, except I find a great inaptitude to that duty.

Saturday night, May 11. I have been to blame, the month past, in not laying violence enough to my inclination, to force myself to a better improvement of time. Have been tardy with respect to the 47th Resolution. Have also been negligent about keeping my thoughts, when joining with others in prayer.

Sabbath-day morning, May 12. I have lost that relish of the Scriptures, and other good books, which I had five or six months ago. Resolved, When I find in myself the least disposition to exercise good nature, that I will then strive most to feel good-naturedly.--At noon. Observe to remember the meditations which I had at West Chester, as I was coming from New York; and those which I had in the orchard; and those under the oak-tree. This day, and the last night, I read over and reviewed those reflections and remarks, which I find to be a very beneficial thing to me.--After the afternoon meeting. I think I find in my heart to be glad from the hopes I have, that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness, and burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18. This week past, spent in journeying to Norwich, and the towns thereabouts. This day returned, and received a letter from my dear friend, Mr. John Smith.--The last Wednesday, took up a resolution to refrain from all manner of evil speaking, for one week to try it, and see the effect of it: hoping, if that evil speaking, which I used to allow myself in, and to account lawful, greeably to the resolutions I have formed concerning it, were not lawful, or best, I should hereby discover it, and get the advantage of temptations to it, and so deceive myself into a strict adherence to my duty, respecting that matter;--that that corruption, which I cannot conquer by main strength, I may get the victory of by stratagem. I find the effect of it already to be, to make me apt to take it for granted, that what I have resolved on this week, is a duty to be observed for ever.

I now plainly perceive, what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been my making: though, in the time of it, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope, that their prayers for me have been, in many things, very powerful and prevalent, that God has, in many things, taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers for me. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

I think it the best way, in general, not to seek for honour, in any other way, than by seeking to be good and to do good. I may pursue knowledge, religion, the glory of God, and the good of mankind with the utmost vigour; but am to leave the honour of it entirely at God's disposal, as a thing with which I have no immediate concern; no, not although, by possessing that honour, I have the greater opportunity to do good.

Mem. To be particularly careful, lest I should be tardy in any point wherein I have been negligent, or have erred, in days, weeks, months, or years past.

Sabbath-day morning, May 19. With respect to my journey last week, I was not careful enough to watch opportunities of solemnly approaching to God three times a day. The last week, when I was about to take up the Wednesday Resolution, it was proposed to me, in my thought, to omit it till I got home again, because there would be a more convenient opportunity. Thus am I ready to look at any thing as an excuse, to grow slack in my christian course.--At night. Concluded to add to my inquiries, as to the spending of time.--At the beginning of the day, or the period, What can I do for the good of men?--and at the end, What have I done for their good?

Tuesday morning, May 21. My conscience is, undoubtedly, more calm, since my last Wednesday Resolution, than it was before.

Wednesday morning, May 22. Memorandum. To take special care of the following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, slightiness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

Saturday morning, May 25. As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I were now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad, and that I had taken more pains and care, to see and narrowly search into that matter. Wherefore, Mem, for the future, most nicely and diligently to look into the opinions of our old divines, concerning conversion. This morning made the 48th Resolution.

Monday afternoon, May 27. Memorandum. Not only to keep from an air of dislike, anger, and fretfulness, in discourse or conversation; but, let me also have as much of an appearance of love, cheerfulness, and benignity, as may be, with a good grace. These following things especially to beware of, in order to the better observation of the 47th Resolution: distrust, discontent, uneasiness and a complaining temper, self-opinion, self-confidence, melancholy, moroseness, slight antipathy, privacy, indolence, and want of resolution--to beware of any thing in discourse or conversation that savours of these.

Saturday night, June 8. At Boston. When I find myself listless and dull, and not easily affected by reading religious books, then to read my resolutions, remarks, reflections, &c.--One thing that would be of great advantage to me, in reading to my profit, would be, the endeavouring, with all my might, to keep the image and picture of the thing in my mind, and be careful that I do not lose it in the chain of the discourse.

Sabbath day, June 9, after the afternoon meeting. Mem. When I fear misfortune, to examine whether I have done my duty; and at the same time, to resolve to do it, and let it go, and be concerned about nothing, but my duty and my sin.

Saturday morning, June 15. At Windsor. Have been to blame, this journey, with respect to strict temperance, in eating, drinking, and sleeping, and in suffering too small matters to give interruption to my wonted chain of religious exercises.--Concluded to protract the Wednesday Resolution to the end of my life.

Tuesday morning, June 18. Mem. To do that part, which I conveniently can, of my stated exercise, while about other business, such as self-examination, resolutions, &c. that I may do the remainder in less time.

Friday afternoon, June 21. I have abundant cause, O my merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly, to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me, in my earnest request, and so hast answered my prayer, for mercy, to keep me from decay and sinking. O, graciously of thy mere goodness, still continue to pity my misery, by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving, into thine hand.

Saturday morning, June 22. Altered the 36th Resolution, to make it the same with the Wednesday Resolution. If I should take special care, every day, to rise above, or not to fall below, or to fall as little as I possibly could below, what I was the day before, it would be of great advantage to me.--I take notice that most of these determinations, when I first resolve them, seem as if they would be much more beneficial than I find them.

Tuesday morning, June 25. Last sabbath, at Boston, reading the Ephesians 6:6-8, concluded that it would be much to my advantage, to take the greatest care, never to do any thing but my duty, and then to do it willingly, cheerfully, and gladly, whatever danger or unpleasant circumstances it may be attended with; with good-will doing it, as to the Lord, not as pleasing man, or myself; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

Saturday morning, June 29. It is best to be careful in prayer, not to put up those petitions, of which I do not feel a sincere desire: thereby my prayer is rendered less sincere, less acceptable to God, and less useful to myself.

Monday noon, July 1. I find I am not careful enough, to keep out all thoughts but religious ones on the sabbath. When I find the least uneasiness in doing my duty, to fly to the 43rd Resolution.

Wednesday night, July 3. I am too negligent, with respect to improving petty opportunities of doing good; thinking, that the good will be very small and unextended, and not worth the pains. Resolved, to regulate this, as that which is wrong, and what ought not to be.--Again confirmed by experience, of the happy effects of a strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind.

Thursday morning, July 4. The last night, in bed, when thinking of death, I thought if I was then to die, that which would make me die in the least degree fearfully, would be the want of a trusting and relying on Jesus Christ, so distinctly and plainly, as has been described by divines; my not having experienced so particular a venturing, and entirely trusting my soul on Christ, after the fears of hell, and terrors of the Lord, encouraged by the mercy, faithfulness, and promises of God, and the gracious invitations of Christ. Then I thought I could go out of the world, as much assured of my salvation, as I was of Christ's faithfulness, knowing that if Christ did not fail me, he would save me who had trusted in him on his word.--At night. Whenever things begin to seem to be in the least out of order, when things begin to feel uneasy within, or irregular without, then to examine myself by the strictest examination.--Resolved, for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper in disputes.

Friday morning, July 5. Last night, when thinking what I should wish I had done, that I had not done, if I was then to die; I thought I should wish, that I had been more importunate with God to fit

me for death, and lead me into all truth, and that I might not be deceived about the state of my soul.--In the forenoon made the 50th Resolution.

Thursday night, July 11. This day, too impatient at the church meeting. Snares and briers have been in my way this afternoon. It is good at such times for one to manifest good nature, even to one's disadvantage, and so as would be imprudent at other times.

Saturday morning, July 13. Transferred the conclusion of June 9, to the Resolution, No. 57; and the conclusion of May 27, to No. 58; and May 12, and July 11, to No. 59; and of July 4, at night, to No. 60; and of May 24, to No. 61; and of June 25, to No. 62; and about noon, the Resolution of January 14, to No. 63.--In times past, I have been too free in judging of the hearts of men from their actions.

Thursday, July 18. Near sunset. Resolved, to make sure of that sign, which the apostle James gives of a perfect man: James 3:2. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able, also, to bridle the whole body."

Friday afternoon, July 19. 1 Peter 2:18. "Servants, be subject to your masters, with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward:" how then ought children to honour their parents!--This verse, together with the two following, viz. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."

Saturday noon, July 20. Dr. Manton's Sermon, on the 119th Psalm. pp. 140, 141. Of Evil-speaking, Use 2d. To them that either devise or receive reproaches. Both are very sinful. Hypocrites, and men that put themselves into a garb of religion, are all for censuring, take a mighty freedom that way: these men betray the rottenness of their hearts.--Alas, in our own sight, we should be the worst of men. The children of God do ever thus speak of themselves, as the least of saints, the greatest of sinners--"more brutish than any man"--"of sinners, whereof I am the chief." You rob them of the most precious treasure. He that robs thee of thy name, is the worst kind of thief. Proverbs 22:1. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."--Object. But must we, in no case, speak evil of another; or may we not speak of another's sin in any case?--Solution 1. It is a very hard matter to speak evil of another without sin.--In one way or another, we shall dash upon the command: better let it alone.--If you speak of the failings of another, it should be with tenderness and grief; as, when they are incorrigible, and likely to infect others; or when it is for the manifest glory of God.--To them that receive the slander, he is a slanderer, who wrongs his neighbour's credit, by upholding an ill report against him.

Monday afternoon, July 22. I find it would be desirable, on many accounts, always to endeavour to wear a benign aspect and air of acting and speaking, in all companies, except it should so happen, that duty requires it otherwise.--I am afraid I am now defective, in not doing whatever my hand finds to do, with my might, with respect to my particular affairs. Remember to watch, see, and know how it is. Vid. Aug. 31.--I see there is danger, of my being drawn into transgression, by the power of such temptations, as the fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.--I might still help myself, and yet not hurt myself, by going with greater expedition from one thing to another, without being quite so nice.

Tuesday afternoon, July 23. When I find those groanings which cannot be uttered, of which the apostle speaks, and those soul-breakings for the longing it hath, of which the psalmist speaks, (Psalms 119:20) Resolved, to favour and promote them, to the utmost of my power, and not to be weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires, and not to be weary of the repetitions of such earnestness. To count it all joy, when I have occasions of great self-denial; because, then, I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of sin, and of greatly confirming and establishing the new creature. I seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness. These are the best opportunities, according to Jan. 14. To improve afflictions, of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on, in my christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, and to damp the vigour of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also, as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, and getting a habit of so doing, according to the 57th Resolution; and as an opportunity of rending my heart off from the world, and setting it on heaven alone, according to Jan. 10. and the 43d and 45th Resolutions; and according to Jan. 12 Feb. 17 and 21. and May 1.--To improve them, also, as opportunities to repent of and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divest my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions, to make the heart better; and, if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present.

Wednesday night, July 24. I begin to find the success of my striving, in joining with others, in the worship of God; insomuch that there is a prospect of making it easy and delightful, and very profitable, in time. Wherefore, Resolved not to cease striving, but to continue it, and redouble it.

Thursday morning, July 25. Altered, and anew established, the 8th Resolution; also established my determination of April 1.--Memorandum. At a convenient time, to make an alphabet of these Resolutions and Remarks, that I may be able to educe them on proper occasions, suitable to the condition I am in, and the duty I am engaged in.

Friday afternoon, July 26. To be particularly careful, to keep up, inviolably, a trust and reliance, ease and entire rest in God, in all conditions, according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous to me.--At night. Resolved, very much to exercise myself in this, all my life long: viz. with the greatest openness, of which I am capable, to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him:--all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton’s 27th Sermon, on Psalms 119:1-176.

Saturday forenoon, July 27. When I am violently beset with temptation, or cannot rid myself of evil thoughts, to do something in arithmetic, or geometry, or some other study, which necessarily engages all my thoughts, and unavoidably keeps them from wandering.

Monday afternoon, July 29. When I am concerned how I shall prepare any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I have it very clear to me, to do what is duty and prudence in the matter.--I sometimes find myself able to trust God, and to be pretty easy when the event is uncertain, but I find it difficult when I am convinced beforehand, that the event will be adverse. I find that this arises, 1. From my want of faith, to believe that that particular advantage will be more to my advantage than disadvantage: 2. From the want of a due sense of the real preferableness of that good, which will be obtained to that which is lost: 3. From the want of a spirit of adoption.

Tuesday night, July 30. Have concluded to endeavour to work myself into duties by searching and tracing back all the real reasons why I do them not, and narrowly searching out all the subtle subterfuges of my thoughts, and answering them to the utmost of my power, that I may know what are the very first originals of my defect, as with respect to want of repentance, love to God, loathing of myself,--to do this sometimes in sermons.--Vid. Resolution 8. Especially, to take occasion therefrom, to bewail those sins of which I have been guilty, that are akin to them; as for instance, from pride in others, to take occasion to bewail my pride; from their malice, to take occasion to bewail my evil speaking: and so of other sins. Mem. To receive slanders and reproaches, as glorious opportunities of doing this.

Wednesday afternoon, July 31. After afflictions, to inquire what I am the better for them; what good I have got by them; and what I might have got by them.--Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others' faults. Never to give credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

Sabbath morning, Aug. 4. Concluded at last, at those times when I am in the best frames, to set down the aspirations of my heart, as soon as I can get time.

Tuesday afternoon, Aug. 6. Very much convinced of the extraordinary deceitfulness of the heart, and how exceedingly affection or appetite blinds the mind, and brings it into entire subjection. There are many things which I should really think to be my duty, if I had the same affections, as when I first came from New York; which now I think not to be so. How doth appetite stretch the reason, to bring both ends together.

Wednesday forenoon, Aug. 7. To esteem it as some advantage, that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through, in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labour is abundantly more precious, as a woman loves her child the more for having brought it forth with travail; and even to Christ Jesus himself his mediatorial glory, his victory and triumph, the kingdom which he hath obtained, how much more glorious is it, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out with such agonies.

Friday afternoon, Aug. 9. With respect to the important business which I have now in hand [10] , Resolved, To do whatever I think to be duty, prudence, and diligence in the matter, and to avoid ostentation; and if I succeed not, and how many disappointments soever I meet with, to be entirely easy; only to take occasion to acknowledge my unworthiness; and if it should actually not succeed, and should not find acceptance, as I expected, yet not to afflict myself about it, according to the 57th Resolution.--At night. One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in times of vacation, is, when I find a profitable thought that I can fix my mind on, to follow it as far as I possibly can to advantage.--I missed it when a graduate at college, both in point of duty and prudence, in going against a universal benevolence and good nature.

Saturday morning, Aug. 10. Transferred my determination of July 23, to the 64th Resolution, and that of July 26, to the 65th.--About sunset. As a help against that inward shameful hypocrisy, to confess frankly to myself all that which I find in myself, either infirmity or sin; also to confess to God, and open the whole case to him, when it is what concerns religion, and humbly and earnestly implore of him the help that is needed; not in the least to endeavour to smother what is in my

heart, but to bring it all out to God and my conscience. By this means, I may arrive at a greater knowledge of my own heart.--When I find difficulty in finding a subject of religious meditation, in vacancies, to pitch at random on what alights to my thoughts, and to go from that to other things which that shall bring into my mind, and follow this progression as a clue, till I come to what I can meditate on with profit and attention, and then to follow that, according to last Thursday's determination.

Sabbath afternoon, Aug. 11. Resolved always to do that, which I shall wish I had done when I see others do it; as for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good nature, kindness, forbearance, or forgiveness, &c. is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences: yet when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it, and see that none of these feared inconveniences follow.

Monday morning, Aug. 12. The chief thing, that now makes me in any measure to question my good estate, is my not having experienced conversion in those particular steps, wherein the people of New England, and anciently the dissenters of Old England, used to experience it. Wherefore, now resolved, never to leave searching, till I have satisfyingly found out the very bottom and foundation, the real reason, why they used to be converted in those steps.

Tuesday morning, Aug. 13. Have sinned, in not being careful enough to please my parents.--Afternoon. I find it would be very much to my advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see on what footing and foundation I stand.

Saturday noon, Aug. 17. Let there, in the general, be something of benevolence in all that I speak.

Tuesday night, Aug. 20. Not careful enough in watching opportunities of bringing in christian discourse with a good grace. Do not exercise myself half enough in this holy art; neither have I courage enough to carry it on with a good grace. Vid Sept. 2.

Saturday morning, Aug. 24. Have not practised quite right about revenge; though I have not done any thing directly out of revenge, yet I have perhaps omitted some things that I should otherwise have done; or have altered the circumstances and manner of my actions, hoping for a secret sort of revenge thereby. I have felt a little sort of satisfaction, when I thought that such an evil would happen to them by my actions, as would make them repent what they have done. To be satisfied for their repenting, when they repent from a sense of their error, is right. But a satisfaction in their repentance, because of the evil that is brought upon them, is revenge. This is in some measure a taking the matter out of God's hands when he was about to manage it, who is better able to plead it for me. Well, therefore, may he leave me to boggle at it.--Near sunset. I yet find a want of dependence on God, to look unto him for success, and to have my eyes unto him for his gracious disposal of the matter; for want of a sense of God's particular influence, in ordering and directing all affairs and businesses, of whatever nature, however naturally, or fortuitously, they may seem to succeed; and for want of a sense of those great advantages, that would follow therefrom: not considering that God will grant success, or make the contrary more to my advantage; or will make the advantage accruing from the unsuccessfulness more sensible and apparent; or will make it of less present and outward disadvantage; or will some way so order the circumstances, as to make the unsuccessfulness more easy to bear: or several, or all of these. This want of dependence, is

likewise for want of the things mentioned, July 29.--Remember to examine all narrations I can call to mind; whether they are exactly according to verity.

Wednesday night, Aug. 28. When I want books to read; yea, when I have not very good books, not to spend time in reading them, but in reading the Scriptures, in perusing Resolutions, Reflections, &c. in writing on types of the Scripture, and other things, in studying the languages, and in spending more time in private duties. To do this, when there is a prospect of wanting time for the purpose. Remember, as soon as I can to get a piece of slate, or something, whereon I can make short memorandums while travelling.

Thursday, Aug. 29. Two great quærenda with me now are: How shall I make advantage of all the time I spend in journeys? and how shall I make a glorious improvement of afflictions?

Saturday night, Aug. 31. The objection which my corruptions make against doing whatever my hands find to do with my might, is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Sabbath morning, Sept. 1. When I am violently beset with worldly thoughts, for a relief, to think of death, and the doleful circumstances of it.

Monday afternoon, Sept. 2. To help me to enter with a good grace into religious conversation; when I am conversing on morality, to turn it over by application, exemplification, or otherwise, to Christianity. Vid. Aug. 28, and Jan. 15.--At night. There is much folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Saturday, Sept. 7. Concluded no more to suffer myself to be interrupted, or diverted from important business, by those things from which I expect, though some, yet but little, profit.

Sabbath morning, Sept. 8. I have been much to blame, for expressing so much impatience for delays in journeys, and the like.

Sabbath evening, Sept. 22. To praise God by singing psalms in prose, and by singing forth the meditations of my heart in prose.

Monday, Sept. 23. I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries, because they are beside the way of thinking to which they have been so long used. Resolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking. My time is so short, that I have not time to perfect myself in all studies; wherefore resolved, to omit and put off all but the most important and needful studies."

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life,--was the maxim of the wisest of men, and it was founded upon the most solid reason. This maxim has ever been considered as most important by all the possessors of true wisdom and piety who have strenuously aimed at daily spiritual advancement. It has never been regarded without the greatest advantages, nor neglected without the most extensive injury. The views which were entertained of this lesson of spiritual wisdom by Jonathan Edwards are sufficiently apparent in all the extracts now presented from his Diary, and the advantages which he derived from its practice are equally manifest. He

lived in the sight of God; he lived in the constant and faithful survey of his own heart and conduct, and he arose to the highest class of the followers of Christ, whose religion is eminently that of the heart. Let others pursue the same steps, and they will surely find the same precious results.

_____ [7] He mentions, Jan. 14, his making the book, and annexing the loose reports to it.

[8] Dwight [9] He refers to slips of paper on which the first part of the Diary is written; as far as Jan. 15, at night.

[10] Perhaps the preparation of a public exercise for the college commencement, when ye received his Master's degree.

06.05. CHAPTER V.

CHAPTER V. HIS TUTORSHIP--SICKNESS--INVITATION TO NORTHAMPTON--PERSONAL NARRATIVE CONTINUED--DIARY CONCLUDED. In Sept. 1723, Mr. Edwards went to New-Haven, and received his degree of Master of Arts, when he was elected a tutor in the college. About this time, several congregations invited him to become their minister; but being fond of study, and conscious how much it would promote his usefulness, he declined their proposals. As there was no immediate vacancy in the office of tutor, he passed the ensuing winter and spring at New-Haven, in study, and in the occasional discharge of the active duties of his profession, and in the beginning of June, 1724, entered on the instruction of a class in the college. The period of his tutorship was a period of great difficulty. For a long time before the election of Mr. Cutler to the office of rector, the college had been in a state of open revolt against the legal government, and had withdrawn from New-Haven. Two years after his election, in Jan. 1721, there was an universal insurrection of the students, which though, after considerable effort, apparently quieted, resulted in a state of extreme disorder and insubordination, beyond any thing that had been known before. In 1722, Mr. Cutler, one of the tutors, and two of the neighbouring ministers, renounced their connexion with the presbyterian church, and publicly declared themselves episcopalians. The shock, occasioned by this event, was very great in the college, in the town, and throughout the colony; and a series of controversies grew out of it, which lasted for many years. In consequence of this, the offices of these gentlemen were vacated, and the college was left for four years without a head; the trustees residing by turns at the college, and each in rotation acting as vice-rector for a month. Fortunately however for the institution, during this bereavement, it had three gentlemen in the office of tutor, of distinguished talents and scholarship, and of great resolution and firmness of character:--Mr. William Smith, of the class of 1719, and chosen tutor in 1722; Mr. Edwards; and Mr. Daniel Edwards, his uncle, class-mate and room-mate, who was chosen in Sept. 1724. On these three gentlemen, all of whom were young men, devolved almost exclusively the government and instruction of the college; yet, their union, energy, and faithfulness, they introduced among the students, in the room of their former negligence and misrule, habits of close study and exact subordination; and in no great length of time, rendered the institution flourishing and prosperous beyond what it had long been. The late President Stiles, who, though a member of college a considerable time after this period, was personally acquainted with the three gentlemen, and knew well the history of their administration, has left an eulogy on the three united, of the highest character. "The Honourable William Smith, the Honourable Daniel Edwards, and the Rev. President Edwards, were the pillar tutors, and the glory of the college, at the critical period between Rector Cutler and Rector Williams. Their tutorial renown was great and excellent. They filled and sustained their offices with great ability, dignity, and honour. For the honour of literature these things ought not to be forgotten."

Sept. 1725, immediately after the commencement, as he was preparing to set out for his father’s house, he was taken suddenly ill, at New-Haven; but hoping that the illness was not severe, and anxious to be at home if he was to be sick, he set out for Windsor. The fatigue of travelling only

increased his illness, and he was compelled to stop at North-Haven, at the house of the Rev. Mr. Stiles, where he was confined, by severe sickness, about three months: during the greater part of this time, his mother was constantly with him. Her husband, writing to her on the 20th of October, begs her to spare herself. "I am afraid you are taking too great a burden on yourself, in tending your son both day and night. I beg of you, therefore, not only to take care of him, but of yourself also. Accept, rather, of the kindness of neighbours, in watching over again, than outbid your own strength, which is but small, by overdoing." She could not leave him till about the middle of November; and it was some time in the winter before he could go to his father’s house. In this sickness, he speaks of himself as having enjoyed new, and most refreshing, manifestations of the presence and grace of God.

After he had held the office of tutor upwards of two years, with the highest reputation, he received proposals from the people of Northampton to become their minister. Many circumstances conspired to prompt his acceptance. He was familiarly acquainted with the place and people. The Rev. Mr. Stoddard, his grandfather, a man of great dignity, and of singular weight and influence in the churches, in consequence of his advanced age, stood in need of his assistance, and wished him to be his colleague. His parents and his other friends all desired it. The situation was in itself respectable, and the town unusually pleasant. He therefore resigned his tutorship, in Sept. 1726, and accepted of the invitation.

"Those who are conversant with the instruction and government of a college, will readily be aware that the period, of which we have now been speaking, was a very busy portion of Mr. Edwards’s life; and if they call to mind the circumstances of the institution, and the habits of the students, when he entered on his office, they will not need to be informed, that the discharge of his official duties must have been accompanied with painful anxiety. It is a rare event in Providence, that so heavy a responsibility is thrown on three individuals so young, so destitute of experience, and of the knowledge of mankind; and the business of instruction and government must have occupied their whole time, and exhausted their whole strength."

"In such a state of things, it was not possible that he should find the same leisure for spiritual exercises as he had found at New York. There his business was chiefly to enjoy; here it was to act. There the persons with whom he continually associated were possessed of uncommon excellence; here their characters were very different. There his attention was drawn, by the objects around him, to heavenly things; here it was necessarily confined almost all the time to this world. There, when retiring for prayer and heavenly contemplation, his mind sought communion with God in all its energy and freshness; here, when it was worn out by toil and exhausted by perplexities. The change in the current of thought and feeling must, therefore, have been great; and (so much is the mind prone to measure its religious state by the amount of daily enjoyment, and so little by the readiness to encounter trials, and to perform laborious and self-denying duties) it is not surprising, that he should have regarded this change, as evidence of perceptible and lamentable declension in religion. Such he in fact regarded it; as we shall find, both from his Narrative and Diary; yet it is by no means certain, that his views of the subject were altogether correct."

"The young Christian has usually a season of leisure, given him in the providence of God, in which to become acquainted with the members of that family into which he has lately been introduced, and with those objects with which as a spiritual being he is in future to be conversant. His time and

his strength are given chiefly to the Scriptures, to prayer, to meditation, and to religious conversation; and he is delightfully conscious that his communion is with the Father, and the Son Jesus Christ, through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, as well as with `the whole family both on earth and in heaven.' The design of this is to open to him his new state of existence, to enable him to understand its relations and duties, and to give him an earnest of better things in reversion. It is a most refreshing and happy period of his life, and, were he designed for contemplation merely, might well be protracted to its close. But, as we are taught most explicitly, in the word and Providence of God, his great worth lies in action--in imitating him whose rule it was--I must do the work of him that sent me while it is day;' and whose practice it was that `he went about doing good.' The Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.--Wherefore? that the man of God may be perfected, being thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Probably no year in the life of Mr. Edwards was spent more usefully, than that in which he was occupied, with his associated, in laying the foundation of sober habits and sound morals, in the seminary now intrusted to their care. Probably in no equal period did he more effectually serve God and his generation. And if, in its progress, he found less of that enjoyment which grows out of spiritual contemplation; he must have had the more delightful consciousness, that in the midst of great difficulties and crosses, he had honestly endeavoured to serve God, and to perform his duty."

There may therefore be reason for doubt, whether the change in his feelings, of which he speaks in the succeeding parts of his Narrative and Diary, was not a declension in this particular species of religious enjoyment, necessarily growing out of the circumstances in which he was placed, rather than a declension in the life and power of religion.

"I continued," he observes, "much in the same frame, in the general, as when at New York, till I went to New-Haven as tutor of the college; particularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to New-Haven, I sunk in religion, my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

"In September, 1725, I was taken ill at New-Haven, and while endeavouring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick, for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness, God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there, on divine and pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed, that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language; `My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning;' and when the light of day came in at the window, it refreshed my soul, from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory."

"I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honour them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But some time after this, I was again greatly diverted with some temporal concerns, that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on, through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more

experience of my own heart than I ever had before." That the mind of Mr. Edwards was not injured as to its spirituality, by his official engagements and trials, is sufficiently evident from these extracts. He was still a holy man of God, whose heart was in heaven, and with whom converse with God was the highest delight.--The remainder of his Diary is chiefly confined to the period of his life which has now been reviewed, and is therefore inserted here. It is only to be regretted, that through the multiplicity of his affairs, he should have found it necessary to discontinue it.

REMAINDER OF DIARY.

"Thursday forenoon, Oct. 4, 1723. Have this day fixed and established it, that Christ Jesus has promised me faithfully, that, if I will do what is my duty, and according to the best of my prudence in the matter, that my condition in this world shall be better for me than any other condition whatever, and more to my welfare to all eternity. And, therefore, whatever my condition shall be, I will esteem it to be such: and if I find need of faith in the matter, that I will confess it as impiety before God. Vid. Resolution 57, and June 9.

Sabbath night, Oct. 7. Have lately erred, in not allowing time enough for conversation.

Friday night, Oct. 12. I see there are some things quite contrary to the soundness and perfection of Christianity, in which almost all good men do allow themselves, and where innate corruption has an unrestrained secret vent, which they never take notice of, or think to be no hurt, or cloak under the name of virtue; which things exceedingly darken the brightness, and hide the loveliness, of Christianity. Who can understand his errors? O that I might be kept from secret faults!

Sabbath morning, Oct. 14. Narrowly to observe after what manner I act when I am in a hurry, and to act as much so at other times as I can without prejudice to the business.

Monday morning, Oct. 15. I seem to be afraid, after errors and decays, to give myself the full exercise of spiritual meditation:--Not to give way to such fears.

Thursday, Oct. 18. To follow the example of Mr. B. who though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Friday night, Nov. 1. When I am unfit for other business to perfect myself in writing characters.*

Friday afternoon, Nov. 22. For the time to come, when I am in a lifeless frame in secret prayer, to force myself to expatiate, as if I were praying before others, more than I used to do.

Tuesday forenoon, Nov. 26. It is a most evil and pernicious practice, in meditations on afflictions, to sit ruminating on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckoning up the evil, dark circumstances thereof, and dwelling long on the dark side: it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so when speaking of them to others, to make them as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles, is to be all the while making new trouble, and feeding and pampering the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our affliction. If we dwelt on the bright side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that we possibly could, when speaking of them, we should think little of them ourselves, and the affliction would really, in a great measure, vanish away.

Friday night, Nov. 29. As a help to attention in social prayer, to take special care to make a particular remark at the beginning of every petition, confession, &c.

Monday morning, Dec. 9. To observe, whether I express any kind of fretting emotion, for the next three weeks.

Thursday night, Dec. 12. If, at any time, I am forced to tell others wherein I think they are somewhat to blame; in order to avoid the important evil that would otherwise ensue, not to tell it to them so, that there shall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.--Vid. Aug. 28. When I do want, or am likely to want, good books, to spend time in studying mathematics, and in reviewing other kinds of old learning; to spend more time in visiting friends, in the more private duties of a pastor, in taking care of worldly business, in going abroad, and other things that I may contrive.

Friday morning, Dec. 27. At the end of every month, to examine my behaviour strictly by some chapter in the New Testament, more especially made up of rules of life.--At the end of the year, to examine my behaviour by the rules of the New Testament in general, reading many chapters. It would also be convenient some time at the end of the year, to read for this purpose in the book of Proverbs.

Tuesday night, Dec. 31. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind, more or less, except the honour of God calls for it in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

1724. Wednesday, Jan. 1. Not to spend too much time in thinking, even of important and necessary worldly business, and to allow every thing its proportion of thought, according to its urgency and importance.

Thursday night, Jan. 2. These things established,--That time gained in things of lesser importance, is as much gained in things of greater; that a minute gained in times of confusion, conversation, or in a journey, is as good as minute gained in my study, at my most retired times; and so, in general, that a minute gained at one time is as good as at another.

Friday night, Jan. 3. The time and pains laid out in seeking the world, is to be proportioned to the necessity, usefulness, and importance of it, with respect to another world, together with the uncertainty of living, and of retaining; provided, that nothing that our duty enjoins, or that is amiable, be omitted, and nothing sinful or unbecoming be done for the sake of it.

Friday, Jan. 10. (After having written to a considerable extent in short hand, which he used, when he wished what he wrote to be effectually concealed from every one but himself, he adds the following.) Remember to act according to Proverbs 12:23. A prudent man concealeth knowledge.

Monday, Jan. 20. I have been very much to blame, in that I have not been as full, and plain, and downright, in my standing up for virtue and religion, when I have had fair occasion, before those who seemed to take no delight in such things. If such conversation would not be agreeable to them, I have in some degree minced the matter, that I might not displease, and might not speak against the grain, more than I should have loved to have done with others, to whom it would be agreeable to speak for religion. I ought to be exceedingly bold with such persons, not talking in a melancholy strain, but in one confident and fearless, assured of the truth and excellence of the

cause.

Monday, Feb. 3. Let every thing have the value now which it will have upon a sick bed: and frequently, in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this question come into my mind. `How much shall I value this upon my death-bed?'

Wednesday, Feb. 5. I have not in times past, in my prayers, enough insisted on the glorifying of God in the world, on the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of man. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz. that it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united prayers of the whole church; and that if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small.

Thursday, Feb. 6. More convinced than ever, of the usefulness of free religious conversation. I find by conversing on natural philosophy, that I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much more clearly, than in private study: wherefore, earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; for those with whom I can at all times, with profit and delight, and with freedom, so converse.

Friday, Feb. 7. Resolved, If God will assist me to it, that I will not care about things, when, upon any account, I have prospect of ill success or adversity; and that I will not think about it, any further than just to do what prudence directs to for prevention, according to Php 4:6. Be careful for nothing; to 1 Peter 5:7. Cast all your care upon God, for he careth for you; and again, Take no thought for the morrow; and again, Take no thought, saying, What shall I eat, and what shall I drink , and wherewithal shall I be clothed: seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Saturday night, Feb. 15. I find that when eating, I cannot be convinced in the time of it, that if I should eat more, I should exceed the bounds of strict temperance, though I have had the experience of two years of the like; and yet as soon as I have done, in three minutes I am convinced of it. But yet when I eat again, and remember it, still while eating I am fully convinced that I have not eaten what is but for nature, nor can I be convinced, that my appetite and feeling is as it was before. It seems to me that I shall be somewhat faint if I leave off then; but when I have finished, I am convinced again, and so it is from time to time.--I have observed that more really seems to be truth, when it makes for my interest, or is in other respects according to my inclination, than it seems if it be otherwise; and it seems to me, that the words in which I express it are more than the thing will properly bear. But if the thing be against my interest, the words of different import seem as much as the thing will properly bear.--Though there is some little seeming indecorum, as if it looked like affectation, in religious conversation as there is also in acts of kindness, yet this is to be broke through.

Tuesday, Feb. 18. Resolved, to act with sweetness and benevolence, and according to the 47th Resolution, in all bodily dispositions,--sick or well, at ease or in pain, sleepy or watchful; and not to suffer discomposure of body to discompose my mind.

Saturday, Feb. 22. I observe that there are some evil habits, which do increase and grow stronger, even in some good people, as they grow older; habits that much obscure the beauty of

Christianity: some things which are according to their natural tempers, which in some measure prevail when they are young in Christ, and the evil disposition having an unobserved control, the habit at last grows very strong, and commonly regulates the practice until death. By this means, old Christians are very commonly, in some respects, more unreasonable than those who are young. I am afraid of contracting such habits, particularly of grudging to give, and to do, and of procrastinating.

Sabbath, Feb. 23. I must be contented, where I have any thing strange or remarkable to tell, not to make it appear so remarkable as it is indeed; lest through fear of this, and the desire of making a thing appear very remarkable, I should exceed the bounds of simple verity. When I am at a feast, or a meal, that very well pleases my appetite, I must not merely take care to leave off with as much of an appetite as at ordinary meals; for when there is a great variety of dishes, I may do that, after I have eaten twice as much as at other meals is sufficient. If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise, than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of Scripture, that to fallen man, they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Monday, March 16. To practise this sort of self-denial, when, as sometimes on fair days, I find myself more particularly disposed to regard the glories of the world, than to betake myself to the study of serious religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not, but I have remarked it hitherto, that at those times when I have read the Scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively and in the best frame. at yale college.

Saturday night, June 6. This week has been a very remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares, and distraction of mind: it being the week I came hither to New-Haven, in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and vexation of the world, and that it will never be another kind of world.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, remember to abstain from altering either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one, afterwards, should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 2. By a sparingness in diet, and eating as much as may be what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly, and shall gain time; 1. By lengthening out my life; 2. Shall need less time for digestion, after meals; 3. Shall be able to study more closely, without injury to my health; 4. Shall need less time for sleep; 5. Shall more seldom be troubled with the head-ache.

Saturday night, Sept. 12. Crosses of the nature of that which I met with this week, thrust me quite below all comforts in religion. They appear no more than vanity and stubble, especially when I meet with them so unprepared for them. I shall not be fit to encounter them, except I have a far stronger and more permanent faith, hope, and love.

Wednesday, Sept. 30. It has been a prevailing thought with me, to which I have given place in practice, that it is best sometimes to eat or drink, when it will do me no good, because the hurt that

it will do me, will not be equal to the trouble of denying myself. But I have determined to suffer that thought to prevail no longer. The hurries of commencement and diversion of the vacancy, has been the occasion of my sinking so exceedingly, as in the last three weeks.

Monday, Oct. 5. I believe it is a good way, when prone to unprofitable thoughts, to deny myself and break off my thoughts by keeping diligently to my study, that they may not have time to operate to work me to such a listless frame. I am apt to think it a good way when I am indisposed to reading and study, to read of my own remarks, the fruit of my study in divinity, &c. to set me a going again.

Friday, Nov. 6. Felt sensibly somewhat of that trust and affiance in Christ, and with delight committing of my soul to him, of which our divines used to speak, and about which I have been somewhat in doubt.

Tuesday, Nov. 10. To mark all that I say in conversation merely to beget in others a good opinion of myself, and examine it.

Sabbath, Nov. 15. Determined, when I am indisposed to prayer, always to premeditate what to pray for; and that it is better, that the prayer should be of almost any shortness, than that my mind should be almost continually off from what I say.

Sabbath, Nov. 22. Considering that by-standers always copy some faults, which we do not see ourselves, or of which at least we are not so fully sensible; and that there are many secret workings of corruption, which escape our sight, and of which others only are sensible: Resolved, therefore, that I will if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me, that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or unbecoming.

Friday, Feb. 12, 1725. The very thing I now want, to give me a clearer and more immediate view of the perfections and glory of God, is as clear a knowledge of the manner of God’s exerting himself, with respect to spirits and mind, as I have of his operations concerning matter and bodies.

Tuesday, Feb. 16. A virtue which I need in a higher degree, to give a beauty and luster to my behaviour, is gentleness. If I had more of an air of gentleness, I should be much mended.

Friday, May 21. If ever I am inclined to turn to the opinion of any other sect: Resolved, beside the most deliberate consideration, earnest prayer, &c. privately to desire all the help that can possibly be afforded me, from some of the most judicious men in the country, together with the prayers of wise and holy men, however strongly persuaded I may seem to be that I am in the right.

Saturday, May 22. When I reprove for faults, whereby I am in any way injured, to defer till the thing is quite over and done with; for that is the way, both to reprove aright, and without the least mixture of spirit, or passion, and to have reproofs effectual, and not suspected.

Friday, May 28. It seems to me, that whether I am now converted or not, I am so settled in the state I am in, that I shall go on it all my life. But, however settled I may be, yet I will continue to pray to God, not to suffer me to be deceived about it, nor to sleep in an unsafe condition; and ever and anon, will call all into question and try myself, using for helps some of our old divines, that God may have opportunities to answer my prayers, and the Spirit of God to show me my error, if I am in one.

Saturday night, June 6. I am sometimes in a frame so listless, that there is no other way of profitably improving time, but conversation, visiting, or recreation, or some bodily exercise. However, it may be best in the first place, before resorting to either of these, to try the whole circle of my mental employments.

Nov. 16. When confined at Mr. Stiles's. I think it would be of special advantage to me, with respect to my truer interest, as near as I can in my studies, to observe this rule: To let half a day's, or at most a day's, study in other things, be succeeded by half a day's or a day's study in divinity.

One thing wherein I have erred, as I would be complete in all social duties, is, in neglecting to write letters to friends. And I would be forewarned of the danger of neglecting to visit my friends and relations when we are parted. When one suppresses thoughts that tend to divert the run of the mind's operations from religion, whether they are melancholy, or anxious, or passionate, or any others; there is this good effect of it, that it keeps the mind in its freedom. Those thoughts are stopped in the beginning, that would have set the mind a going in that stream.

There are a great many exercises, that for the present seem not to help, but rather impede, religious meditation and affections, the fruit of which is reaped afterwards, and is of far greater worth than what is lost; for thereby the mind is only for the present diverted; but what is attained is, upon occasion, of use for the whole life-time.

Sept. 26, 1726. Tis just about three years, that I have been for the most part in a low sunk estate and condition, miserably senseless, to what I used to be, about spiritual things. `Twas three years ago, the week before commencement; just about the same time this year, I began to be somewhat as I used to be.

Jan. 1728. I think Christ has recommended rising early in the morning, by his rising from the grave very early.

Jan. 22, 1734. I judge that it is best, when I am in a good frame for divine contemplation, or engaged in reading the Scriptures, or any study of divine subjects, that, ordinarily, I will not be interrupted by going to dinner, but will forego my dinner, rather than be broke off.

April 4, 1735. When at any time I have a sense of any divine thing, then to turn it in my thoughts to a practical improvement. As for instance, when I am in my mind, on some argument for the truth of religion, the reality of a future state, and the like, then to think with myself, how safely I may venture to sell all, for a future good. So when at any time I have a more than ordinary sense of the glory of the saints in another world, to think how well it is worth my while to deny myself, and to sell all that I have, for this glory, &c. May 18. My mind at present is, never to suffer my thoughts and meditations at all to ruminate.

June 11. To set apart days of meditation on particular subjects; as, sometimes to set apart a day for the consideration of the greatness of my sins; at another, to consider the dreadfulness and certainty of the future misery of ungodly men; at another, the truth and certainty of religion; and so, of the great future things promised and threatened in the Scriptures."

06.06. CHAPTER VI.

CHAPTER VI.

SETTLEMENT IN THE MINISTRY AT NORTHAMPTON--SITUATION OF THINGS AT THE TIME OF HIS SETTLEMENT--ATTENTION TO RELIGION IN THE PARISH--COURSE OF STUDY--HABITS OF LIFE--MARRIAGE--DEATH AND CHARACTER OF MR. STODDARD--SICKNESS OF MR. EDWARDS--DEATH AND CHARACTER OF HIS SISTER JERUSHA--HIS FIRST PUBLICATION. On the 15th of February, 1727, Mr. Edwards was ordained as a minister of the gospel, and placed over the church and congregation at Northampton, as the colleague of his grandfather, the Rev. Mr. Stoddard. He was now entering on the business of life, in a profession attended with many difficulties, and presenting a field sufficiently ample for the employment of the highest faculties ever conferred on man. It may not be improper, therefore, to stop a moment, and review the circumstances in which he was placed.

He was twenty-three years of age. His constitution was naturally so tender and feeble, as to be preserved, even in tolerable health, only with unceasing care. He had passed through the successive periods of childhood, youth, and early manhood, not only without reproach, but in such a manner, as to secure the high esteem and approbation of all who knew him. His filial piety, and fraternal affection, had been most exemplary, and had rendered him a centre for strong attraction to the united family. Originally of a grave and sober character, he had been the subject of early, frequent, and strong religious impressions; which, if they did not result in saving conversion in his childhood, yet rendered him conscientious, and solemnly and habitually mindful of eternal things. For a considerable period, he had not only felt the life and power of religion, but had appeared imbued with an unusually large measure of the grace of God. Few persons, of the same age, discover a piety so pure, so practical, or so pervading.

He had been devoted to books from his infancy, and appears of his own accord, from an early period, to have formed habits of severe and successful application. His mind, originally possessed of uncommon powers, and fraught with an intense desire of knowledge, was qualified for eminence, as we have already seen, not in a single pursuit merely, but in every walk of literature and science. Though probably the youngest member of his class, he had been acknowledged as its first scholar, in the distribution of its honours. He had not been distinguished for his attainments in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew literature only, but still more in those studies which require the application of stronger powers--in mathematics and logic, in natural and mental philosophy, and the higher principles of theology. In these, he had not simply proved himself capable of comprehending the discoveries of others, but had ventured out, where there was no path nor guide, into new and unexplored regions of the spiritual [11] world, with a success, which might well have prompted him to bold and fearless enterprise. As officers of the college, the peculiar difficulties in which they were placed, had given him, and his associates, an opportunity to acquire uncommon reputation, not only as instructors and governors of youths, but as men of unshaken firmness, and unwavering integrity. His mind was now rich in its attainments; its views were

already, for the period in which he lived, singularly expanded and comprehensive; and its powers were under thorough discipline, and yielded an exact and persevering obedience. His habits of study were completely formed, and were of the most severe and unbending character.

Theology had been, for years, his favourite study. For it he had deliberately relinquished, not only the varied pursuits of natural science, but in a measure, also, those investigations into the nature and operations of mind, by which, at an earlier period, his whole attention had been engrossed. He had already discovered, that much of what he found in systems and commentaries, was a mere mass of rubbish; and that many of the great principles, which constitute the foundation of the science, were yet to be established. He had studied theology, not chiefly in systems or commentaries, but in the Bible, and in the character and mutual relations of God and his creatures, from which all its principles are derived; and had already entered on a series of investigations, which, if ultimately found correct, would effectuate most important changes in the opinions of the christian world. The ministry had long been the profession of his choice, and was doubtless the only profession which he had ever thought of pursuing. Few persons, probably, enter the sacred office with more just views of its elevation and importance. His work he appears to have regarded simply as the work of salvation;--the same work, on which HE, whose commission he bore, came down to this lower world;--and to the accomplishment of it, the surrendry of himself appears to have been deliberate and entire. His reception as a preacher had certainly been flattering. Repeated and urgent proposals had been made to him for settlement; and, as far as he was known, he was obviously regarded as a young man of uncommon promise.

Northampton, the place of his settlement, is in its natural situation uncommonly pleasant, was then the shire town of a county, embracing nearly one half of the area of the colony, and embodied within its limits, more than the ordinary share of refinement and polish. The church was large, and, with the congregation, was united. Both were united in him, and earnestly desirous that he should become their minister. From his childhood he had familiarly known both the place and the people. His parents were the familiar friends of many of the inhabitants; and they, with his connexions in the place, regarded his settlement there as a most pleasing event.

He was also the individual, whom probably, of all others, his grandfather desired, for his colleague and successor. That venerable man, then in his 84th year, had been the minister of Northampton 55 years; and by his piety, his great energy of character, and his knowledge of mankind, had early acquired, and maintained through a long life, a singular degree of weight among the ministers and churches of New England. Though a close student, and an able and faithful preacher, he was in character a man of business, and of action; and, in all the important ecclesiastical bodies of Massachusetts, he had for many years an influence, which usually was not contested, and almost always was paramount. In Northampton he had been a faithful and successful minister. Under his preaching, the place had repeatedly witnessed revivals of religion; particularly in 1679, 1683, 1690, 1712, and 1718. Those in 1683, 1690, and 1712, were distinguished for their extent, and for the accessions made to the number of communicants. While the existing members of the church, with scarcely an exception, regarded him as their spiritual father, all the acting inhabitants of the town had grown up under his ministry, and had been accustomed, from infancy, to pay a respect to his person and character, and a deference to his opinions, such as children pay to those of a loved and venerated parent.

One circumstance, relating to the actual condition of the church at Northampton, deserves to be mentioned here, as it had an ultimate bearing on some of the most important events recorded in these pages. That church, like the other early churches of New England, according to its original platform, admitted none to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, except those who, after due examination, were regarded in the judgment of christian charity as regenerate persons. Such was the uniform practice of the church, from the time of its formation, during the life of Mr. Mather, and for upwards of thirty years after the settlement of Mr. Stoddard. How early Mr. Stoddard changed his own views on this subject, cannot probably be ascertained; but he attempted, in 1704, and, though not without opposition, yet with ultimate success, to introduce a corresponding change in the practice of the church. Though no vote was then taken to alter the rules of admission, yet the point of practice was yielded. The sacrament, from that time, was viewed as a converting ordinance, and those who were not regarded, either by themselves or others, as possessed of piety, were encouraged to unite themselves to the church. The attention to religion in 1718, was neither extensive, nor of long continuance, and appears not to have terminated happily. During the nine years which intervened between that event and the settlement of Mr. Edwards, Mr. Stoddard witnessed "a far more degenerate time among his people, particularly among the young, than ever before," in which the means of salvation were attended with little or no visible efficacy. The young became addicted to habits of dissipation and licentiousness; family government too generally failed; the sabbath was extensively profaned; and the decorum of the sanctuary was not unfrequently disturbed. There had also long prevailed in the town a spirit of contention between two parties, into which they had for many years been divided, which kept alive a mutual jealousy, and prepared them to oppose one another in all public affairs.

Such were the circumstances in which Mr. Edwards entered on his ministry at Northampton. At this time, Mr. Stoddard, though so much advanced in years, had a good degree of strength, both of body and mind; and, for a considerable period after the settlement of his grandson, he was able to officiate in the desk the half of every sabbath. Almost immediately after that event, he was permitted to witness a work of divine grace among some of his people; in the course of which about twenty were believed to be savingly converted. This was to him a most pleasing circumstance, as well as most useful to his colleague; who observes, "I have reason to bless God for the great advantage I had by it." No doubt it was intended to prepare him for more important and interesting scenes. The attention to religion, though at no time very extensive, continued for about two years, and was followed by several years of general inattention and indifference.

Immediately after his settlement, Mr. Edwards commenced the practice of preparing two discourses weekly; one of which was preached as a lecture, on an evening in the week. This he continued for several years. Though he regarded preaching the gospel as the great duty of a minister, and would on no account offer to God, or deliver to his people, that which was not the fruit of toil and labour; yet he resolved, from the commencement of his ministry, not to devote the time of each week exclusively to the preparation of his sermons, but to spend a large portion of it in the study of the Bible, and in the investigation of the more difficult and important subjects of theology. His mode of study with the pen has been described, and was now vigorously pursued, in the continuation of his "Miscellanies," and his "Notes on the Scriptures," as well as of a work, entitled, "The Types of the Messiah in the Old Testament, " which he appears to have commenced while a candidate for the ministry. With an infirm constitution, and health ordinarily feeble, it was

obviously impossible, however, to carry this resolution into practice, without the most strict attention to diet, exercise, and method; but in all these points, his habits had long been formed, and persevered in, with a direct reference to the best improvement of time, and the greatest efficiency of his intellectual powers. In eating and drinking, he was unusually abstemious, and constantly watchful. He carefully observed the effects of the different sorts of food, and selected those which best suited his constitution, and rendered him most fit for mental labour. Having also ascertained the quantity of food, which, while it sustained his bodily strength, left his mind most sprightly and active, he most scrupulously and exactly confined himself to the prescribed limits; regarding it as a shame and a sin, to waste his time, and his mental strength, by animal indulgence. In this respect, he lived by rule, and constantly practised great self-denial; as he did. also, with regard to the time passed in sleep. He accustomed himself to rise at four, or between four and five, in the morning, and, in winter, spent several of those hours in study which are commonly wasted in slumber. In the evening, he usually allowed himself a season of relaxation, in the midst of his family. His most usual diversion in summer, was riding on horseback, and walking; and in his solitary rides and walks, he appears to have decided, before leaving home, on what subjects to meditate. He would commonly, unless diverted by company, ride two or three miles after dinner, to some lonely grove, where he would dismount and walk awhile. At such times, he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that might be suggested, and which promised some light on any important subject. In winter, he was accustomed, almost daily, to take his axe, and cut wood moderately, for the space of half an hour or more. In solitary rides of considerable length, he adopted a kind of artificial memory. Having pursued a given subject of thought to its proper results, he would pin a small piece of paper on a given spot in his coat, and charge his mind to associate the subject and the piece of paper. He would then repeat the same process with a second subject of thought, fastening the token in a different place, and then a third, and a fourth, as the time might permit. From a ride of several days, he would usually bring home a considerable number of these remembrancers; and, on going to his study, would take them off, one by one, in regular order, and write down the train of thought of which each was intended to remind him.

"He did not," observes Dr. Hopkins, "make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick, or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings, in particular neighbourhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray with them, and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstance; and he catechized the children in public, every sabbath in the forenoon. And he used, sometimes, to propose questions to particular young persons, in writing, for them to answer, after a proper time given to them to prepare. In putting out these questions, he endeavoured to suit them to the age, genius, and ability of those, to whom they were given. His questions were generally such, as required but a short answer; and yet, could not be answered without a particular knowledge of some historical part of the Scriptures; and therefore led, and even obliged, persons to study the Bible.

"He did not neglect visiting his people from house to house, because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one important part of the work of a gospel minister; but, because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances,

and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry. He observed, that some had a talent for entertaining and profiting by occasional visits among their people. They have words at command, and a facility at introducing profitable religious discourse, in a manner free, natural, and familiar, and apparently without design or contrivance. He supposed, that such had a call to spend a great deal of their time in visiting their people; but he looked on his own talents to be quite otherwise. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and, in an easy manner, turn it to whatever topic he pleased, without the help of others, and it may be, against their inclinations. He therefore found, that his visits of this kind must be, in a great degree, unprofitable. And as he was settled in a large parish, it would have taken up a great part of his time to visit from house to house, which he thought he could spend, in his study, to much more valuable purposes, and so better promote the great ends of his ministry. For it appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to the souls of men, and most promote the cause of Christ, by preaching and writing, and conversing with persons under religious impressions, in his study; whither he encouraged all such to repair; where they might be sure, in ordinary cases, to find him, and to be allowed easy access to him; and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness, and familiarity."

Owing to his constant watchfulness and self-denial in food and sleep, and his regular attention to bodily exercise, notwithstanding the feebleness of his constitution, few students are capable of more close or more long-continued application than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours every day in his study; and these hours were passed, not in perusing or treasuring up the thoughts of others, but in employments far more exhausting--in the investigation of difficult subjects, in the origination and arrangement of thoughts, in the invention of arguments, and in the discovery of truths and principles. Nor was his exact method, in the distribution of his time, of less essential service. In consequence of his uniform regularity and self-denial, and the force of habit, the powers of his mind were always at his command, and would do their prescribed task in the time appointed. This enabled him to assign the preparation of his sermons, each week, to given days, and specific subjects of investigation to other given days; and except in cases of sickness, or journeying, or some other extraordinary interruption, it was rare, indeed, that he failed of accomplishing every part of his weekly task, or that he was pressed for time in the accomplishment. So exact was the distribution of his time, and so perfect the command of his mental powers, that in addition to his preparation of two discourses in each week, his stated and occasional lectures, and his customary pastoral duties, he continued regularly his "Notes on the Scriptures," his "Miscellanies," his "Types of the Messiah," and a work which he soon commenced, entitled, "Prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and their Fulfilment." On the 28th of July, 1727, Mr. Edwards was married, at New-haven, to Miss Sarah Pierrepont. Her paternal grandfather, John Pierrepont, Esq. who came from England and resided in Roxbury, Massachusetts, was a younger branch of a most distinguished family in his own country. Her father, the Rev. James Pierrepont, was "an eminent, pious, and useful minister, at New-Haven." He married Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Samuel Hooker, of Farmington, who was the son of the Rev. Thomas Hooker, of Hartford, familiarly denominated "the father of the Connecticut churches," and "well known, in the churches of England, for his distinguished talents and most ardent piety." Mr. Pierrepont was one of the principal founders, and one of the trustees, of Yale college; and, to help forward the seminary, read lectures to the students, for some considerable time, as professor of Moral Philosophy. The Platform of the Connecticut Churches, established at Saybrook, in 1708, is ascribed to his pen.

Miss Pierrepont was born on the 9th of January, 1710, and at the time of her marriage was in the 18th year of her age. She was a young lady of uncommon beauty. Not only is this the language of tradition; but Dr. Hopkins, who first saw her when the mother of seven children, says she was more than ordinarily beautiful; and her portrait, taken by a respectable English painter [12] , while it presents a form and features not often rivalled, exhibits also that peculiar loveliness of expression, which is the combined result of intelligence, cheerfulness, and benevolence. The native powers of her mind were of a superior order; and her parents being in easy circumstances, and of liberal views, provided for their children all the advantages of an enlightened and polished education. In her manners she was gentle and courteous, amiable in her behaviour, and the law of kindness appeared to govern all her conversation and conduct. She was also a rare example of early piety; having exhibited the life and power of religion, and that in a remarkable manner, when only five years of age; [13] and having also confirmed the hopes which her friends then cherished, by the uniform and increasing excellence of her character, in childhood and youth. So warm and animated were her religious feelings, in every period of life, that they might perhaps have been regarded as enthusiastic, had they not been under the control of true delicacy and sound discretion. Mr. Edwards had known her several years before their marriage, and from the following passage, written on a blank leaf, in 1723, it is obvious, that even then her uncommon piety, at least, had arrested his attention. "They say there is a young lady in [New-Haven] who is loved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight; and that she hardly cares for any thing, except to meditate on him--that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do any thing wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind; especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her." After due allowance is made for animation of feeling, the reader will be convinced, that such a testimony, concerning a young lady of thirteen, could not have been given, by so competent a judge, had there not been something unusual in the purity and elevation of her mind and the excellence of her life. Few persons, we are convinced, no older than she was at the time of her marriage, have made equal progress in holiness; and rare, very rare, is the instance, in which such a connexion results in a purer or more uninterrupted happiness. It was a union founded on high personal esteem, and on a mutual affection, which continually grew, and ripened, and mellowed for the time of harvest. The station, which she was called to fill at this early age, is one of great delicacy, as well as responsibility, and is attended with many difficulties. She entered on the performance of the various duties to her family and the people, to which it summoned her, with a firm reliance on the guidance and support of God; and perhaps no stronger evidence can be given of her substantial worth, than that from the first she

discharged them in such a manner, as to secure the high and increasing approbation of all who knew her. The attention to religion, which has been mentioned as commencing about the period of Mr. Edwards's ordination, though at no time extensive, continued about two years, and was followed by several years of inattention and indifference. His public labours were continued with faithfulness, but with no peculiar success; and he had reason to lament the too perceptible declension of his people, both in religion and morals. On the 11th of February, 1729, his venerable colleague was removed from the scene of his earthly labours. The event was sincerely and tenderly lamented by the people of Northampton, as well as extensively throughout the province. His funeral sermon was preached by his son-in-law, the Rev. William Williams, of Hatfield; and numerous ministers, in their own pulpits, paid a similar tribute of respect to his memory. In the spring of the same year, the health of Mr. Edwards, in consequence of too close application, so far failed him, that he was obliged to be absent from his people several months. Early in May he was at New-Haven, in company with Mrs. Edwards and their infant child, a daughter born Aug. 25th, 1728. In September, his father, in a letter to one of his daughters, expresses the hope that the health of his son is so far restored, as to enable him to resume his labours, and to preach twice on the sabbath. The summer was probably passed, partly at Northampton, and partly in travelling. His visit to Windsor, in September, gave him his last opportunity of seeing his sister Jerusha, whom he tenderly loved; and who a little while before had passed a considerable time with her friends in Northampton. She was attacked with a malignant fever in December, and on the 22d of that month died at her father's house. The uncommon strength and excellence of her character, rendered her peculiarly dear to all her relatives and friends; and from the testimonials of her father, of four of her sisters, and of a friend of the family at a distance, written soon after her death, [14] I have ascertained the following particulars. She was born in June, 1710, and, on the testimony of that friend, was a young lady of great sweetness of temper, of a fine understanding, and of a beautiful countenance. She was devoted to reading from childhood, and though fond of books of taste and amusement, she customarily preferred those which require close thought, and are fitted to strengthen and inform the mind. Like her sisters, she had received a thorough education, both English and classical, and by her proficiency, had justified the views of her father, and sustained the honour and claims of her sex. In conversation, she was solid and instructive beyond her years, yet, at the same time, was sprightly and active, and had an uncommon share of native wit and humour. Her wit was always delicate and kind, and used merely for recreation. According to the rule she prescribed to another, it constituted "the sauce, and not the food, in the entertainment." Being fond of retirement and meditation from early life, she passed much of her leisure time in solitary walks in the groves behind her father's house; and the richness of her mind, in moral reflection and philosophical remark, proved that these hours were not wasted in reverie, but occupied by solid thought and profitable contemplation. Habitually serene and cheerful, she was contented and happy; not envious of others, not desirous of admiration, not ambitious nor aspiring: and while she valued highly the esteem of her friends and of the wise and good, she was firmly convinced that her happiness depended, chiefly and ultimately, on the state of her own mind. She appeared to have gained the entire government of her temper and her passions, discovered uncommon equanimity and firmness under trials, and while, in difficult cases, she sought the best advice, yet ultimately acted for herself. Her religious life began in childhood; and from that time, meditation, prayer, and reading the sacred Scriptures, were not a prescribed task, but a coveted enjoyment. Her sisters, who knew how much of her time she daily passed alone, had the best

reason to believe that no place was so pleasant to her as her own retirement, and no society so delightful as solitude with God. She read theology, as a science, with the deepest interest, and pursued the systematic study of the Scriptures, by the help of the best commentaries. Her observance of the sabbath was exemplary, in solemnly preparing for it, in allotting to it the prescribed hours, and in devoting it only to sacred employments; and in the solemn and entire devotion of her mind to the duties of the sanctuary, she appeared, habitually, to feel with David, "Holiness becometh thine house for ever." Few persons attend more closely to preaching, or judge more correctly concerning it, or have higher pleasure in that which is solid, pungent, and practical. She saw and conversed with God, in his works of creation and providence. Her religious joy was, at times, intense and elevated. After telling one of her sisters, on a particular occasion, that she could not describe it, she observed to her, that it seemed like a streak of light shining in a dark place; and reminded her of a line Watts's Lyrics, "And sudden, from the cleaving skies, a gleam of glory broke." Her conscience was truly enlightened, and her conduct appeared to be governed by principle. She approved of the best things; discovered great reverence for religion, and strong attachment to the truly pious and conscientious; was severe in her estimate of herself, and charitable in judging of others; was not easily provoked, and usually tried to excuse the provocation; was unapt to cherish prejudices, and lamented, and strove to conceal, the faults of Christians. On the testimony of those who knew her best, "She was a remarkably loving, dutiful, obedient daughter, and a very kind and loving sister," "very helpful and serviceable in the family, and willingly labouring with her own hands," very "kind and friendly to her neighbours," attentive to the sick, charitable to the poor, prone to sympathize with the afflicted, and merciful to the brutes; and at the same time, respectful to superiors, obliging to equals, condescending and affable to inferiors, and manifesting sincere good will to all mankind. Courteous and easy in her manners, she was also modest, unostentatious, and retiring; and, while she uniformly respected herself, she commanded the respect of all who saw her. She was fond of all that was comely in dress, but averse to every thing gay and gaudy. She loved peace, and strove to reconcile those who were at variance; was delicately attentive to those of her sex, who were slighted by others; received reproofs with meekness, and told others of their faults with so much sweetness and faithfulness, as to increase their esteem and affection for herself. She detested all guile, and management, and deception, all flattery and falsehood, and wholly refused to associate with those who exhibited this character. She was most careful and select in her friendships, and most true and faithful to her friends--highly valuing their affection, and discovering the deepest interest in their welfare. Her conversation and conduct indicated uncommon innocence and purity of mind; and she avoided many things, which are thought correct by multitudes who are strictly virtuous. During her sickness she was not forsaken. A day or two before its termination, she manifested a remarkable admiration of the grace and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, to sinners, and particularly to herself: saying, "It is wonderful, it surprises me." A part of the time she was in some degree delirious; but, when her mind wandered, it seemed to wander heavenward. Just before her death, she attempted to sing a hymn, entitled, "The Absence of Christ," and died, in the full possession of her rational powers, expressing her hope of eternal salvation through his blood. This first example of the ravages of death, in this numerous family, was a most trying event to all its members; and the tenderness with which they cherished the memory of her who was gone, probably terminated only with life. The second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, was born on the 16th of the following April, and named Jerusha, after their deceased sister. In July, 1731, Mr. Edwards being in Boston,

delivered a sermon at the public lecture, entitled, "God glorified in Man's Dependence," from 1 Corinthians 1:29-30. "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." It was published, at the request of several ministers, and others who heard it, and preceded by a preface by the Rev. Messrs. Prince and Cooper, of Boston. This was his first publication, and is scarcely known to the American reader of his works. The subject was at that time novel, as exhibited by the preacher, and made a deep impression on the audience, and on the reverend gentlemen who were particularly active in procuring its publication. "It was with no small difficulty," say they, "that the author's youth and modesty were prevailed on, to let him appear a preacher in our public lecture, and afterwards to give us a copy of his discourse, at the desire of divers ministers, and others who heard it. But, as we quickly found him to be a workman that need not be ashamed before his brethren, our satisfaction was the greater, to see him pitching upon so noble a subject, and treating it with so much strength and clearness, as the judicious will perceive in the following composure: a subject, which secures to God his great design, in the work of fallen man's redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, which is evidently so laid out, as that the glory of the whole should return to him the blessed ordainer, purchaser, and applier; a subject, which enters deep into practical religion; without the belief of which, that must soon die in the hearts and lives of men." The following is the testimony, borne by these excellent men, to the talents and piety of the author:

"We cannot, therefore, but express our joy and thankfulness, that the great Head of the church is pleased still to raise up, from among the children of his people, for the supply of his churches, those who assert and maintain these evangelical principles; and that our churches, notwithstanding all their degeneracies, have still a high value for just principles, and for those who publicly own and teach them. And, as we cannot but wish and pray, that the college in the neighbouring colony, as well as our own, may be a fruitful mother of many such sons as the author; so we heartily rejoice, in the special favour of Providence, in bestowing such a rich gift on the happy church of Northampton, which has, for so many lustres of years, flourished under the influence of such pious doctrines, taught them in the excellent ministry of their late venerable pastor, whose gift and spirit we hope will long live and shine in his grandson, to the end that they may abound in all the lovely fruits of evangelical humility and thankfulness, to the glory of God." The discourse itself deserves this high commendation. It was the commencement of a series of efforts, on the part of the author, to illustrate the glory of God, as appearing in the greatest of all his works, the work of man's redemption. Rare indeed is the instance, in which a first publication is equally rich in condensed thought, or in new and elevated conceptions. The third child of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, also a daughter, was born February 13th, 1732, and received the name of Esther, after his mother and Mrs. Stoddard.

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[11] I use spiritual here in its original and most appropriate sense, as opposed to material.

[12] The Rev. Dr. Erskine, the warm friend and the correspondent of Mr. Edwards, being desirous of procuring a correct portrait , both of him and his wife, and hearing that a respectable English painter was in Boston , forwarded to his agent in that town, the sum requisite, not only for the portraits, but for the expenses of the journey. They were taken in 1740; and after the death of Dr.

Erskine, were very kindly transmitted by his executor to Dr. Edwards.

[13] Hopkin’s Life of Edwards. Dr. H. resided in the family a considerable time.

[14] This last was published.

06.07. CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER VII.

REMARKABLE REVIVAL OF RELIGION, IN 1734, AND 1735--ITS EXTENT AND POWER--MANNER OF TREATING AWAKENED SINNERS--CAUSES OF ITS DECLINE--RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY IN HAMPSHIRE--DEATH OF HIS SISTER LUCY--CHARACTERISTICS OF MRS. EDWARDS--REMAINDER OF PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

Early in 1732, the state of religion in Northampton, which had been for several years on the decline, began gradually, and perceptibly, to grow better; and an obvious check was given to the open prevalence of disorder and licentiousness. Immoral practices, which had long been customary, were regarded as disgraceful, and extensively renounced. The young, who had been the chief abettors of these disorders, and on whom the means of grace had exerted no salutary influence, discovered more of a disposition to hearken to the counsels of their parents, and the admonitions of the gospel, relinquished by degrees their more gross and public sins, and attended on the worship of the sabbath more generally, and with greater decorum and seriousness of mind; and, among the people as a body, there was a larger number than before, who manifested a personal interest in their own salvation. This desirable change in the congregation became more and more perceptible, throughout that and the following year. At the latter end of 1733, there appeared a very unusual flexibleness, and a disposition to yield to advice, in the young of both sexes; on an occasion, too, and under circumstances, where it was wholly unexpected. It had long, and perhaps always, been the custom in Northampton, to devote the sabbath evening, and the evening after the state public lecture, to visiting and diversion. On a sabbath preceding one of the public lectures, Mr. Edwards preached a sermon on the subject, explaining the mischievous consequences of this unhappy practice, exhorting the young to a reformation; and calling on parents and masters, universally, to come to an explicit agreement with one another, to govern their families in this respect, and on these evenings to keep their children and servants at home. The following evening, it so happened that, among a considerable number visiting at his house, there were individuals from every part of the town; and he took that occasion, to propose to those who were present, that they should, in his name, request the heads of families in their respective neighbourhoods, to assemble the next day, and converse upon the subject, and agree, every one, to restrain his own family. They did so. Such a meeting was accordingly held in each neighbourhood, and the proposal was universally complied with. But, when they made known this agreement to their families, they found little or no restraint necessary; for the young people, almost without exception, declared that they were convinced, by what they had heard from the pulpit, of the impropriety of the practice, and were ready cheerfully to relinquish it. From that time forward, it was given up, and there was an immediate and thorough reformation of those disorders and immoralities, which it had occasioned. This unexpected occurrence tenderly affected the minds of the people, and happily prepared them for events of still deeper interest.

Just after this, there began to be an unusual concern on the subject of religion, at a little hamlet called Pascommuck, consisting of a few farm houses, about three miles from the principal settlement; and a number of persons, at that place, appeared to be savingly converted. In the ensuing spring, the sudden and awful death of a young man, who became immediately delirious, and continued so until he died; followed by that of a young married woman, who, after great mental suffering, appeared to find peace with God, and died full of comfort, in a most earnest and affecting manner warning and counselling others; contributed extensively, and powerfully, to impress the minds of the young, and to excite a deeper interest on the subject of religion, throughout the congregation. The fourth child and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born April 7th, 1734, and baptized by the name of Mary. In the autumn, Mr. Edwards recommended to the young people, on the day of each stated public lecture, to assemble in various parts of the town, and spend the evening in prayer, and the other duties of social religion. This they readily did, and their example was followed by those who were older. The solemnity of mind, which now began to pervade the church and congregation, and which was constantly increasing, had a visible re-action on all the labours of Mr. Edwards, public as well as private; and it will not be easy to find discourses in any language, more solemn, spiritual, or powerful, than many of those which he now delivered. One of these, from Matthew 16:17. entitled, "A Divine and Supernatural Light immediately imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God, shown to be both a Scriptural and Rational Doctrine," excited uncommon interest in the hearers, and, at their request, was now published. As an exhibition of religion, as existing within the soul, in one of its peculiar forms or aspects, it will be found, in the perusal, remarkably adapted to enlighten, to refresh, and to sanctify; while the evidence of the reality of such a light, as derived both from the Scriptures and from reason, will convince every unprejudiced mind. At this time, a violent controversy, respecting Arminianism, prevailed extensively over that part of New England, and the friends of vital piety in Northampton regarded it as likely to have a most unhappy bearing on the interests of religion in that place; but, contrary to their fears, it was powerfully overruled for its promotion. Mr. Edwards, well knowing that the points at issue had an immediate bearing on the great subject of salvation, and that mankind never can be so powerfully affected by any subject, as when their attention to it has been strongly excited; determined, in opposition to the fears and the counsels of many of his friends, to explain his own views to his people, from the pulpit. Accordingly, he preached a series of sermons, on the various points relating to the controversy, and among others, his well-known Discourses on the great doctrine of Justification by Faith alone. For this he was sincerely censured by numbers on the spot, as well as ridiculed by many elsewhere [15] . The event, however, proved that he had judged wisely. In his discourses, he explained the scriptural conditions of salvation, and exposed the errors then prevalent with regard to them, with so much force of argument, and in a manner so solemn and practical, that it was attended with a signal blessing from heaven, on the people of his charge. Many, who had cherished these errors, were convinced that they could be justified only by the righteousness of Christ; while others, who had not, were brought to feel that they must be renewed by the Holy Spirit; and the minds of both were led the more earnestly to seek that they might be accepted of God. In the latter part of December, five or six individuals appeared to be very suddenly and savingly converted, one after another; and some of them in a manner so remarkable, as to awaken very great numbers, of all ages and conditions. The year 1735 opened on Northampton in a most auspicious manner. A deep and solemn interest in the great truths of religion, had become universal in all parts of the town, and among all classes of people. This was

the only subject of conversation in every company; and almost the only business of the people appeared to be, to secure their salvation. So extensive was the influence of the Spirit of God, that there was scarcely an individual in the town, either old or young, who was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. This was true of the gayest, of the most licentious, and of the most hostile to religion. And in the midst of this universal attention, the work of conversion was carried on in the most astonishing manner. Every day witnessed its triumphs; and so great was the alteration in the appearance of the town, that in the spring and summer following, it appeared to be full of the presence of God. There was scarcely a house which did not furnish the tokens of his presence, and scarcely a family which did not present the trophies of his grace. "The town," says Mr. Edwards, "was never so full of love, nor so full of joy, nor yet so full of distress, as it was then." Whenever he met the people in the sanctuary, he not only saw the house crowded, but every hearer earnest to receive the truth of God, and often the whole assembly dissolved in tears: some weeping for sorrow, others for joy, and others from compassion. In the months of March and April, when the work of God was carried on with the greatest power, he supposes the number, apparently of genuine conversions, to have been at least four a day, or nearly thirty a week, take one week with another, for five or six weeks together.

During the winter and spring, many persons from the neighbouring towns came to Northampton, to attend the stated lectures of Mr. Edwards; many others, on business, or on visits; and many others, from a distance, having heard contradictory reports of the state of things, came to see and examine for themselves. Of these, great numbers had their consciences awakened, were savingly wrought upon, and went home rejoicing in the forgiving love of God. This appeared to be the means of spreading the same influence in the adjacent towns, and in places more remote, so that no less than ten towns in the same county, and seventeen in the adjoining colony of Connecticut, within a short time, were favoured with revivals of religion. This was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable events of the kind, that has occurred since the canon of the New Testament was finished. It was so on account of its universality: no class, nor age, nor description, was exempt. Upwards of fifty persons above forty years of age, and ten above ninety, near thirty between ten and fourteen, and of four [16] , became, in the view of Mr. Edwards, the subjects of the renewing grace of God. It was so on account of the unusual numbers, who appeared to become Christians; amounting to more than three hundred persons, in half a year, and about as many of them males as females. Previous to one sacrament, about one hundred were received to the communion, and near sixty previous to another; and the whole number of communicants, at one time, was about six hundred and twenty, including almost all the adult population of the town. It was so in its rapid progress, in its amazing power, in the depth of the convictions felt, and in the degree of light, of love, and of joy communicated; as well as in its great extent, and in its swift propagation from place to place.

Early in the progress of this work of grace, Mr. Edwards seems to have decided for himself, the manner in which he was bound to treat awakened sinners:--to urge repentance on every such sinner, as his immediate duty; to insist that God is under no manner of obligation to any unrenewed man; and that a man can challenge nothing, either in absolute justice, or by free promise, on account of any thing he does before he repents and believes. He was fully convinced that if he had taught those, who came to consult him in their spiritual troubles, any other doctrines, he should have taken the most direct course to have utterly undone them. The discourses, which,

beyond measure more than any others which he preached, "had an immediate saving effect," were several from Romans 3:19. "That every mouth may be stopped,"--in which he endeavoured to show that it would be just with God, for ever to reject, and cast off, mere natural men.

Though it had not been the custom, as we have already seen, for a long period at Northampton, to require of candidates for admission to the church, a credible relation of the evidences of their own conversion, because, if unconverted, they were supposed to have a right to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as a converting ordinance: yet Mr. Edwards supposed he had very "sufficient evidence" of the conversion of those who were now admitted. There can be but little doubt, however, that, if the rules of the church had required, in every case, a thorough examination of the candidate's piety, the period of probation would have been longer, the danger of a false profession more solemnly realized, and the examination of each individual, by the pastor of the church, as well as by himself, far more strict; or that many, at first, regarded, both by themselves and others, as unquestionably Christians, would not, at that time, have made a profession of religion. But unfortunately he had never fully examined the scriptural ground for admission to the Lord's supper, and, like many others, had taken it for granted, that Mr. Stoddard's views of the subject were just. Had he investigated it as thoroughly, at that important crisis, as he did afterwards, there can be but little doubt that, in the high state of religious feeling then prevalent, the church would readily have changed its practice, or that all the candidates for admission would have consented to a thorough examination. Had such indeed been the issue, Mr. Edwards himself would have been saved from many trials, and the church and people of Northampton from great and incalculable evils: still it may well be doubted, whether the actual result has not occasioned a far greater amount of good to the church at large. In the latter part of May, 1735, this great work of the Spirit of God began obviously to decline, and the instances of conversion to be less numerous, both at Northampton and in the neighbouring villages. One principal cause of this declension, is undoubtedly to be found in the fact, that in all these places, both among ministers and private christians, the physical excitement had been greater than the human constitution can, for a long period, endure. Nothing, it should be remembered, exhausts the strength and the animal spirits, like feeling. One hour of intense joy, or of intense sorrow, will more entirely prostrate the frame, than weeks of close study. In revivals of religion, as they have hitherto appeared, the nerves of the whole man--of body, mind, and heart,--are kept continually on the stretch, from month to month; until at length they are relaxed, and become non-elastic; and then all feeling and energy, of every kind, is gone. Another reason is undoubtedly to be found in the fact, that those, who had so long witnessed this remarkable work of God, without renouncing their sins, had at length become hardened and hopeless in their impenitence. Mr. Edwards also attributes it, in part, to two striking events of Providence, at Northampton, and to two remarkable instances of enthusiastic delusion, in two of the neighbouring villages.

He mentions also a third cause, and one far more powerful, and more extensive in its influence, than either of the two last. This was an ecclesiastical controversy, growing out of the settlement of a minister at Springfield, in which he himself was ultimately compelled, though with great reluctance, to take a part; which agitated, not only the county of Hampshire, but the more remote churches of the province. Of this, a bare mention would alone be necessary, did we not find his connexion with it referred to, at a subsequent and most interesting period of his life. In 1735, the first church in Springfield, having elected a pastor, invited the churches in the southern part of

Hampshire, by their pastors and delegates in council, to proceed to his ordination. The council, when convened, after examining the qualifications of the candidate, refused to ordain him, and assigned two reasons for this refusal--youthful immorality, and anti-scriptural tenets. Mr. Edwards, though invited to this council, for some reason or other, was not present. The church, in August, called a second council, consisting chiefly of ministers and delegates from the churches in Boston, which, without delay, proceeded to the ordination. The first council, finding their own measures thus openly impeached, published a pamphlet entitled, "A Narrative and Defence of the Proceedings of the Ministers of Hampshire," &c. justifying their own conduct, and censuring that of their brethren. The second council defended themselves in a pamphlet entitled, "An Answer to the Hampshire Narrative." Mr. Edwards, at the request of the first council, and particularly of his uncle, the Rev. Mr. Williams, of Hatfield, who was its moderator, wrote a reply to this, entitled, "A Letter to the Author of the Pamphlet called, An Answer to the Hampshire Narrative."--This reply, viewed either as an argument upon the law and the facts, or as an answer to his opponents, is an exhibition of logic, not often met with in similar discussions, and appears to have concluded the controversy. This series of events occurred during the revival of religion in the churches of that county, and was thought, by too powerfully engrossing the attention, both of ministers and people, in various places, to have hastened its conclusion. And there can be no doubt that this opinion was correct. A revival of religion is nothing but the immediate result of an uncommon attention, on the part of a church and congregation, to the truth of God;--particularly to the great truths, which disclose the worth of the soul, and the only way in which it can be saved. Whenever, and wherever, the members of a church pay the due attention to these truths, by giving them their proper influence on their hearts, religion revives immediately in their affections and their conduct; and when the impenitent pay such attention, the kingdom of heaven immediately "suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The only effectual way to put a stop to such a work of grace, is, therefore, to divert the attention of Christians and sinners from those truths which bear immediately on the work of salvation. In the latter part of the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards were called to mourn the death of another of his sisters, named Lucy, the youngest but one of his father’s children; who was born in 1715, and died August 21, 1736 [17] , at the age of 21. After her they named their fifth child, who was born August 31, of the same year.

It was a peculiarly favourable dispensation of Providence, that, amid the multiplied cares and labours of this period, the health of Mr. Edwards was graciously preserved. A revival of religion to a minister, like the period of harvest to the husbandman, is the most busy and the most exhausting of all seasons; and during the progress of that, which he had just witnessed, not only was the whole time of Mr. Edwards fully occupied, but all the powers of his mind were laboriously employed, and all the feelings of his heart kept, from month to month, in high and powerful excitement. In addition to his ordinary duties as a teacher and pastor, his public lectures were now multiplied, private lectures were weekly appointed in different parts of the town, and his study was almost daily thronged by multitudes, looking to him as their spiritual guide. From the adjacent villages, also, great numbers resorted to him, for the same purpose, having the highest confidence in his wisdom and experience; and numerous ministers from various parts of the country, came to his house, to witness the triumphs of divine grace, and to gain, from his counsels and his measures, more just conceptions of the best manner of discharging the highest and most sacred duties of their office. In the midst of these complicated labours, as well as at all times, he found at home one, who was in every sense a help meet for him; one who made their common dwelling the

abode of order and neatness, of peace and comfort, of harmony and love, to all its inmates, and of kindness and hospitality to the friend, the visitant, and the stranger. "While she uniformly paid a becoming deference to her husband, and treated him with entire respect, she spared no pains in conforming to his inclinations, and rendering every thing in the family agreeable and pleasant: accounting it her greatest glory, and that wherein she could best serve God and her generation, to be the means, in this way, of promoting his usefulness and happiness. As he was of a weakly, infirm constitution, and was necessarily peculiarly exact in his diet, she was tender nurse to him, cheerfully attending upon him at all times, and in all things ministering to his comfort. And no person of discernment could be conversant in the family, without observing, and admiring, the perfect harmony, and mutual love and esteem, that subsisted between them. At the same time, when she herself laboured under bodily disorders and pains, which was not unfrequently the case, instead of troubling those around her with her complaints, and wearing a sour or dejected countenance, as if out of humour with every body, and every thing around her, because she was disregarded and neglected; she was accustomed to bear up under them, not only with patience, but with cheerfulness and good humour."

Devoted as Mr. Edwards was to study, and to the duties of his profession, it was necessary for him at all times, but especially in a season like this, of multiplied toils and anxieties, to be relieved from attention to all secular concerns; and it was a most happy circumstance, that he could trust every thing of this nature to the care of Mrs. Edwards, with entire safety, and with undoubting confidence. "She was a most judicious and faithful mistress of a family, habitually industrious, a sound economist, managing her household affairs with diligence and discretion. She was conscientiously careful that nothing should be wasted and lost; and often when she herself took care to save any thing of trifling value, or directed her children or others to do so, or when she saw them waste any thing, she would repeat the words of our Saviour--`that nothing be lost;' which words she said she often thought of, as containing a maxim worth remembering, especially when considered as the reason alleged by Christ, why his disciples should gather up the fragments of that bread which he had just before created with a word. She took almost the whole direction of the temporal affairs of the family without doors and within, managing them with great wisdom and prudence as well as cheerfulness; and in this was particularly suited to the disposition as well as the habits and necessities of her husband, who chose to have no care, if possible, of any worldly business." But there are other duties, of a still more tender and difficult nature, which none but a parent can adequately perform; and it was an unspeakable privilege to Mr. Edwards, now surrounded by a young and growing family, that when his duties to his people, especially in seasons like this, necessarily occupied his whole attention, he could safely commit his children to the wisdom and piety, the love and faithfulness, of their mother. Her views of the responsibility of parents were large and comprehensive. "She thought that, as a parent, she had great and important duties to do towards her children, before they were capable of government and instruction. For them, she constantly and earnestly prayed, and bore them on her heart before God, in all her secret and most solemn addresses to him; and that, even before they were born. The prospect of her becoming the mother of a rational immortal creature, which came into existence in an undone and infinitely dreadful state, was sufficient to lead her to bow before God daily, for his blessing on it--even redemption and eternal life by Jesus Christ. So that, through all the pain, labour, and sorrow, which attended her being the mother of children, she was in travail for them, that they might be born of God."

She regularly prayed with her children, from a very early period, and, as there is the best reason to believe, with great earnestness and importunity. Being thoroughly sensible that, in many respects, the chief care of forming children by government and instruction naturally lies on mothers, as they are most with their children at an age when they commonly receive impressions that are permanent, and have great influence in forming the character for life, she was very careful to do her part in this important business. When she foresaw or met with any special difficulty in this matter, she was wont to apply to her husband for advice and assistance; and on such occasions, they would both attend to it as a matter of the utmost importance. She had an excellent way of governing her children: she knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully, without loud angry words, much less, heavy blows. She seldom punished them; and in speaking to them used gentle and pleasant words. If any correction was necessary, she did not administer it in a passion; and when she had occasion to reprove and rebuke, she would do it in few words, without warmth and noise, and with all calmness and gentleness of mind. In her directions and reproofs in matters of importance, she would address herself to the reason of her children, that they might not only know her inclination and will, but at the same time be convinced of the reasonableness of it. She had need to speak but once; she was cheerfully obeyed; murmuring and answering again were not known among them. In their manners, they were uncommonly respectful to their parents. When their parents came into the room, they all rose instinctively from their seats, and never resumed them until their parents were seated; and when either parent was speaking, no matter with whom they had been conversing, they were all immediately silent and attentive. The kind and gentle treatment they received from their mother, while she strictly and punctiliously maintained her parental authority, seem naturally to beget and promote a filial respect and affection, and to lead them to a mild, tender treatment of each other. Quarrelling and contention, which too frequently take place among children, were in her family wholly unknown. She carefully observed the first appearance of resentment and ill will in her young children, towards any person whatever, and did not connive at it, as many who have the care of children do, but was careful to show her displeasure, and suppress it to the utmost; yet not by angry, wrathful words, which often provoke children to wrath, and stir up their irascible passions, rather than abate them. Her system of discipline was begun at a very early age, and it was her rule to resist the first, as well as every subsequent, exhibition of temper or disobedience in the child, however young, until its will was brought into submission to the will of its parents; wisely reflecting, that until a child will obey his parents, he can never be brought to obey God.

Fond as Mr. Edwards was of welcoming the friend and the stranger, and much as his house was a favourite place of resort, to ministers and others; it was absolutely necessary at all times, and peculiarly so in seasons of religious attention like this, that some one, well knowing how to perform the rites of hospitality, and to pay all the civilities and charities of life, should relieve him from these attentions, during those hours which were consecrated to his professional duties; and here, also, he could most advantageously avail himself of the assistance of Mrs. Edwards. Educated in the midst of polished life, familiar from childhood with the rules of decorum and good breeding, affable and easy in her manners, and governed by the feelings of liberality and benevolence, she was remarkable for her kindness to her friends, and to the visitants who resorted to Mr. Edwards; sparing no pains to make them welcome, and to provide for their convenience and comfort. She was also peculiarly kind to strangers who came to her house. By her sweet and winning manners and ready conversation, she soon became acquainted with them, and brought them to feel

acquainted with herself; and showed such concern for their comfort, and so kindly offered what she thought they needed, that while her friendly attentions discovered at once that she knew the feelings of a stranger, they also made their way directly to his heart, and gaining his confidence, led him immediately to feel as if he were at home, in the midst of near and affectionate friends.

"She made it her rule to speak well of all, so far as she could with truth and justice to herself and others. She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections and failings of any; and when she heard persons speaking ill of others, she would say what she thought she could with truth and justice in their excuse, or divert the obloquy, by mentioning those things that were commendable in them. Thus she was tender of every one’s character, even of those who injured and spoke evil of her; and carefully guarded against the too common vice of evil speaking and backbiting. She could bear injuries and reproach with great calmness, without any disposition to render evil for evil; but, on the contrary, was ready to pity and forgive those who appeared to be her enemies." This course of conduct, steadily pursued, secured, in an unusual degree, the affection and confidence of those who knew her.

She proved, also, an invaluable auxiliary to Mr. Edwards, in the duties of his profession, not only by her excellent example, but by her active efforts in doing good. "She was," says Dr. Hopkins, "eminent for her piety, and for experimental religion. Religious conversation was her delight; and, as far as propriety permitted, she promoted it in all companies. her religious conversation showed at once her clear comprehension of spiritual and divine things, and the deep impression which they had made upon her mind." It was not merely conversation about religion--about its truths, or duties, or its actual state--its doctrines or triumphs--or the character and conduct of its friends and ministers: it was religion itself;--that supreme love to God, to his kingdom and his glory, which, abounding in the heart, flows forth spontaneously, in the daily conversation and the daily life. The friends of vital Christianity, those who delighted in its great and essential truths, who showed its practical influence on their lives, and who were most engaged in promoting its prosperity, were her chosen friends and intimates. With such persons she would converse freely and confidentially, telling them of the exercises of her own heart, and the happiness she had experienced in a life of religion, for their encouragement in the christian course. Her mind appeared to attend to spiritual and divine things constantly, on all occasions, and in every condition and business of life. Secret prayer was her uniform practice, and appeared to be the source of daily enjoyment. She was a constant attendant on public worship, and always exhibited the deepest solemnity and reverence in the house of God. She always prized highly the privilege of social worship, not only in the family, but in the private meetings of christians. Such meetings, on the part of females only, for prayer and religious conversation, have at times been objected to, as, both in their nature and results, inconsistent with the true delicacy of the sex. Her own judgment, formed deliberately, and in coincidence with that of her husband, was in favour of these meetings; and accordingly, she regularly encouraged and promoted them, during the revival of religion of which we have been speaking, as well as at other times; attending on them herself, and not declining to take her proper share in the performance of their various duties. In this way, she exerted an important influence among her own sex, and over the young; an influence always salutary in promoting union, ardour, and spiritual-mindedness, but especially powerful in seasons of uncommon attention to religion.

One circumstance, which served essentially to extend and increase this influence, was the fact, that her religion had nothing gloomy or forbidding in its character. Unusual as it was in degree, it

was eminently the religion of joy. On the testimony of Mr. Edwards, it possessed this character, even when she was a little child of about five or six years of age, as well as customarily in after-life. At the commencement of this remarkable work of grace, she appears to have dedicated herself anew to God, with more entire devotion of heart to his service and glory, than she had ever been conscious of before; and during its progress, as well as afterwards, she experienced a degree of religious enjoyment, not previously known to herself, and not often vouchsafed to others. But on this subject, we may have occasion to speak more fully hereafter.

What, during this interesting work of grace, was the state of Mr. Edwards's own feelings on the subject of religion, must be gathered chiefly from his sermons written at the time, from the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," and from that high character for moral excellence, which he enjoyed not only among his own people, but among the ministers. Yet the remainder of his Personal Narrative, extending from his settlement, until a date somewhat later than this, and of course including this period, presents a general view of the subject, in a high degree interesting, and most proper to be inserted here.

REMAINDER OF PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

"Since I came to Northampton, I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections, and of the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in showing mercy to whom he would show mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me a great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

"I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would, in a great measure, spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Isaiah 32:2. `A man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest,' &c.

"It has often appeared to me delightful, to be united to Christ; to have him for my Head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my Teacher and Prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matthew 18:3 has often been sweet to me, `Except ye be converted, and become as little children,' &c. I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into and out of Christ: to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live, by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psalms 115:1. `Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.' And those words of Christ, Luke 10:21. `In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and

earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' That sovereignty of God, which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worth of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to show the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

"Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems, at such times, a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

"My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ's kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing, in all my reading, has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect, all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

"I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

"Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception--which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have several other times had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

"I have, many times, had a sense of the glory of the Third Person in the Trinity, and his office as Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet

communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God as a word of life; as the light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

"Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree, as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion [18] . It has often appeared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind; of all that have been since the beginning of the world to this time: and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul-concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying, that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself; I thought their expressions seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

"My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, `Infinite upon infinite--Infinite upon infinite!' When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss, infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet, it seems to me that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I though I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

"I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other Christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be `humbled to the dust;' that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought, and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer, `to lie infinitely low before God.' And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit, left in my heart.

"I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet, I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and

putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

"Though it seems to me, that in some respects I was a far better Christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a Mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, `This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine;' and of Christ, `This is my chosen Prophet.' It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night, (Jan. 1739,) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out, `How happy are they, who do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!' I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done."

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[15] Among those who opposed Mr. Edwards on this occasion, were several members of a family, in a neighbouring town, nearly connected with his own, and possessing, from its numbers, wealth, and respectability, a considerable share of influence. Their religious sentiments differed widely from his, and their opposition to him, in the course which he now pursued, became direct and violent. As his defence of his own opinions was regarded as triumphant, they appear to have felt, in some degree, the shame and mortification of a defeat; and their opposition to Mr. Edwards, though he resorted to every honourable method of conciliation, became, on their part, a settled personal hostility. It is probable, that their advice to Mr. Edwards, to refrain from the controversy, and particularly, not to publish his sentiments with regard to it, was given somewhat categorically, and with a full expectation that he, young as he was, would comply with it. His refusal so to do, was an offence not to be forgiven. We shall have occasion to recur to this subject again.

[16] Of the conversion of this child, whose name was Phebe Bartlett, a most minute and interesting account is given in the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions." Dr. Edwards, under date of March 30, 1789, in a letter to Dr. Ryland, says, "In answer to your inquiry, in a former letter, concerning Phebe Bartlett, I have to inform you, that she is yet living, and has uniformly maintained the character of a true convert.

[17] I have discovered no papers or letters of the family, of a date near this, and no mention of this young lady, except on her tombstone.

[18] Our author does not say, that he had more wickedness, and badness of heart, since his conversion, the he had before; but that he had a greater sense thereof. Thus a blind man may have his garden full of noxious weeds, and yet not see or be sensible of them. But should the garden be is great part cleared of these, and furnished with many beautiful and salutary plants; and supposing the owner now to have the power of discriminating objects of sight; in this case, he

would have less, but he see and have a sense of more. And thus it was that St. Paul, though greatly freed from sin, yet saw and felt himself as "the chief of sinners." To which may be added, that the better the organ, and clearer the light may be, the stronger will be the sense excited by sin or holiness.

06.08. CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER VIII.

"NARRATIVE OF SURPRISING CONVERSIONS"--HIS VIEWS OF REVIVALS OF RELIGION--REMARKABLE PROVIDENCE AT NORTHAMPTON--"FIVE DISCOURSES"--MR. BELLAMY A RESIDENT OF HIS FAMILY--HISTORY OF REDEMPTION--EXTRA-PAROCHIAL LABOURS OF MR. EDWARDS--SERMON AT ENFIELD--FUNERAL SERMON ON THE REV. W. WILLIAMS. On the 30th of May, 1735, Mr. Edwards, in answer to a letter from the Rev. Dr. Colman, of Boston, wrote a succinct account of the work of Divine grace at Northampton; which, being published by him, and forwarded to the Rev. Dr. Watts and the Rev. Dr. Guyse, in London, those gentlemen discovered so much interest in the facts recited, detailing them on several occasions before large assemblies, that the author, at the request of his correspondent, was induced to prepare a much fuller statement, in a letter to the same gentleman, bearing date, Nov. 6, 1736. This was published in London, under the title of "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," with an Introduction by Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse; and was read very extensively, and with very lively emotions, by Christians in England. There, this mark of Divine grace was regarded, not only with very deep interest, but with surprise and wonder: nothing like it, for its extent and power, having been witnessed in that country, for many previous years. Those excellent men observe, "We are abundantly satisfied of the truth of this narrative, not only from the character of the writer, but from the concurrent testimony of many other persons in New England; for this thing was not done in a corner. There is a spot of ground, as we are informed, wherein there are twelve or fourteen towns and villages, chiefly situate in the county of Hampshire, near the banks of the river Connecticut, within the compass of thirty miles, wherein it pleased God, two years ago, to display his sovereign mercy, in the conversion of a great multitude of souls, in a short space of time; turning them from a formal, cold, and careless profession of Christianity, to the lively exercise of every christian grace, and the powerful practice of our holy religion. The great God has seemed to act over again the miracle of Gideon’s fleece, which was plentifully watered with the dew of heaven, while the rest of the earth round about it was dry, and had no such remarkable blessing.

"There has been a great and just complaint, for many years, among the ministers and churches of Old England, and in New, (except about the time of the late earthquake there,) that the work of conversion goes on very slowly, that the Spirit of God, in his saving influences, is much withdrawn from the ministrations of his word; and there are few that receive the ministrations of the gospel, with any eminent success upon their hearts. But as the gospel is the same divine instrument of grace still, as ever it was in the days of the apostles, so our ascended Saviour, now and then, takes a special occasion to manifest the divinity of this gospel, by a plentiful effusion of his Spirit where it is preached: then sinners are turned into saints in numbers, and there is a new face of things spread over a town or country. The wilderness and the solitary places are glad, the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose; and surely, concerning this instance, we may add, that they have seen the glory of the Lord there, and the excellency of our God; they have seen the outgoings of God our King in his sanctuary." This work was the first of a series of publications from

Mr. Edwards, intended to explain the nature and effects of saving conversion, and the nature of a genuine work of the Holy Spirit in a community. As a religious narrative, it is one of the most interesting I have hitherto met with; having all that exactness of description and vividness of colouring, which attend the account of an eyewitness, when drawn up, not from recollection, but in the very passing of the scenes which he describes. It proved a most useful and seasonable publication. For a long period, revivals of religion had been chiefly unknown, both in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe. The church at large had generally ceased to expect events of this nature, regarding them as confined to apostolic times, and to the ultimate triumphs of Christianity; and appear to have entertained very imperfect views of their causes, their nature, and the manner in which they ought to be regarded. In no previous publication had these important subjects been adequately explained. The particular event, which Mr. Edwards had the privilege of recording, viewed as a remarkable work of Divine grace, has, to this day, scarcely a parallel in the modern annals of the church. His own views of these subjects were alike removed from the apathy of unbelief, and the wildness of enthusiasm; they were derived, not merely from his familiarity with the facts, but from just conceptions of the intellectual and moral faculties of man, and from a thorough knowledge of the word of God. And while the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" served to inspire the church at large with a new and higher kind of faith, and hope, and zeal, it also proved a safe directory of their views and their conduct. In a short time it was extensively circulated, both in England and Scotland; and in the latter country, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, its diffusion was speedily followed by salutary and important consequences.

It may not be improper to insert in this place the following letter of Mr. Edwards, giving an account of a surprising and alarming providence, which attended the people of Northampton, in the early part of 1737.

"Northampton, March 19, 1737.

"We in this town were, the last Lord’s day, (March 13th,) the spectators, and many of us the subjects, of one of the most amazing instances of Divine preservation, that perhaps was ever known in the world. Our meeting-house is old and decayed, so that we have been for some time building a new one, which is yet unfinished. It has been observed of late, that the house we have hitherto met in, has gradually spread at the bottom; the sills and walls giving way, especially in the foreside, by reason of the weight of timber at top pressing on the braces, that are inserted into the posts and beams of the house. It has done so more than ordinarily this spring: which seems to have been occasioned by the heaving of the ground, through the extreme frosts of the winter past, and its now settling again on that side which is next the sun, by the spring thaws. By this means, the underpinning has been considerably disordered, which people were not sensible of, till the ends of the joists, which bore up the front gallery, were drawn off from the girts on which they rested, by the walls giving way. So that in the midst of the public exercise in the forenoon, soon after the beginning of the sermon, the whole gallery--full of people, with all the seats and timbers, suddenly, and without any warning--sunk, and fell down, with the most amazing noise, upon the heads of those that sat under, to the astonishment of the congregation. The house was filled with dolorous shrieking and crying; and nothing else was expected than to find many people dead, or dashed to pieces.

"The gallery, in falling, seemed to break and sink first in the middle; so that those who were upon it were thrown together in heaps before the front door. But the whole was so sudden, that many of those who fell, knew nothing what it was, at the time, that had befallen them. Others in the congregation thought it had been an amazing clap of thunder. The falling gallery seemed to be broken all to pieces before it got down; so that some who fell with it, as well as those who were under, were buried in the ruins; and were found pressed under heavy loads of timber, and could do nothing to help themselves.

"But so mysteriously and wonderfully did it come to pass, that every life was preserved; and though many were greatly bruised, and their flesh torn, yet there is not, as I can understand, one bone broken, or so much as put out of joint, among them all. Some, who were thought to be almost dead at first, are greatly recovered; and but one young woman seems yet to remain in dangerous circumstances, by an inward hurt in her breast; but of late there appears more hope of her recovery.

"None can give an account, or conceive, by what means people's lives and limbs should be thus preserved, when so great a multitude were thus imminently exposed. It looked as though it was impossible, but that great numbers must instantly be crushed to death, or dashed in pieces. It seems unreasonable to ascribe it to any thing else but the care of Providence, in disposing the motions of every piece of timber, and the precise place of safety where every one should sit and fall, when none were in any capacity to care for their own preservation. The preservation seems to be most wonderful, with respect to the women and children in the middle alley, under the gallery, where it came down first, and with greatest force, and where there was nothing to break the force of the falling weight.

"Such an event may be a sufficient argument of a Divine providence over the lives of men. We thought ourselves called on to set apart a day to be spent in the solemn worship of God, to humble ourselves under such a rebuke of God upon us, in time of public service in his house, by so dangerous and surprising an accident; and to praise his name for so wonderful, and as it were miraculous, a preservation. The last Wednesday was kept by us to that end; and a mercy, in which the hand of God is so remarkably evident, may be well worthy to affect the hearts of all who hear it." In 1738, the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" was republished in Boston, with a preface by four of the senior ministers of that town. To it were prefixed five discourses, on the following subjects:

I. Justification by Faith alone. Romans 4:5.

II. Pressing into the Kingdom of God. Luke 16:16.

III. Ruth's Resolution. Ruth 1:16.

IV. The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners. Romans 3:19.

V. The Excellency of Jesus Christ. Revelation 5:5-6. The first four of these discourses were delivered during the revival of religion, and were published at the earnest desire of those to whom they were preached. In fixing on the particular discourses, necessary to make up the volume, he was guided by the choice of the people. "What has determined them in this choice," he observes, "is the experience of special benefit to their souls from these discourses. Their desire to have them

in their hands, from the press, has long manifested, and often expressed to me; their earnestness in it is evident from this, that though it be a year to them of the greatest charge that ever has been, by reason of the expense of building a new meeting-house, yet they chose rather to be at this additional expense now, though it be very considerable, than to have it delayed another year." In publishing the discourse on "Justification," he was also influenced by the urgent request of several ministers, who were present when a part of it was delivered, and whose opinion and advice he thought deserving of great respect. This discourse, though when first written of a much less size than as it is printed, was preached at two successive public lectures, in the latter part of 1734. It was a time, when the minds of the people, in all that section of country, were very much agitated by a controversy on that very subject; when some were brought to doubt of that way of acceptance with God, which they had been taught from their infancy was the only way; and when many were engaged in looking more thoroughly into the grounds of those doctrines in which they had been educated; that this discourse seemed to be remarkably blessed, not only in establishing the judgments of men in this truth, but in engaging their hearts in a more earnest pursuit of justification, by faith in the righteousness of Christ. "At that time," says the author, "while I was greatly reproached for defending this doctrine in the pulpit, and just upon my suffering a very open abuse for it, God’s work wonderfully broke forth among us, and souls began to flock to Christ, as the Saviour in whose righteousness alone they hoped to be justified. So that this was the doctrine, on which this work, in its beginning, was founded, as it evidently was in the whole progress of it." He regarded these facts as a remarkable testimony of God’s approbation of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. This discourse, which is really a treatise of more than one hundred closely printed pages, exhibited the subject in a light so new, clear, and convincing, and so effectually removed the difficulties with which, till then, it was supposed to be attended, that on its first publication it met a very welcome reception, and from that time to the present has been regarded as the common text-book of students in theology. It would not be easy to find another treatise on the same subject, equally able and conclusive.

There are individuals, who, having received their theological views from the straitest sect of a given class of theologians, regard the sermon on "Pressing into the kingdom of God," as inconsistent with those principles of moral agency, which are established in the treatise on the "Freedom of the Will;" and charitably impute the error to the imperfect views of the author at this period. While a member of college, however, Mr. Edwards, in investigating the subject of Power, as he was reading the Essay of Locke, came to the settled conclusion, that men have in the physical sense, the power of repenting and turning to God. A further examination might perhaps evince, that the points in question are less consistent with some peculiar views of theology, of a more modern date, than with any, logically deducible from the treatise on the "Will." The sermon itself, like the rest, has uncommon ardour, unction, and solemnity, and was one of the most useful which he delivered. The sermon on the "Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners," in the language of the text, literally stops the mouth of every reader, and compels him, as he stands before his Judge, to admit, if he does not feel, the justice of his sentence. I know not where to find, in any language, a discourse so well adapted to strip the impenitent sinner of every excuse, to convince him of his guilt, and to bring him low before the justice and holiness of God. According to the estimate of Mr. Edwards, it was far the most powerful and effectual of his discourses; and we scarcely know of any other sermon which has been favoured with equal success. The sermon on the "Excellency of Christ," was selected by Mr. Edwards himself, partly because he had been

importuned to publish it by individuals in another town, in whose hearing it was occasionally preached; and partly because he thought that a discourse on such an evangelical subject, would properly follow others that were chiefly awakening; and that something of the excellency of the Saviour was proper to succeed those things, that were to show the necessity of salvation. No one who reads it will hesitate to believe, that it was most happily selected. I have met with no sermon hitherto, so admirably adapted to the circumstances of a sinner, when, on the commencement of his repentance, he renounces every other object of trust, but the righteousness of Christ. Taking the whole volume, as thus printed, the Narrative and the Five Discourses, we suppose it to have been one of the most effectual, in promoting the work of salvation, which has hitherto issued from the press. The sixth child, and eldest son, of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born July 25, 1738, and after his father was baptized by the name of Timothy.

About this period, Mr. Joseph Bellamy, afterwards the Rev. Dr. Bellamy of Bethlem, Connecticut, went to Northampton to pursue his theological studies under Mr. Edwards, and resided for a considerable period in his family. The very high respect which he cherished for the eminent talents and piety of Mr. Edwards, and which drew him to Northampton, was reciprocated by the latter; and a friendship commenced between them, which terminated only with life [19] . In the beginning of March, 1739, Mr. Edwards commenced a series of sermons from Isaiah li. 8. "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." The eight first were delivered during that month, the eight next in the two following months, and the whole series, thirty in all, was completed before the close of August. After explaining the text, he derives from it the following doctrine: "The work of redemption is a work, which carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world." The subject was one in which Mr. Edwards felt the deepest interest; but he appears never to have repeated the series of discourses to his people. What his ultimate intentions were, we may learn, however, from the following extract of a letter, written by him many years afterwards: "I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a History of the Work of Redemption, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history, considering the affair of christian theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, which I suppose is to be the grand design of all God’s designs, and the summum and ultimum of all God’s operations and decrees, particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order;--The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events; beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have an account of in history or prophecy, till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things, when it shall be said, It is done, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End; concluding my work, with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled to last for eternity.--This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds,--heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected successive events and alterations in each, so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; which is a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every doctrine will appear to the greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in

the most striking manner, showing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole." From this it is obvious, that he long cherished the intention of re-writing and enlarging the work, and of turning it into a regular treatise; but this design he never accomplished. We shall have occasion to allude to this work hereafter. The sixth daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards was born June 24, 1740, and named Susannah. The circumstances which caused the remarkable attention to religion, which began in 1734, to decline, were chiefly local in their nature, and limited in their influence, either to Northampton, or to the county of Hampshire. The consequence was, that it continued to exist, in various sections of the country, to the east, the south, and the west, during the five following years. By the astonishing work of grace at Northampton, an impulse had been given to the churches of this whole western world, which could not soon be lost. The history of that event, having been extensively circulated, had produced a general conviction in the minds of Christians, that the preaching of the gospel might be attended by effects, not less surprising, than those which followed it in apostolic times. This conviction produced an important change in the views, and conduct, both of ministers and churches. The style of preaching was altered: it became, extensively, more direct and pungent, and more adapted to awaken the feelings and convince the conscience. The prayers of good men, both in public and private, indicated more intense desires for the prevalence of religion, and a stronger expectation that the word of God would be attended with an immediate blessing. As the natural result of such a change, revivals of religion were witnessed in numerous villages in New Jersey, Connecticut, and the eastern parts of New England; and even where this was not the case, religion was so extensively and unusually the object of attention, during the period specified, that the church at large seemed preparing for events of a more interesting nature, than any that had yet been witnessed. In consequence of the high reputation, which Mr. Edwards had acquired as a powerful and successful preacher, and as a safe and wise counsellor to the anxious and inquiring, he received frequent invitations from churches, near and more remote, to come and labour among them for a little period; and with the consent of his people, (his own pulpit always being supplied,) he often went forth on these missionary tours, and found an ample reward in the abundant success which crowned his labours. In this, his example was soon followed by several distinguished ministers in Connecticut and New Jersey. In one of these excursions, he spent some little time at Enfield in Connecticut, where he preached, on the 8th of July, 1741, the well-known sermon, entitled, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," from Deuteronomy 32:35; which was the cause of an immediate and general revival of religion throughout the place. It was soon afterwards published. On the 2d of September following, he preached the sermon, entitled, "The Sorrows of the Bereaved spread before Jesus," at the funeral of his uncle, the Rev. William Williams of Hatfield, a gentleman highly respected for his sound understanding, piety, and faithfulness as a minister. This sermon was immediately afterwards published.

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[19] Mr. Bellamy was settled at Bethlem in the spring of 1740, in the midst of a general attention to religion, on the part of the people of that place.

06.09. CHAPTER IX.

CHAPTER IX.

COMMENCEMENT OF A SECOND GREAT REVIVAL OF RELIGION, IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1740--VISIT OF MR. WHITEFIELD AT NORTHAMPTON--IMPULSES--JUDGING OF THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF OTHERS--LETTER TO MR. WHEELOCK--GREAT EFFECTS OF A PRIVATE LECTURE OF MR. E.--LETTER TO HIS DAUGHTER--LETTER TO A YOUNG LADY IN CONNECTICUT--LAY PREACHING--LETTER OF REV. G. TENNENT--SERMON AT NEW-HAVEN--"DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF A WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD"--PREFACES BY MR. COOPER AND MR. WILLISON--MR. SAMUEL HOPKINS.

While Mr. Edwards was thus occasionally serving his Divine Master abroad, he found, also, that his labours at home began to be attended with similar success. A great reformation in morals, as well as religion, had been the consequence of the preceding revival of religion. Associations for prayer and social religion had been regularly kept up, and a few instances of awakening and conversion had all along been known, even at the season of the greatest stupidity. In the spring of 1740, there was a perceptible alteration for the better; and the influence of the Spirit of God was most obvious on the minds of the people, particularly on those of the young, in causing greater seriousness and solemnity, and in prompting them to make religion far more generally the subject of conversation. Improprieties of conduct, too often allowed, were more generally avoided; greater numbers resorted to Mr. Edwards to converse with him respecting their salvation; and, in particular individuals, there appeared satisfactory evidence of an entire change of character. This state of things continued through the summer and autumn. On the evening of Thursday, the 16th of October, 1740, Mr. Whitefield came to Northampton to see Mr. Edwards, and to converse with him respecting the work of God in 1735, and remained there until the morning of the 20th. In this interval he preached five sermons, adapted to the circumstances of the town, reproving the backslidings of some, the obstinate impenitence of others, and summoning all, by the mercies with which the town had been distinguished, to return to God. His visit was followed by an awakening among professors of religion, and soon afterwards by a deep concern among the young, and there were some instances of hopeful conversion. This increased during the winter; and in the spring of 1741 religion became the object of general attention. On Monday, Mr. Edwards, with the Rev. Mr. Hopkins of West Springfield, his brother-in-law, and several other gentlemen, accompanied Mr. Whitefield on the east side of the river as far as East Windsor, to the house of his father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards. While they were thus together, he took an opportunity to converse with Mr. Whitefield alone, at some length, on the subject of impulses, and assigned the reasons which he had to think, that he gave too much heed to such things. Mr. Whitefield received it kindly, but did not seem inclined to have much conversation on the subject, and in the time of it, did not appear convinced by any thing which he heard. He also took occasion in the presence of others, to converse with Mr. Whitefield at some length, about his too customary practice of judging other persons to be unconverted; examined the scriptural warrant for such judgments, and expressed

his own decided disapprobation of the practice. Mr. Whitefield, at the same time, mentioned to Mr. Edwards his design of bringing over a number of young men from England, into New Jersey and Pennsylvania, to be ordained by the two Mr. Tennents. Their whole interview was an exceedingly kind and affectionate one; yet Mr. Edwards supposed that Mr. Whitefield regarded him somewhat less as an intimate and confidential friend, than he would have done, had he not opposed him in two favourite points of his own practice, for which no one can be at a loss to perceive that he could find no scriptural justification. Each however regarded the other with great affection and esteem, as a highly favoured servant of God; and Mr. Edwards, as we shall soon see, speaks of Mr. Whitefield's visit to Northampton in terms of the warmest approbation. In the month of May, a private lecture of Mr. Edwards's was attended with very powerful effects on the audience, and ultimately upon the young of both sexes, and on children throughout the town; and during the summer, and the early part of the autumn, there was a glorious progress in the work of God on the hearts of sinners in conviction and conversion, and great numbers appeared to become the real disciples of Christ.

Among the ministers, who at this period occasionally left their own congregations, and went forth as labourers into the common field to gather in the harvest, one of those who were most distinguished for their activity and success, was the Rev. Mr. Wheelock, of Lebanon, afterwards the president of Dartmouth college. In the following letter from Mr. Edwards to this gentleman, he urges him to visit Scantic, a feeble settlement in the northern part of his father's parish: the inhabitants of which were too remote to attend public worship regularly at East Windsor, and yet too few and feeble to maintain it themselves.

"Northampton, June 9, 1741.

"rev. and dear sir,

"The special occasion of my now writing to you, is a desire I have of two things; one is, that you and your brother Pomeroy would go to Scantic, in my father's parish, and preach there as often as the people will be willing to hear you, and continue so doing as long as the concerns of your own parishes will allow of your being absent. You know the wretched circumstances of that society; and if ever they are healed, I believe it must be by a reviving and prevailing of true religion among them. By all that I can understand, they are wholly dead, in this extraordinary day of God's gracious visitation. You have lately been so remarkable blessed elsewhere, that I cannot but hope you would have success there also. I have written to my father, to inform him that I have desired this of you.

"Another thing that I desire of you is, that you would come up hither and help us, both you and Mr. Pomeroy. There has been a reviving of religion among us of late; but your labours have been much more remarkably blessed than mine. Other ministers, I have heard, have shut up their pulpits against you; but here I engage you shall find one open. May God send you hither, with the like blessing as he has sent you to some other places; and may your coming be a means to humble me, for my barrenness and unprofitableness, and a means of my instruction and enlivening. I want an opportunity to concert measures with you, for the advancement of the kingdom and glory of our Redeemer. Please to communicate what I write to Mr. Pomeroy, and give my service to him. I desire the prayers of you both, that God will give me more of that holy spirit, and happy success, with which you are replenished.

I am, Dear Sir, your unworthy brother and fellow-labourer, jonathan edwards." As very few of Mr. Edwards's letters to his own family are preserved, it is proper to give those few to the reader, even when they are not otherwise interesting, in order to exhibit his true character, as an affectionate and faithful christian father. The following was addressed to his eldest daughter, in her thirteenth year, while residing with her aunt, Mrs. Huntington, at Lebanon. To Miss Sarah Edwards, Lebanon.

Northampton, June 25th, 1741. my dear child, Your mother has received two letters from you, since you went away. We rejoice to hear of your welfare, and of the flourishing state of religion in Lebanon. I hope you will well improve the great advantage God is thereby putting into your hands, for the good of your own soul. You have very weak and infirm health, and I am afraid are always like to have; and it may be, are not to be long-lived; and while you do live, are not like to enjoy so much of the comforts of this life as others do, by reason of your want of health; and therefore, if you have no better portion, will be miserable indeed. But, if your soul prospers, you will be a happy, blessed person, whatever becomes of your body. I wish you much of the presence of Christ, and of communion with him, and that you might live so as to give him honour, in the place where you are, by an amiable behaviour towards all. Your mother would have you go on with your work, if you can, and she would be glad if your aunt would set you to work something of hers, though you do but little in a day. She would have you send word by Mr. Wheelock, who I suppose will come up the next week, or the week after, whether you are well enough to make lace: if you are, she will send you a lace and bobbins. The flourishing of religion in this town, and in these parts of the country, has rather increased since you went away. Your mother joins with me in giving her love to you, and to your uncle and aunt. Your sisters give their love to you, and their duty to them. The whole family is glad, when we hear from you. Recommending you to the continual care and mercy of heaven, I remain your loving father, Jonathan Edwards."

Some time in the course of the year, a young lady, residing at S ----, in Connecticut, who had lately made a public profession of religion, requested Mr. Edwards to give her some advice, as to the best manner of maintaining a religious life. In reply, he addressed to her the following letter; which will be found eminently useful to all persons just entering on the christian course.

Letter addressed to a Young Lady at S --, Conn. in the year 1741.

"my dear young friend, As you desired me to send you, in writing, some directions how to conduct yourself in your christian course, I would now answer your request. The sweet remembrance of the great things I have lately seen at S ----, inclines me to do any thing in my power, to contribute to the spiritual joy and prosperity of God's people there.

1. I would advise you to keep up as great a strife and earnestness in religion, as if you knew yourself to be in a state of nature, and were seeking conversion. We advise persons under conviction, to be earnest and violent for the kingdom of heaven; but when they have attained to conversion, they ought not to be the less watchful, laborious, and earnest, in the whole work of religion, but the more so; for they are under infinitely greater obligations. For want of this, many persons, in a few months after their conversion, have begun to lose their sweet and lively sense of spiritual things, and to grow cold and dark, and have `pierced themselves through with many sorrows;' whereas, if they had done as the apostle did, (Php 3:12-14) their path would have been `as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.'

2. Do not leave off seeking, striving, and praying for the very same things that we exhort unconverted persons to strive for, and a degree of which you have had already in conversion. Pray that your eyes may be opened, that you may receive sight, that you may know yourself, and be brought to God's footstool; and that you may see the glory of God and Christ, and may be raised from the dead, and have the love of Christ shed abroad in your heart. Those who have most of these things, have need still to pray for them; for there is so much blindness and hardness, pride and death remaining, that they still need to have that work of God wrought upon them, further to enlighten and enliven them, that shall be bringing them out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and be a kind of new conversion and resurrection from the dead. There are very few requests that are proper for an impenitent man, that are not also, in some sense, proper for the godly.

3. When you hear a sermon, hear for yourself. Though what is spoken may be more especially directed to the unconverted, or to those that, in other respects, are in different circumstances from yourself; yet, let the chief intent of your mind be to consider, `In what respect is this applicable to me? and what improvement ought I to make of this, for my own soul's good?'

4. Though God has forgiven and forgotten your past sins, yet do not forget them yourself: often remember, what a wretched bond-slave you were in the land of Egypt. Often bring to mind your particular acts of sin before conversion; as the blessed apostle Paul is often mentioning his old blaspheming, persecuting spirit, and his injuriousness to the renewed; humbling his heart, and acknowledging that he was `the least of the apostles,' and not worthy `to be called an apostle,' and the `least of all saints,' and the `chief of sinners;' and be often confessing your old sins to God, and let that text be often in your mind, (Ezekiel 16:63) `that thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou has done, saith the Lord God.'

5. Remember, that you have more cause, on some accounts, a thousand times, to lament and humble yourself for sins that have been committed since conversion, than before, because of the infinitely greater obligations that are upon you to live to God, and to look upon the faithfulness of Christ, in unchangeably continuing his loving-kindness, notwithstanding all your great unworthiness since your conversion.

6. Be always greatly abased for your remaining sin, and never think that you lie low enough for it; but yet be not discouraged or disheartened by it; for, though we are exceeding sinful, yet we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; the preciousness of whose blood, the merit of whose righteousness, and the greatness of whose love and faithfulness, infinitely overtop the highest mountains of our sins.

7. When you engage in the duty of prayer, or come to the Lord's supper, or attend any other duty of divine worship, come to Christ as Mary Magdalen [20] did; (Luke 7:37-38) come, and cast yourself at his feet, and kiss them, and pour forth upon him the sweet perfumed ointment of divine love, out of a pure and broken heart, as she poured the precious ointment out of her pure broken alabaster box.

8. Remember, that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace, and of sweet communion with Christ: it was the first sin committed, and lies lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building, and is with the greatest difficulty rooted out, and is the most

hidden, secret, and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps insensibly into the midst of religion, even, sometimes, under the disguise of humility itself.

9. That you may pass a correct judgment concerning yourself, always look upon those as the best discoveries, and the best comforts, that have most of these two effects: those that make you least and lowest, and most like a child; and those that most engage and fix your heart, in a full and firm disposition to deny yourself for God, and to spend and be spent for him.

10. If at any time you fall into doubts about the state of your soul, in dark and dull frames of mind, it is proper to review your past experience; but do not consume too much time and strength in this way: rather apply yourself, with all your might, to an earnest pursuit after renewed experience, new light, and new lively acts of faith and love. One new discovery of the glory of Christ's face, will do more toward scattering clouds of darkness in one minute, than examining old experience, by the best marks that can be given, through a whole year.

11. When the exercise of grace is low, and corruption prevails, and by that means fear prevails; do not desire to have fear cast out any other way, than by the reviving and prevailing of love in the heart: by this, fear will be effectually expelled, as darkness in a room vanishes away, when the pleasant beams of the sun are let into it.

12. When you counsel and warn others, do it earnestly, and affectionately, and thoroughly; and when you are speaking to your equals, let your warnings be intermixed with expressions of your sense of your own unworthiness, and of the sovereign grace that makes you differ.

13. If you would set up religious meetings of young women by yourselves, to be attended once in a while, besides the other meetings that you attend, I should think it would be very proper and profitable.

14. Under special difficulties, or when in great need of, or great longings after, any particular mercy, for yourself or others, set apart a day for secret prayer and fasting by yourself alone; and let the day be spent, not only in petitions for the mercies you desire, but in searching your heart, and in looking over your past life, and confessing your sins before God, not as is wont to be done in public prayer, but by a very particular rehearsal before God of the sins of your past life, from your childhood hitherto, before and after conversion, with the circumstances and aggravations attending them, and spreading all the abominations of your heart very particularly, and fully as possible, before him.

15. Do not let the adversaries of the cross have occasion to reproach religion on your account. How holily should the children of God, the redeemed and the beloved of the Son of God, behave themselves. Therefore, `walk as children of the light, and of the day,' and `adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour;' and especially, abound in what are called the christian virtues, and make you like the Lamb of God: be meek and lowly of heart, and full of pure, heavenly, and humble love to all; abound in deeds of love to others, and self-denial for others; and let there be in you a disposition to account others better than yourself.

16. In all your course, walk with God, and follow Christ, as a little, poor, helpless child, taking hold of Christ's hand, keeping your eye on the marks of the wounds in his hands and side, whence came the blood that cleanses you from sin, and hiding your nakedness under the skirt of the white

shining robes of his righteousness.

17. Pray much for the ministers and the church of God; especially, that he would carry on his glorious work which he has now begun, till the world shall be full of his glory."

About this period, a considerable number of lay members of the church began, in various parts of New England, to hold religious meetings, and to preach and exhort in the manner of ministers. They were usually men of worth, and desirous of doing good; but having much zeal, and little knowledge, and often but little discretion, the church, at that period, had certainly very little reason to rejoice in their labours. The following letter of the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, written probably in the autumn of 1741, explains his own views on this subject. [21] "rev. And dear sir,

I rejoice to hear that my poor labours have been of any service to any in New England. All glory be to the great and glorious God, when out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, he is pleased sometimes to ordain praise. I rejoice to hear the progress of God’s work among you, this last summer and that there are any appearances of its continuance: Blessed be God, dear brother! As to the subject you mention of laymen being sent out to exhort and to teach, supposing them to be real converts, I cannot but think, if it be encouraged and continued, it will be of dreadful consequence to the church’s peace and soundness in the faith. I will not gainsay but that private persons may be of service to the church of God by private, humble, fraternal reproof, and exhortations; and no doubt it is their duty to be faithful in these things. But in the mean time if christian prudence and humility do not attend their essays, they are like to be prejudicial to the church’s real well-being. But for ignorant young converts to take upon them authoritatively to instruct and exhort publicly, tends to introduce the greatest errors and the grossest anarchy and confusion. The ministers of Christ should be apt to teach and able to convince gainsayers, and it is dangerous to the pure church of God, when those are novices, whose lips should preserve knowledge. It is base presumption, whatever zeal be pretended to, notwithstanding, for any persons to take this honour to themselves, unless they be called of God, as Aaron. I know most young zealots are apt, through ignorance, inconsideration, and pride of heart, to undertake what they have no proper qualifications for: and, through their imprudences and enthusiasm, the church of God suffers. I think all that fear God, should rise up and crush the enthusiastic creature in the egg. Dear brother, the times we live in are dangerous. The churches in America and elsewhere are in great hazard of enthusiasm: we have need to think of the maxim, principiis obsta. May Zion’s King protect his church! I add no more, but love, and beg a remembrance in your prayers.

Gilbert Tennent." In the September following, Mr. Edwards attended the public commencement at New-Haven, and on the 10th of that month preached his celebrated sermon entitled, "Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God," which, in consequence of a general request from the clergy, and other gentlemen attending the commencement, was published soon after at Boston, accompanied with a Preface from the Rev. Mr. Cooper; and in Scotland the ensuing year, with a preface from the Rev. Mr. Willison. This sermon, by exhibiting the distinguishing marks between an imaginary and a real work of the Spirit of God, and by applying those marks to the work of grace then begun, and rapidly spreading throughout the northern and middle colonies, became an unanswerable defence, not only of that, but of all genuine revivals of religion. It was indeed the object of immediate and reiterated attacks from the press; but being built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, it stands sure, while those attacks and their authors

are forgotten. It exhibits the scriptural evidences of a genuine revival of religion, in much the same manner, as his subsequent treatise on "Religious Affections," does those of a genuine conversion. Mr. Cooper thus introduces it to the Christians of New England:

"If any are disposed to receive conviction, have mind open to light, and are really willing to know of the present work, whether it be of God; it is with great satisfaction and pleasure I can recommend to them the following sheets, in which they will find the "distinguishing marks" of such a work, as they are to be found in the Holy Scriptures, applied to the uncommon operation that has been on the minds of many in this land. Here the matter is tried by the infallible touchstone of the Holy Scriptures, and is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary with great judgment and impartiality.

"A performance of this kind is seasonable and necessary; and I desire heartily to bless God, who inclined this, his servant, to undertake it, and has greatly assisted him in it. The reverend author is known to be `a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;' the place where he has been called to exercise his ministry has been famous for experimental religion; and he has had opportunities to observe this work in many places where it has powerfully appeared, and to converse with numbers that have been the subjects of it. These things qualify him for this undertaking, above most. His arguments in favour of the work, are strongly drawn from Scripture, reason, and experience: and I shall believe every candid, judicious reader will say, he writes very free from an enthusiastic or a party spirit. The use of human learning is asserted; a methodical way of preaching, the fruit of study as well as prayer, is recommended; and the exercise of charity, in judging others, pressed and urged: and those things, which are esteemed the blemished, are like to be the hinderances, of the work, are with great faithfulness cautioned and warned against.--Many, I believe, will be thankful for this publication. Those who have already entertained favourable thoughts of this work, will be confirmed by it; and the doubting may be convinced and satisfied. But if there be any, after all, who cannot see the signatures of a Divine hand on the work, it is to be hoped they will be prevailed on to spare their censures, and stop their oppositions, lest `haply they should be found to fight against God.'--I will only add my prayer, That the worthy author of this discourse may long be continued a burning and a shining light, in the golden candlestick where Christ has placed him, and from thence diffuse his light throughout these provinces! That the Divine Spirit, whose cause is here espoused, would accompany this, and the other valuable publications of his servant, with his powerful influences; that they may promote the Redeemer's interests, serve the ends of vital religion, and so add to the author's present joy and future crown!" The following is the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Willison, to the churches of Scotland. "The ensuing treatise, by the Rev. Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, in New England, concerning the work and operation of the Holy Spirit on men's consciences, is, in my humble opinion, a most excellent, solid, judicious, and scriptural performance; which I hope, through the Divine blessing, will prove most useful to the church, for discerning a true and real work of the Spirit of God, and for guarding against delusions and mistakes. It is certainly a great mercy to the church, that this subject hath been undertaken and handled by such an experienced, well furnished scribe, that hath been long acquainted with the Spirit of God's dealings with the souls of men, in his own congregation, and the country where he lives. And seeing the extraordinary work there at present, though several thousand miles distant from Scotland, is of the same kind with that at Cambuslang and other places about, and meets with the same opposition; the author doth, with great judgment, answer the common objections which are made against the work, both here and there, so that scarce any thing further needs be

added. He warns people very warmly against opposing or reproaching the work of the Holy Spirit. He being the Third Person of the glorious Trinity, and God equal with the Father and the Son, and the great applier of the redemption purchased for us; it becomes all men highly to honour him and his work, and to look upon it as highly dangerous to speak a word against him, according to Matthew 12:32.--I shall add no more, but my fervent prayers to God, to bless both the author and his discourse, and that he would pour out his Spirit yet more abundantly, both on America and all the British dominions; and that he would hasten the glory of the latter days, when the Jews shall be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, and that all the kingdoms of the world may become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, that he may reign for ever and ever! Amen and Amen."

It was during this visit to New-Haven, that Mr. Hopkins [22] , then about to receive the degree of A.B. at Yale college, first saw Mr. Edwards. He soon after became his pupil, and continued his intimate friend through life, and was ultimately his biographer. The impression made on his mind, may be gathered from the following account of the subject, in the Memoirs of his own life. "When I heard Mr. Tennent," (the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, who had preached often at New-Haven in the preceding March.) "I thought he was the greatest and best man, and the best preacher, that I had ever seen or heard. His words were to me `like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' And I thought that, when I should leave the college, as I was then in my last year, I would go and live with him, wherever I should find him. But just before the commencement in September, when I was to take my degree, on the seventeenth day of which month I was twenty years old, Mr. Edwards, of Northampton, came to New-Haven, and preached. He then preached the sermon on The Trial of the Spirits, which was afterwards printed. I had before read his sermons on Justification, &c., and his Narrative of Remarkable Conversions at Northampton, which took place about seven years before this. Though I then did not obtain any personal acquaintance with him, any further than by hearing him preach; yet I conceived such an esteem of him, and was so pleased with his preaching, that I altered my former determination with respect to Mr. Tennent, and concluded to go and live with Mr. Edwards, as soon as I should have opportunity, though he lived about eighty miles from my father's house."

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[20] This is a very common mistake. The woman here mentioned was not Mary Magdalen.

[21] The superscription and date are gone from the MS. but having Mr. Edwards's hand-writing on the back, I suppose the letter to have been written to him.

[22] Afterwards the Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D. D. of Newport, author of the System of Divinity

06.10. CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER X.

TEMPORARY ABATEMENT OF RELIGIOUS ATTENTION--LETTER TO MR. BELLAMY--MISSIONARY TOUR--SUCCESS AT LEICESTER--MR. HOPKINS BECOMES A MEMBER OF HIS FAMILY--MR. BUELL'S SUCCESSFUL LABOURS AT NORTHAMPTON--MR. EDWARDS'S NARRATIVE OF THE REVIVAL AT NORTHAMPTON, IN 1740-1742--COVENANT ENTERED INTO BY THE CHURCH. for about three months, or from November to January, there was an obvious abatement in the attention to religion at Northampton; and although there were instances of conversion from time to time through the winter, yet they were less frequent than before. Mr. Edwards alludes to this fact, in the following letter to Mr. Bellamy, of Bethlehem.

"Northampton, Jan. 21, 1742. rev. and dear sir,

I received yours of Jan. 11, for which I thank you. Religion, in this and the neighbouring towns, has now of late been on the decaying hand. I desire your prayers, that God would quicken and revive us again; and particularly, that he would greatly humble, and pardon, and quicken me, and fill me with his own fulness; and, if it may consist with his will, improve me as an instrument to revive his work. There has been, the year past, the most wonderful work among children here, by far, that ever was. God has seemed almost wholly to take a new generation, that are come on since the late great work, seven years ago.--Neither earth nor hell can hinder his work, that is going on in the country. Christ gloriously triumphs at this day. You have probably before now heard of the great and wonderful things that have lately been wrought at Portsmouth, the chief town in new Hampshire. There are also appearing great things at Ipswich and Newbury, the two largest towns in this province except Boston, and several other towns beyond Boston, and some towns nearer. By what I can understand, the work of God is greater at this day in the land, than it has been at any time. O what cause have we, with exulting hearts, to agree to give glory to him, who thus rides forth in the chariot of his salvation, conquering and to conquer; and earnestly to pray, that now the Sun of righteousness would come forth like a bridegroom, rejoicing as a giant, to run his race from one end of the heavens to the other, that nothing may be hid from the light and heat thereof.

It is not probable that I shall be able to attend your meeting at Guilford. I have lately been so much gone from my people, and don't know but I must be obliged to leave `em again next week about a fortnight, being called to Leicester, a town about half way to Boston, where a great work of grace has lately commenced; and probably soon after that to another place; and having at this time some extraordinary affairs to attend to at home. I pray that Christ, our good Shepherd, will be with you, and direct you and greatly strengthen and bless you.

Dear Sir, I have none of those books you speak of, to sell. I have only a few, that I intend to send to some of my friends. I have already sent you one of my New-Haven sermons, by Mr. ----. Nevertheless, I have herewith sent another, which I desire you to give to Mr. Mills, if he has none; but if he has, dispose of it where you think it will do most good. I have also sent one of those

sermons I preached at Enfield; as to the other, I have but one of them in the world.

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate and unworthy brother, and fellow-labourer, jonathan edwards." The absence from his people, alluded to in the preceding letter, occurred in consequence of a missionary tour of some length, in the two preceding months; during which he visited various places, to which he had been invited, in consequence of an unusual attention to religion there, among the people. His own congregation, readily admitting that, at such a time, there was a louder call for his services in those places, than in Northampton, consented, in the true spirit of christian benevolence, that he should listen to these calls of Providence, and go forth into other fields of labour. In so doing, they soon found a fulfilment of the promise, that he who watereth shall be watered himself. On Monday the 25th of January, Mr. Edwards set out for Leicester, and remained there several weeks, preaching with remarkable success. The revival of religion almost immediately pervaded the whole congregation, and great numbers were believed to be the subjects of hopeful conversion. On Wednesday, January 27th, Mr. Buell, a class-mate of Mr. Hopkins, who, though he left college in the September preceding, had already been preaching some time, and had gained the reputation of an uncommonly engaged and animated preacher, came to Northampton, to preach during the absence of Mr. Edwards. Immediately the work of grace, which had for a season declined, was again carried on with even greater power than before. A high degree of religious feeling was excited in the church; a solemn, anxious attention to the salvation of the soul, was witnessed extensively among the congregation; and, soon after the return of Mr. Edwards, the work of conviction and conversion again went forward with renewed success.

Mr. Hopkins alludes to these events, in his own narrative. "In the month of December," he observes, "being furnished with a horse, I set out for Northampton, with a view to live with Mr. Edwards, where I was an utter stranger. When I arrived there, Mr. Edwards was not at home; but I was received with great kindness by Mrs. Edwards and the family, and had encouragement that I might live there during the winter. Mr. Edwards was absent on a preaching tour, as people in general were greatly attentive to religion and preaching, which was attended with remarkable effects, in the conviction and supposed conversion of multitudes. I was very gloomy, and was most of the time retired in my chamber. After some days, Mrs. Edwards came into my chamber, and said, "As I was now become a member of the family for a season, she felt herself interested in my welfare; and, as she observed that I appeared gloomy and dejected, she hoped I would not think she intruded, by her desiring to know, and asking me what was the occasion of it, or to that purpose. I told her the freedom she used was agreeable to me; that the occasion of the appearance which she mentioned, was the state in which I considered myself. I was in a Christless, graceless state, and had been under a degree of conviction and concern for myself, for a number of months; had got no relief, and my case, instead of growing better, appeared to grow worse. Upon which we entered into a free conversation; and on the whole she told me, that she had peculiar exercises in prayer respecting me, since I had been in the family; that she trusted I should receive light and comfort, and doubted not that God intended yet to do great things by me.

"Religion was now at a lower ebb at Northampton than it had been of late, and than it appeared to be in the neighbouring towns, and in New England in general. In the month of January, Mr. Buell, my class-mate, came to Northampton, having commenced a zealous preacher of the gospel; and was the means of greatly reviving the people to zeal in religion. He preached every day, and

sometimes twice a day, publicly, Mr. Edwards being out of town, preaching in distant towns. Professing Christians appeared greatly revived and comforted; and a number were under conviction; and I think there were some hopeful new converts. After Mr. Buell had been in Northampton a week or two, he set out on a tour towards Boston [23] ."

Having thus alluded to the religious state of Northampton at this period, so far as was necessary to exhibit the order and connexion of events; we now proceed to give Mr. Edwards's own account of the revival of religion in that town, in 1740-1742, as communicated in a letter to a minister of Boston.

"Northampton, Dec.12, 1743. rev. and dear sir,

Ever since the great work of God, that was wrought here about nine years ago, there has been a great and abiding alteration in this town, in many respects. There has been vastly more religion kept up in the town, among all sorts of persons, in religious exercises, and in common conversation; there has been a great alteration among the youth of the town, with respect to revelry, frolicking, profane and licentious conversation, and lewd songs; and there has also been a great alteration, amongst both old and young, with regard to tavern-haunting. I suppose the town has been in no measure so free of vice in these respects, for any long time together, for sixty years, as it has been these nine years past. There has also been an evident alteration, with respect to a charitable spirit to the poor; though I think with regard to this, we in this town, as well as the land in general, come far short of gospel rules. And though after that great work nine years ago, there has been a very lamentable decay of religious affections, and the engagedness of people's spirit in religion; yet many societies for prayer and social worship were all along kept up, and there were some few instances of awakening, and deep concern about the things of another world, even in the most dead time. In the year 1740, in the spring before Mr. Whitefield came to this town, there was a visible alteration: there was more seriousness and religious conversation, especially among young people; those things that were of ill tendency among them, were forborne; and it was a very frequent thing for persons to consult their minister upon the salvation of their souls; and in some particular persons there appeared a great attention, about that time. And thus it continued, until Mr. Whitefield came to town, which was about the middle of October following: he preached here four sermons in the meeting-house, (besides a private lecture at my house,) one on Friday, another on Saturday, and two upon the sabbath. The congregation was extraordinarily melted by every sermon; almost the whole assembly being in tears for a great part of sermon time. Mr. Whitefield's sermons were suitable to the circumstances of the town; containing a just reproof of our backslidings, and in a most moving and affecting manner, making use of our great professions, and great mercies, as arguments with us to return to God, from whom we had departed. Immediately after this, the minds of the people in general appeared more engaged in religion, showing a greater forwardness to make religion the subject of their conversation, and to meet frequently for religious purposes, and to embrace all opportunities to hear the word preached. The revival at first appeared chiefly among professors, and those that had entertained hope that they were in a state of salvation, to whom Mr. Whitefield chiefly addressed himself; but in a very short time, there appeared an awakening and deep concern among some young persons, that looked upon themselves in a Christless state; and there were some hopeful appearances of conversion, and some professors were greatly revived. In about a month or six weeks, there was a great attention in the town, both as to the revival of professors and the

awakening of others. By the middle of December, a considerable work of God appeared among those that were very young; and the revival of religion continued to increase, so that in the spring an engagedness of spirit, about the things of religion, was become very general amongst young people and children, and religious subjects almost wholly took up their conversation when they were together. In the month of May, 1741, a sermon was preached to a company, at a private house. Near the conclusion of the discourse, one or two persons, that were professors, were so greatly affected with a sense of the greatness and glory of divine things, and the infinite importance of the things of eternity, that they were not able to conceal it--the affection of their minds overcoming their strength, and having a very visible effect upon their bodies. When the exercises were over, the young people that were present removed into the other room for religious conference; and particularly that they might have opportunity to inquire of those, that were thus affected, what apprehensions they had, and what things they were that thus deeply impressed their minds; and there soon appeared a very great effect of their conversation; the affection was quickly propagated throughout the room; many of the young people and children, that were professors, appeared to be overcome with a sense of the greatness and glory of divine things, and with admiration, love, joy, and praise, and compassion to others, that looked upon themselves as in a state of nature; and many others at the same time were overcome with distress, about their sinful and miserable estate and condition; so that the whole room was full of nothing but outcries, faintings, and the like. Others soon heard of it in several parts of the town, and came to them; and what they saw and heard there, was greatly affecting to them, so that many of them were overpowered in like manner, and it continued thus for some hours; the time being spent in prayer, singing, counselling, and conferring. There seemed to be a consequent happy effect of that meeting, to several particular persons, and on the state of religion in the town in general. After this, were meetings from time to time, attended with like appearances. But a little after it, at the conclusion of the public exercises on the sabbath, I appointed the children that were under seventeen years of age, to go from the meeting-house to a neighbouring house, that I might there further enforce what they had heard in public, and might give in some counsels proper for their age. The children were there very generally and greatly affected with the warnings and counsels that were given them, and many exceedingly overcome; and the room was filled with cries; and when they were dismissed, they almost all of them went home crying aloud through the streets, to all parts of the town. The like appearances attended several such meetings of children, that were appointed. But their affections appeared by what followed, to be of a very different nature: in many, they appeared indeed but childish affections, and in a day or two would leave them as they were before; others were deeply impressed; their convictions took fast hold of them, and abode by them: and there were some that, from one meeting to another, seemed extraordinarily affected for some time, to but little purpose, their affections presently vanishing from time to time; but yet afterwards, were seized with abiding convictions, and their affections became durable.

About the middle of the summer, I called together the young people that were communicants, from sixteen to twenty-six years of age, to my house; which proved to be a most happy meeting: many seemed to be very greatly and most agreeably affected with those views, which excited humility, self-condemnation, self-abhorrence, love, and joy: many fainted under these affections. We had several meetings that summer, of young people, attended with like appearances. It was about that time, that there first began to be cryings out in the meeting-house; which several times occasioned many of the congregation to stay in the house after the public exercises were over, to confer with

those who seemed to be overcome with religious convictions and affections, which was found to tend much to the propagation of their impressions, with lasting effect upon many; conference being, at these times, commonly joined with prayer and singing. In the summer and autumn, the children in various parts of the town had religious meetings by themselves, for prayer, sometimes joined with fasting; wherein many of them seemed to be greatly and properly affected, and I hope some them savingly wrought upon. The months of August and September were the most remarkable of any this year, for appearances of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and great revivings, quickenings, and comforts of professors, and for extraordinary external effects of these things. It was a very frequent thing, to see a house full of outcries, faintings, convulsions, and such like, both with distress, and also with admiration and joy. It was not the manner here, to hold meetings all night, as in some places, nor was it common to continue them till very late in the night; but it was pretty often so, that there were some that were so affected, and their bodies so overcome, that they could not go home, but were obliged to stay all night where they were. There was no difference, that I know of here, with regard to these extraordinary effects, in meetings in the night and in the day time: the meetings in which these effects appeared in the evening, being commonly begun, and their extraordinary effects, in the day, and continued in the evening; and some meetings have been very remarkable for such extraordinary effects, that were both begun and finished in the day time. There was an appearance of a glorious progress of the work of God upon the hearts of sinners, in conviction, and conversion, this summer and autumn, and great numbers, I think we have reason to hope, were brought savingly home to Christ. But this was remarkable: the work of Good in his influences of this nature, seemed to be almost wholly upon a new generation--those that were not come to years of discretion in that wonderful season, nine years ago; children, or those that were then children: others, who had enjoyed that former glorious opportunity, without any appearance of saving benefit, seemed now to be almost wholly passed over and let alone. But now we had the most wonderful work among children, that ever was in Northampton. The former outpouring of the Spirit was remarkable for influences upon the minds of children, beyond all that had ever been before; but this far exceeded that. Indeed, as to influences on the minds of professors, this work was by no means confined to a new generation. Many, of all ages, partook of it; but yet, in this respect, it was more general on those that were of the young sort. Many, who had been formerly wrought upon, and in the time of our declension had fallen into decays, and had in a great measure left God, and gone after the world, now passed under a very remarkable new work of the Spirit of God, as if they had been the subjects of a second conversion. They were first led into the wilderness, and had a work of conviction; having much deeper convictions of the sins of both nature and practice, than ever before; though with some new circumstances, and something new in the kind of conviction in some, with great distress, beyond what they had felt before their first conversion. Under these convictions, they were excited to strive for salvation, and the kingdom of heaven suffered violence from some of them, in a far more remarkable manner than before; and after great convictions and humblings, and agonizing with God, they had Christ discovered to them anew, as an all-sufficient Saviour, and in the glories of his grace, and in a far more clear manner than before; and with greater humility, self-emptiness, and brokenness of heart, and a purer, a higher joy, and greater desires after holiness of life; but with greater self-diffidence and distrust of their treacherous hearts. One circumstance, wherein this work differed from that, which had been in the towns five or six years before, was, that conversions were frequently wrought more sensibly and visibly; the impressions stronger, and more manifest

by their external effects; the progress of the Spirit of God in conviction, from step to step, more apparent; and the transition from one state to another, more sensible and plain; so that it might, in many instances, be as it were seen by bystanders. The preceding season had been very remarkable on this account, beyond what had been before; but this more remarkable than that. And in this season, these apparent or visible conversions, (if I may so call them,) were more frequently in the presence of others, at religious meetings, where the appearances of what was wrought on the heart fell under public observation.

After September, 1741, there seemed to be some abatement of these extraordinary appearances, yet they did not wholly cease, but there was something of them, from time to time, all winter. About the beginning of February, 1742, Mr. Buell came to this town. I was then absent from home, and continued so till about a fortnight after. Mr. Buell preached from day to day, almost every day, in the meeting-house.--I had left him the free use of my pulpit, having heard of his designed visit, before I went from home. He spent almost the whole time religious exercises with the people, either in public or private, the people continually thronging him. When he first came, there came with him a number of the zealous people from Suffield, who continued here for some time. There were very extraordinary effects of Mr. Buell's labours; the people were exceedingly moved, crying out in great numbers in the meeting-house, and a great part of the congregation commonly staying in the house of God, for hours after the public service. Many also were exceedingly moved in private meetings, where Mr. Buell was: almost the whole town seemed to be in a great and continual commotion, day and night, and there was indeed a very great revival of religion. But it was principally among professors; the appearances of a work of conversion were in no measure as great, as they had been the summer before. When I came home, I found the town in very extraordinary circumstances, such as, in some respects, I never saw it in before. Mr. Buell continued here a fortnight or three weeks after I returned: there being still great appearances attending his labours; many in their religious affections being raised far beyond what they had ever been before: and there were some instances of persons lying in a sort of trance, remaining perhaps for a whole twenty-four hours motionless, and with their senses locked up; but in the mean time under strong imaginations, as though they went to heaven, and had there a vision of glorious and delightful objects. But when the people were raised to this height, Satan took the advantage, and his interposition, in many instances, soon became very apparent: and a great deal of caution and pains were found necessary, to keep the people, many of them, from running wild. In the month of March, I led the people into a solemn public renewal of their covenant with God. To that end, having made a draft of a covenant, I first proposed it to some of the principal men in the church; then to the people, in their several religious associations in various parts of the town; then to the whole congregation in public; and then I deposited a copy of it in the hands of each of the four deacons, that all who desired it might resort to them, and have opportunity to view and consider it. Then the people in general, that were above fourteen years of age, first subscribed the covenant with their hands; and then, on a day of fasting and prayer, all together presented themselves before the Lord in his house, and stood up, and solemnly manifested their consent to it, as their vow to God. The covenant was as follows:

COPY OF A COVENANT,

Entered into and subscribed, by the people of God at Northampton, and owned before God in his house as their vow to the Lord, and made a solemn act of public worship, by the congregation in

general that were above fourteen years of age, on a day of fasting and prayer for the continuance and increase of the gracious presence of God in that place.

March 16th, 1742. Acknowledging God's great goodness to us, a sinful, unworthy, people, in the blessed manifestations and fruits of his gracious presence in this town, both formerly and lately, and particularly in the very late spiritual revival; and adoring the glorious majesty, power, and grace of God, manifested in the present wonderful outpouring of his Spirit, in many parts of this land, in this place; and lamenting our past backslidings and ungrateful departings from God, and humbly begging of God that he would not mark our iniquities, but, for Christ's sake, come over the mountains of our sins, and visit us with his salvation, and continue the tokens of his presence with us, and yet more gloriously pour out his blessed Spirit upon us, and make us all partakers of the divine blessings he is, at this day, bestowing here, and in many parts of this land; we do this day present ourselves before the Lord, to renounce our evil ways, we put away our abominations from before God's eyes, and with one accord, to renew our engagements to seek and serve God: and particularly do now solemnly promise and vow to the Lord as follows:-- In all our conversation, concerns, and dealings with our neighbour, we will have a strict regard to rules of honesty, justice, and uprightness, that we don't overreach or defraud our neighbour in any matter, and either wilfully, or through want of care, injure him in any of his honest possessions or rights; and in all our communication will have a tender respect, not only to our own interest, but also to the interest of our neighbour; and will carefully endeavour, in every thing, to do to others as we should expect, or think reasonable, that they should do to us, if we were in their case, and they in ours. And particularly we will endeavour to render every one his due, and will take heed to ourselves, that we don't injure our neighbour, and give him just cause of offence, by wilfully or negligently forbearing to pay our honest debts. And wherein any of us, upon strict examination of our past behaviour, may be conscious to ourselves, that we have by any means wronged any of our neighbours in their outward estate, we will not rest, till we have made that restitution, or given that satisfaction, which the rules of moral equity require; or if we are, on a strict and impartial search, conscious to ourselves, that we have in any other respect considerably injured our neighbour, we will truly endeavour to do that, which we in our consciences suppose christian rules require, in order to a reparation of the injury, and removing the offence given thereby. And furthermore we promise, that we will not allow ourselves in backbiting; and that we will take great heed to ourselves to avoid all violations of those christian rules, Titus 3:2. `Speak evil of no man;' James 4:11. `Speak not evil one of another, brethren;' and 2 Corinthians 12:20. `Let there be no strifes, backbitings, whisperings;' and that we will not only not slander our neighbour, but also will not feed a spirit of bitterness, ill will, or secret grudge against our neighbour, insist on his real faults needlessly, and when not called to it, or from such a spirit, speak of his failings and blemishes with ridicule, or an air of contempt. And we promise, that we will be very careful to avoid doing any thing to our neighbour from a spirit of revenge. And that we will take great care that we do not, for private interest or our own honour, or to maintain ourselves against those of a contrary party, or to get our wills, or to promote any design in opposition to others, do those things which we, on the most impartial consideration are capable of, can think in our consciences will tend to wound religion, and the interests of Christ's kingdom. And particularly, that so far as any of us, by Divine Providence, have any special influence upon others, to lead them in the management of public affairs, we will not make our own worldly gain, or honour, or interest in the affections of others, or getting the better of any of a contrary party, that are in any respect our competitors, or the bringing

or keeping them down, our governing aim, to the prejudice of the interest of religion, and the honour of Christ. And in the management of any public affair, wherever there is a difference of opinions, concerning any outward possessions, privileges, rights, or properties, we will not willingly violate justice for private interest: and with the greatest strictness and watchfulness, will avoid all unchristian bitterness, vehemence, and heat of spirit; yea, though we should think ourselves injured by a contrary party; and in the time of the management of such affairs, will especially watch over ourselves, our spirits, and our tongues, to avoid all unchristian inveighings, reproachings, bitter reflecting, judging and ridiculing others, either in public meetings or in private conversation, either to men's faces, or behind their backs; but will greatly endeavour, so far as we are concerned, that all should be managed with christian humility, gentleness, quietness, and love. And furthermore we promise, that we will not tolerate the exercise of enmity and ill will, or revenge in our hearts, against any of our neighbours; and we will often be strictly searching and examining our own hearts with respect to that matter. And if any of us find that we have an old secret grudge against any of our neighbours, we will not gratify it, but cross it, and endeavour to our utmost to root it out, crying to God for his help; and that we will make it our true and faithful endeavour, in our places, that a party spirit may not be kept up amongst us, but that it may utterly cease; that for the future, we may all be one, united in undisturbed peace and unfeigned love. And those of us that are in youth, do promise, never to allow ourselves in any diversions or pastimes, in meetings, or companies of young people, that we, in our consciences, upon sober consideration, judge not well to consist with, or would sinfully tend to hinder, the devoutest and most engaged spirit in religion, or indispose the mind for that devout and profitable attendance on the duties of the closet, which is most agreeable to God's will, or that we, in our most impartial judgment, can think tends to rob God of that honour which he expects, by our orderly serious attendance on family worship. And furthermore we promise, that we will strictly avoid all freedoms and familiarities in company, so tending either to stir up or gratify a lust of lasciviousness, that we cannot in our consciences think will be approved by the infinitely pure and holy eye of God, or that we can think, on serious and impartial consideration, we should be afraid to practise, if we expected in a few hours to appear before that holy God, to give an account of ourselves to him, as fearing they would be condemned by him as unlawful and impure.

We also promise, with great watchfulness, to perform relative duties, required by christian rules, in the families we belong to, as we stand related respectively, towards parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, masters or mistresses, and servants. And we now appear before God, depending on Divine grace and assistance, solemnly to devote our whole lives, to be laboriously spent in the business of religion; ever making it our greatest business, without backsliding from such a way of living, not hearkening to the solicitations of our sloth, and other corrupt inclinations, or the temptations of the world, that tend to draw us off from it; and particularly, that we will not abuse a hope or opinion that any of us may have, of our being interested in Christ, to indulge ourselves in sloth, or the more easily to yield to the solicitations of any sinful inclinations; but will run with perseverance the race that is set before us, and work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. And because we are sensible that the keeping these solemn vows may hereafter, in many cases, be very contrary to our corrupt inclinations and carnal interests, we do now therefore appear before God to make a surrender of all to him, and to make a sacrifice of every carnal inclination and interest, to the great business of religion and the interest of our souls. And being sensible of our weakness, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and our

proneness to forget our most solemn vows, and lose our resolutions, we promise to be often strictly examining ourselves by these promises, especially before the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and beg of God that he would, for Christ's sake, keep us from wickedly dissembling in these our solemn vows; and that he who searches our hearts, and ponders the path of our feet, would, from time to time, help us in trying ourselves by this covenant, and help us to keep covenant with him, and not leave us to our own foolish, wicked, and treacherous hearts. In the beginning of the summer of 1742, there seemed to be an abatement of the liveliness of people's affections in religion; but yet many were often in a great height of them. And in the fall and winter following, there were at times extraordinary appearances. But in the general, people's engagedness in religion, and the liveliness of their affections, have been on the decline; and some of the young people especially, have shamefully lost their liveliness and vigour in religion, and much of the seriousness and solemnity of their spirits. But there are many that walk as becometh saints; and to this day there are a considerable number in town that seem to be near to God, and maintain much of the life of religion, and enjoy many of the sensible tokens and fruits of his gracious presence. With respect to the late season of revival of religion amongst us for three or four years past, it has been observable, that in the former part of it, in the years 1740 and 1741, the work seemed to be much more pure, having less of a corrupt mixture than in the former great outpouring of the Spirit, in 1735 and 1736. Persons seemed to be sensible of their former errors, and had learned more of their own hearts, and experience had taught them more of the tendency and consequences of things. They were now better guarded, and their affections were not only stronger, but attended with greater solemnity, and greater humility and self-distrust, and greater engagedness after holy living and perseverance: and there were fewer errors in conduct. But in the latter part of it, in the year 1742, it was otherwise: the work continued more pure till we were infected from abroad: our people hearing of, and some of them seeing, the work in other places, where there was greater visible commotion than here, and the outward appearances were more extraordinary, were ready to think that the work in those places far excelled what was amongst us, and their eyes were dazzled with the high profession and great show that some made, who came hither from other places. That those people went so far beyond them in raptures and violent emotions of the affections, and a vehement zeal, and what they call boldness for Christ, our people were ready to think was owing to far greater attainments in grace, and intimacy with heaven: they looked little in their own eyes in comparison with them, and were ready to submit themselves to them, and yield themselves up to their conduct, taking it for granted, that every thing was right that they said and did. These things had a strange influence on the people, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy tincture, from which it was a hard and long labour to deliver them, and from which some of them are not fully delivered to this day. The effects and consequences of things among us plainly show the following things, viz. That the degree of grace is by no means to be judged of by the degree of joy, or the degree of zeal; and that indeed we cannot at all determine by these things, who are gracious and who are not; and that it is not the degree of religious affections, but the nature of them, that is chiefly to be looked at. Some that have had very great raptures of joy, and have been extraordinarily filled, (as the vulgar phrase is,) and have had their bodies overcome, and that very often, have manifested far less of the temper of Christians in their conduct since, than some others that have been still, and have made no great outward show. But then again, there are many others, that have had extraordinary joys and emotions of mind, with frequent great effects upon their bodies, that behave themselves stedfastly,

as humble, amiable, eminent Christians.

'Tis evident that there may be great religious affections in individuals, which may in show and appearance resemble gracious affections, and have the same effects upon their bodies, but are far from having the same effect on the temper of their minds and the course of their lives. And likewise there is nothing more manifest, by what appears amongst us, than that the good estate of individuals is not chiefly to be judged of by any exactness of steps, and method of experiences, in what is supposed to be the first conversion; but that we must judge by the spirit that breathes, the effect wrought upon the temper of the soul in the time of the work and remaining afterwards. Though there have been very few instances among professors, amongst us, of what is ordinarily called scandalous sins, known to me; yet the temper that some of them show, and the behaviour they have been of, together with some things in the nature and circumstances of their experiences, make me much afraid lest there be a considerable number that have woefully deceived themselves. Though, on the other hand, there is a great number whose temper and conversation is such, as justly confirms the charity others towards them; and not a few, in whose disposition and walk there are amiable appearances of eminent grace. And notwithstanding all the corrupt mixtures that have been in the late work here, there are not only many blessed fruits of it, in particular persons that yet remain, but some good effects of it upon the town in general. A spirit of party has more extensively subsided. I suppose there has been less appearance these three or four years past, of that division of the town into two parties, which has long been our bane, than has been at any time during the preceding thirty years; and the people have apparently had much more caution, and a greater guard on their spirit and their tongues, to avoid contention and unchristian heats, in town-meetings, and on other occasions. And `tis a thing greatly to be rejoiced in, that the people very lately came to an agreement and final issue, with respect to their grand controversy relating to their common lands; which has been, above any other particular thing, a source of mutual prejudices, jealousies, and debates, for fifteen or sixteen years past. The people also seem to be much more sensible of the danger of resting in old experiences, or what they were subjects of at their supposed first conversion; and to be more fully convinced of the necessity of forgetting the things that are behind, and pressing forward and maintaining earnest labour, watchfulness, and prayerfulness, as long as they live.

I am, Rev. Sir, Your friend and brother, jonathan edwards"

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[23] Mr. Hopkins continued to pursue his studies with Mr. Edwards, until the next autumn, and again for a short period in the spring, after which he was settled at Housatonnuck, then a part of Stockbridge, now called Great Barrington.

06.11. CHAPTER XI.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. EDWARDS. HER SOLEMN SELF-DEDICATIONS HER UNCOMMON DISCOVERIES OF THE DIVINE PERFECTIONS AND GLORY; AND OF THE EXCELLENCY OF CHRIST REMARKS CONCERNING THEM. In speaking of Mrs. Edwards, we have already had occasion to remark, that her piety appears to have been in no ordinary degree pure, intense, and elevated, and that her views of spiritual and heavenly things were uncommonly clear and joyful. Near the close of the year 1738, according to the testimony of Mr. Edwards, she was led, under an uncommon discovery of God's excellency, and in an high exercise of love to God, and of rest and joy in him, to make a new and most solemn dedication of herself to his service and glory, an entire renunciation of the world, and a resignation of all to God. After this, she had often such views of the glory of the divine perfections, and of Christ's excellencies, and at times, for hours together, without any interruption, that she was overwhelmed, and as it were swallowed up, in the light and joy of the love of God. In the summer of 1740, after a new and more perfect resignation of herself to God, with yet greater fervency, her views of the glory of God, and of the excellency of Christ, became still more clear and transporting; and in the following winter, after a similar but more perfect resignation of herself, and acceptance of God as the only portion and happiness of her soul, God appeared to vouchsafe to her, for a long period, a degree of spiritual light and enjoyment, which seemed to be, in reality, an anticipation of the joys of the heavenly world. There was so much that was unusual and striking in this state of mind, that her husband requested her to draw up an exact statement of it; which, having been preserved, is now presented to the reader.

"On Tuesday night, Jan. 19, 1742," observes Mrs. Edwards, "I felt very uneasy and unhappy, at my being so low in grace. I thought I very much needed help from God, and found a spirit of earnestness to seek help of him, that I might have more holiness. When I had for a time been earnestly wrestling with God for it, I felt within myself great quietness of spirit, unusual submission to God, and willingness to wait upon him, with respect to the time and manner in which he should help me, and wished that he should take his own time, and his own way, to do it.

"The next morning I found a degree of uneasiness in my mind, at Mr. Edwards's suggesting, that he thought I had failed in some measure in point of prudence, in some conversation I had with Mr. Williams, of Hadley, the day before. I found, that it seemed to bereave me of the quietness and calm of my mind, in any respect not to have the good opinion of my husband. This, I much disliked in myself, as arguing a want of a sufficient rest in God, and felt a disposition to fight against it, and look to God for his help, that I might have a more full and entire rest in him, independent of all other things. I continued in this frame, from early in the morning until about 10 o'clock, at which time the Rev. Mr. Reynolds went to prayer in the family.

"I had, before this, so entirely given myself up to God, and resigned up every thing into his hands, that I had, for a long time, felt myself quite alone in the world; so that the peace and calm of my mind, and my rest in God, as my only and all-sufficient happiness, seemed sensibly above the

reach of disturbance from any thing but these two: 1st. My own good name and fair reputation among men, and especially the esteem and just treatment of the people of this town; 2dly. And more especially, the esteem, and love, and kind treatment of my husband. At times, indeed, I had seemed to be considerable elevated above the influence of even these things; yet I had not found my calm, and peace, and rest in God so sensibly, fully, and constantly, above the reach of disturbance from them, until now.

While Mr. Reynolds was at prayer in the family this morning, I felt an earnest desire that, in calling on God, he should say, Father, or that he should address the Almighty under that appellation: on which the thought turned in my mind.--Why can I say, Father?--Can I now at this time, with the confidence of a child, and without the least misgiving of heart, call God my Father?--This brought to my mind two lines of Mr. Erskine's sonnet:

'I see him lay his vengeance by. `And smile in Jesus' face.'

"I was thus deeply sensible, that my sins did loudly call for vengeance; but I then by faith saw God `lay his vengeance by, and smile in Jesus' face.' It appeared to be real and certain that he did so. I had not the least doubt, that he then sweetly smiled upon me, with the look of forgiveness and love, having laid aside all his displeasure towards me, for Jesus' sake; which made me feel very weak, and somewhat faint.

"In consequence of this, I felt a strong desire to be alone with God, to go to him, without having any one to interrupt the silent and soft communion, which I earnestly desired between God and my own soul; and accordingly withdrew to my chamber. It should have been mentioned that, before I retired, while Mr. Reynolds was praying, these words, in Romans 8:34 came into my mind, `Who is he that condemneth; it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;' as well as the following words, `Who shall separate us from the love of Christ,' &c.; which occasioned great sweetness and delight in my soul. But when I was alone, the words came to my mind with far greater power and sweetness; upon which I took the Bible, and read the words to the end of the chapter, when they were impressed on my heart with vastly greater power and sweetness still. They appeared to me with undoubted certainty as the words of God, and as words which God did pronounce concerning me. I had no more doubt of it, than I had of my being. I seemed as it were to hear the great God proclaiming thus to the world concerning me; `Who shall lay any thing to thy charge,' &c.; and had it strongly impressed on me, how impossible it was for any thing in heaven or earth, in this world or the future, ever to separate me from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus. I cannot find language to express, how certain this appeared--the everlasting mountains and hills were but shadows to it. My safety, and happiness, and eternal enjoyment of God's immutable love, seemed as durable and unchangeable as God himself. Melted and overcome by the sweetness of this assurance, I fell into a great flow of tears, and could not forbear weeping aloud. It appeared certain to me that God was my Father, and Christ my Lord and Saviour, that he was mine and I his. Under a delightful sense of the immediate presence and love of God, these words seemed to come over and over in my mind, `My God, my all; my God, my all.' The presence of God was so near, and so real, that I seemed scarcely conscious of any thing else. God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, seemed as distinct persons, both manifesting their inconceivable loveliness, and mildness, and gentleness, and their great and immutable love to me. I seemed to be taken under the care

and charge of my God and Saviour, in an inexpressibly endearing manner; and Christ appeared to me as a mighty Saviour, under the character of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, taking my heart, with all its corruptions, under his care, and putting it at his feet. In all things, which concerned me, I felt myself safe under the protection of the Father and the Saviour; who appeared with supreme kindness to keep a record of every thing that I did, and of every thing that was done to me, purely for my good.

"The peace and happiness, which I hereupon felt, was altogether inexpressible. It seemed to be that which came from heaven; to be eternal and unchangeable. I seemed to be lifted above earth and hell, out of the reach of every thing here below, so that I could look on all the rage and enmity of men or devils, with a kind of holy indifference, and an undisturbed tranquillity. At the same time, I felt compassion and love for all mankind, and a deep abasement of soul, under a sense of my own unworthiness. I thought of the ministers who were in the house, and felt willing to undergo any labour and self-denial, if they would but come to the help of the Lord. I also felt myself more perfectly weaned from all things here below, than ever before. The whole world, with all its enjoyments, and all its troubles, seemed to be nothing:--My God was my all, my only portion. No possible suffering appeared to be worth regarding: all persecutions and torments were a mere nothing. I seemed to dwell on high, and the place of defence to be the munition of rocks.

"After some time, the two evils mentioned above, as those which I should have been least able to bear, came to my mind--the ill treatment of the town, and the ill will of my husband; but now I was carried exceedingly above even such things as these, and I could feel that, if I were exposed to them both, they would seem comparatively nothing. There was then a deep snow on the ground, and I could think of being driven from my home into the cold and snow, of being chased from the town with the utmost contempt and malice, and of being left to perish with the cold, as cast out by all the world, with perfect calmness and serenity. It appeared to me, that it would not move me, or in the least disturb the inexpressible happiness and peace of my soul. My mind seemed as much above all such things, as the sun is above the earth.

"I continued in a very sweet and lively sense of divine things, day and night, sleeping and waking, until Saturday, Jan. 23. On Saturday morning, I had a most solemn and deep impression on my mind of the eye of God as fixed upon me, to observe what improvement I made of those spiritual communications I had received from him; as well as of the respect shown Mr. Edwards, who had then been sent for to preach at Leicester. I was sensible that I was sinful enough to bestow it on my pride, or on my sloth, which seemed exceedingly dreadful to me. At night, my soul seemed to be filled with an inexpressibly sweet and pure love to God, and to the children of God; with a refreshing consolation and solace of soul, which made me willing to lie on the earth, at the feet of the servants of God, to declare his gracious dealings with me, and breathe forth before them my love, and gratitude, and praise.

"The next day, which was the sabbath, I enjoyed a sweet, and lively, and assured sense of God’s infinite grace, and favour, and love to me, in taking me out of the depths of hell, and exalting me to the heavenly glory, and the dignity of a royal priesthood.

"On Monday night, Mr. Edwards, being gone that day to Leicester, I heard that Mr. Buell was coming to this town, and from what I had heard of him, and of his success, I had strong hopes that there would be great effects from his labours here. At the same time, I had a deep and affecting

impression, that the eye of God was ever upon my heart, and that it greatly concerned me to watch my heart, and see to it that I was perfectly resigned to God, with respect to the instruments he should make use of to revive religion in this town, and be entirely willing, if it was God's pleasure, that he should make use of Mr. Buell; and also that other Christians should appear to excel me in christian experience, and in the benefit they should derive from ministers. I was conscious, that it would be exceedingly provoking to God if I should not be thus resigned, and earnestly endeavoured to watch my heart, that no feelings of a contrary nature might arise; and was enabled, as I thought, to exercise full resignation, and acquiescence in God's pleasure, as to these things. I was sensible what great cause I had to bless God, for the use he had made of Mr. Edwards hitherto; but thought, if he never blessed his labours any more, and should greatly bless the labours of other ministers, I could entirely acquiesce in his will. It appeared to me meet and proper, that God should employ babes and sucklings to advance his kingdom. When I thought of these things, it was my instinctive feeling to say, `Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!' This seemed to be the sweet and instinctive language of my soul.

"On Tuesday, I remained in a sweet and lively exercise of this resignation, and love to and rest in God, seeming to be in my heart from day to day, far above the reach of every thing here below. On Tuesday night, especially the latter part of it, I felt a great earnestness of soul and engagedness in seeking God for the town, that religion might now revive, and that God would bless Mr. Buell to that end. God seemed to be very near to me while I was thus striving with him for these things, and I had a strong hope that what I sought of him would be granted. There seemed naturally and unavoidably to arise in my mind an assurance that now God would do great things for Northampton.

"On Wednesday morning, I heard that Mr. Buell arrived the night before at Mr. Phelps's, and that there seemed to be great tokens and effects of the presence of God there, which greatly encouraged and rejoiced me. About an hour and a half after, Mr. Buell came to our house; I sat still in entire resignedness to God, and willingness that God should bless his labours here as much as he pleased; though it were to the enlivening of every saint, and to the conversion of every sinner, in the town. These feelings continued afterwards, when I saw his great success; as I never felt the least rising of heart to the contrary, but my submission was even and uniform, without interruption or disturbance. I rejoiced when I saw the honour which God put upon him, and the respect paid him by the people, and the greater success attending his preaching, than had followed the preaching of Mr. Edwards immediately before he went to Leicester. I found rest and rejoicing in it, and the sweet language of my soul continually was, `Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!'

"At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a lecture was preached by Mr. Buell. In the latter part of the sermon, one or two appeared much moved, and after the blessing, when the people were going out, several others. To my mind there was the clearest evidence, that God was present in the congregation, on the work of redeeming love; and in the clear view of this, I was all at once filled with such intense admiration of the wonderful condescension and grace of God, in returning again to Northampton, as overwhelmed my soul, and immediately took away my bodily strength. This was accompanied with an earnest longing, that those of us, who were the children of God, might now arise and strive. It appeared to me, that the angels in heaven sung praises, for such wonderful, free, and sovereign grace, and my heart was lifted up in adoration and praise. I continued to have clear views of the future world, of eternal happiness and misery, and my heart

full of love to the souls of men. On seeing some, that I found were in a natural condition, I felt a most tender compassion for them; but especially was I, while I remained in the meeting-house, from time to time overcome, and my strength taken away, by the sight of one and another, whom I regarded as the children of God, and who, I had heard, were lively and animated in religion. We remained in the meeting-house about three hours, after the public exercises were over. During most of the time, my bodily strength was overcome; and the joy and thankfulness, which were excited in my mind, as I contemplated the great goodness of God, led me to converse with those who were near me, in a very earnest manner.

"When I came home, I found Mr. Buell, Mr. Christophers, Mr. Hopkins, Mrs. Eleanor Dwight, the wife of Mr. Joseph Allen, and Mr. Job Strong, at the house. Seeing and conversing with them on the Divine goodness, renewed my former feelings, and filled me with an intense desire that we might all arise, and with an active, flowing, and fervent heart give glory to God. The intenseness of my feelings again took away my bodily strength. The words of one of Dr. Watts's Hosannas powerfully affected me; and in the course of the conversation, I uttered them as the real language of my heart, with great earnestness and emotion.

`Hosanna to King David's Son, Who reigns on a superior throne,' &c. And while I was uttering the words, my mind was so deeply impressed with the love of Christ, and a sense of his immediate presence, that I could with difficulty refrain from rising from my seat, and leaping for joy. I continued to enjoy this intense, and lively, and refreshing sense of divine things, accompanied with strong emotions, for nearly an hour; after which, I experienced a delightful calm, and peace and rest in God, until I retired for the night; and during the night, both waking and sleeping, I had joyful views of divine things, and a complacential rest of soul in God. I awoke in the morning of Thursday, Jan. 28th, in the same happy frame of mind, and engaged in the duties of my family with a sweet consciousness, that God was present with me, and with earnest longings of soul for the continuance and increase of the blessed fruits of the Holy Spirit in the town. About nine o'clock, these desires became so exceedingly intense, when I saw numbers of the people coming into the house, with an appearance of deep interest in religion, that my bodily strength was much weakened, and it was with difficulty that I could pursue my ordinary avocations. About 11 o'clock, as I accidentally went into the room where Mr. Buell was conversing with some of the people, I heard him say, `O that we, who are the children of God, should be cold and lifeless in religion!' and I felt such a sense of the deep ingratitude manifested by the children of God, in such coldness and deadness, that my strength was immediately taken away, and I sunk down on the spot. Those who were near raised me, and placed me in a chair; and from the fulness of my heart, I expressed to them, in a very earnest manner, the deep sense I had of the wonderful grace of Christ towards me, of the assurance I had of his having saved me from hell, of my happiness running parallel with eternity, of the duty of giving up all to God, and of the peace and joy inspired by an entire dependence on his mercy and grace. Mr. Buell then read a melting hymn of Dr. Watts's, [24] concerning the loveliness of Christ, the enjoyments and employments of heaven, and the Christian's earnest desire of heavenly things; and the truth and reality of the things mentioned in the hymn, made so strong an impression on my mind, and my soul was drawn so powerfully towards Christ and heaven, that I leaped unconsciously from my chair. I seemed to be drawn upwards, soul and body, from the earth towards heaven; and it appeared to me that I must naturally and necessarily ascend thither. These feelings continued while the hymn was reading,

and during the prayer of Mr. Christophers, which followed. After the prayer, Mr. Buell read two other hymns, on the glories of heaven, which moved me so exceedingly, and drew me so strongly heavenward, that it seemed as it were to draw my body upwards, and I felt as if I must necessarily ascend thither. At length my strength failed me, and I sunk down; when they took me up and laid me on the bed, where I lay for a considerable time, faint with joy, while contemplating the glories of the heavenly world. After I had lain a while, I felt more perfectly subdued and weaned from the world, and more fully resigned to God, than I had ever been conscious of before. I felt an entire indifference to the opinions, and representations, and conduct of mankind respecting me; and a perfect willingness, that God should employ some other instrument than Mr. Edwards, in advancing the work of grace in Northampton. I was entirely swallowed up in God, as my only portion, and his honour and glory was the object of my supreme desire and delight. At the same time, I felt a far greater love to the children of God, than ever before. I seemed to love them as my own soul; and when I saw them, my heart went out towards them, with an inexpressible endearedness and sweetness. I beheld them by faith in their risen and glorified state, with spiritual bodies re-fashioned after the image of Christ's glorious body, and arrayed in the beauty of heaven. The time when they would be so appeared very near, by faith it seemed as if it were present. This was accompanied with a ravishing sense of the unspeakable joys of the upper world. They appeared to my mind in all their reality and certainty, and as it were in actual and distinct vision; so plain and evident were they to the eye of my faith, I seemed to regard them as begun. These anticipations were renewed over and over, while I lay on the bed, from twelve o'clock till four, being too much exhausted by emotions of joy, to rise and sit up; and during most of the time, my feelings prompted me to converse very earnestly with one and another of the pious women, who were present, on those spiritual and heavenly objects, of which I had so deep an impression. A little while before I arose, Mr. Buell and the people went to meeting.

"I continued in a sweet and lively sense of divine things, until I retired to rest. That night, which was Thursday night, Jan. 28, was the sweetest night I ever had in my life. I never before, for so long a time together, enjoyed so much of the light, and rest, and sweetness of heaven in my soul, but without the least agitation of body during the whole time. The great part of the night I lay awake, sometimes asleep, and sometimes between sleeping and waking. But all night I continued in a constant, clear, and lively sense of the heavenly sweetness of Christ's excellent and transcendent love, of his nearness to me, and of my dearness to him; with an inexpressibly sweet calmness of soul in an entire rest in him. I seemed to myself to perceive a glow of divine love come down from the heart of Christ in heaven, into my heart, in a constant stream, like a stream or pencil of sweet light. At the same time, my heart and soul all flowed out in love to Christ; so that there seemed to be a constant flowing and reflowing of heavenly and divine love, from Christ's heart to mine; and I appeared to myself to float or swim, in these bright, sweet beams of the love of Christ, like the motes swimming in the beams of the sun, or the streams of his light which come in at the window. My soul remained in a kind of heavenly elysium. So far as I am capable of making a comparison, I think that what I felt each minute, during the continuance of the whole time, was worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure, which I had enjoyed in my whole life put together. It was a pure delight, which fed and satisfied the soul. It was pleasure, without the least sting, or any interruption. It was a sweetness, which my soul was lost in. It seemed to be all that my feeble frame could sustain, of that fulness of joy, which is felt by those, who behold the face of Christ, and share his love in the heavenly world. There was but little difference, whether I was asleep or

awake, so deep was the impression made on my soul; but if there was any difference, the sweetness was greatest and most uninterrupted while I was asleep.

"As I awoke early the next morning, which was Friday, I was led to think of Mr. Williams of Hadley preaching that day in the town, as had been appointed; and to examine my heart, whether I was willing that he, who was a neighbouring minister, should be extraordinarily blessed, and made a greater instrument of good in the town, than Mr. Edwards; and was enabled to say, with respect to that matter, `Amen, Lord Jesus!' and to be entirely willing, if God pleased, that he should be the instrument of converting every soul in the town. My soul acquiesced fully in the will of God, as to the instrument, if his work of renewing grace did but go on.

"This lively sense of the beauty and excellency of divine things continued during the morning, accompanied with peculiar sweetness and delight. To my own imagination, my soul seemed to be gone out of me to God and Christ in heaven, and to have very little relation to my body. God and Christ were so present to me, and so near me, that I seemed removed from myself. The spiritual beauty of the Father and the Saviour, seemed to engross my whole mind; and it was the instinctive feeling of my heart, `Thou art; and there is none beside thee.' I never felt such an entire emptiness of self-love, or any regard to any private, selfish interest of my own. It seemed to me, that I had entirely done with myself. I felt that the opinions of the world concerning me were nothing, and that I had no more to do with any outward interest of my own, than with that of a person whom I never saw. The glory of God seemed to be all, and in all, and to swallow up every wish and desire of my heart.

"Mr. Sheldon came into the house about 10 o'clock, and said to me as he came in, `The Sun of righteousness arose on my soul this morning, before day;' upon which I said to him in reply, `That Sun has not set upon my soul all this night; I have dwelt on high in the heavenly mansions; the light of divine love has surrounded me; my soul has been lost in God, and has almost left the body.' This conversation only served to give me a still livelier sense of the reality and excellence of divine things, and that to such a degree, as again to take away my strength, and occasion great agitation of body. So strong were my feelings, I could not refrain from conversing with those around me, in a very earnest manner, for about a quarter of an hour, on the infinite riches of divine love in the work of salvation; when, my strength entirely failing, my flesh grew very cold, and they carried me and set me by the fire. As I sat there, I had a most affecting sense of the mighty power of Christ, which had been exerted in what he had done for my soul, and in sustaining and keeping down the native corruptions of my heart, and of the glorious and wonderful grace of God in causing the ark to return to Northampton. So intense were my feelings, when speaking of these things, that I could not forbear rising up and leaping with joy and exultation. I felt at the same time an exceedingly strong and tender affection for the children of God, and realized, in a manner exceedingly sweet and ravishing, the meaning of Christ's prayer, in John 17:21. `That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' This union appeared to me an inconceivable, excellent, and sweet oneness; and at the same time I felt that oneness in my soul, with the children of God who were present. Mr. Christophers then read the hymn out of the Penitential cries, beginning with `My soul doth magnify the Lord, My spirit doth rejoice;' The whole hymn was deeply affecting to my feelings: but when these words were read, `My sighs at length are turn'd to songs, The Comforter is come:'-- So conscious was I of the joyful presence of the Holy Spirit, I could scarcely refrain from leaping with transports of joy. This happy

frame of mind continued until two o'clock, when Mr. Williams came in, and we soon went to meeting. He preached on the subject of the assurance of faith. The whole sermon was affecting to me, but especially when he came to show the way in which assurance was obtained, and to point out its happy fruits. When I heard him say, that those who have assurance, have a foretaste of heavenly glory, I knew the truth of it from what I then felt: I knew that I then tasted the clusters of the heavenly Canaan: my soul was filled and overwhelmed with light, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and seemed just ready to go away from the body. I could scarcely refrain from expressing my joy aloud, in the midst of the service. I had, in the mean time, an overwhelming sense of the glory of God, as the Great Eternal All, and of the happiness of having my own will entirely subdued to his will. I knew that the foretaste of glory, which I then had in my soul, came from him, that I certainly should go to him, and should, as it were, drop into the Divine Being, and be swallowed up in God.

"After meeting was done, the congregation waited while Mr. Buell went home, to prepare to give them a lecture. It was almost dark before he came, and, in the mean time, I conversed in a very earnest and joyful manner, with those who were with me in the pew. My mind dwelt on the thought, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and it appeared to me that he was going to set up a reign of love on the earth, and that heaven and earth were, as it were, coming together; which so exceedingly moved me that I could not forbear expressing aloud, to those near me, my exultation of soul. This subsided into a heavenly calm, and a rest of soul in God, which was even sweeter than what preceded it. Afterwards, Mr. Buell came and preached; and the same happy frame of mind continued during the evening, and night, and the next day. In the forenoon, I was thinking of the manner in which the children of God had been treated in the world--particularly of their being shut up in prison--and the folly of such attempts to make them miserable, seemed to surprise me. It appeared astonishing, that men should think, by this means, to injure those who had such a kingdom within them. Towards night being informed that Mrs. P----had expressed her fears lest I should die before Mr. Edwards's return, and he should think the people had killed his wife; I told those who were present, that I chose to die in the way that was most agreeable to God's will, and that I should be willing to die in darkness and horror, if it was most for the glory of God.

"In the evening, I read those chapters in John, which contain Christ's dying discourse with his disciples, and his prayer with them. After I had done reading, and was in my retirement, a little before bed-time, thinking on what I had read, my soul was so filled with love to Christ, and love to his people, that I fainted under the intenseness of the feeling. I felt, while reading, a delightful acquiescence in the petition to the Father--`I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' Though it seemed to me infinitely better to die to go to Christ, yet I felt an entire willingness to continue in this world so long as God pleased, to do and suffer what he would have me.

"After retiring to rest and sleeping a little while, I awoke and had a very lively consciousness of God's being near me. I had an idea of a shining way, or path of light, between heaven and my soul, somewhat as on Thursday night, except that God seemed nearer to me, and as it were close by, and the way seemed more open, and the communication more immediate and more free. I lay awake most of the night, with a constant delightful sense of God's great love and infinite condescension, and with a continual view of God as near, and as my God. My soul remained, as on Thursday night, in a kind of heavenly elysium. Whether waking or sleeping, there was no

interruption, throughout the night, to the views of my soul, to its heavenly light, and divine, inexpressible sweetness. It was without any agitation or motion of the body. I was led to reflect on God's mercy to me, in giving me, for many years, a willingness to die; and after that, for more than two years past, in making me willing to live, that I might do and suffer whatever he called me to here; whereas, before that, I often used to feel impatient at the thought of living. This then appeared to me, as it had often done before, what gave me much the greatest sense of thankfulness to God. I also thought how God had graciously given me, for a great while, an entire resignation to his will, with respect to the kind and manner of death that I should die; having been made willing to die on the rack, or at the stake, or any other tormenting death, and, if it were God's will, to die in darkness: and how I had that day been made very sensible and fully willing, if it was God's pleasure and for his glory, to die in horror. But now it occurred to me, that when I had thus been made willing to live, and to be kept on this dark abode, I used to think of living no longer than to the ordinary age of man. Upon this I was led to ask myself, Whether I was not willing to be kept out of heaven even longer; and my whole heart seemed immediately to reply, `Yes, a thousand years, if it be God's will, and for his honour and glory:' and then my heart, in the language of resignation, went further, and with great alacrity and sweetness, to answer as it were over and over again, `Yes, and live a thousand years in horror, if it be most for the glory of God: yea, I am willing to live a thousand years a hell upon earth, if it be most for the honour of God.' But then I considered with myself, What this would be, to live a hell upon earth, for so long a time; and I thought of the torment of my body being so great, awful, and overwhelming, that none could bear to live in the country where the spectacle was seen, and of the torment and horror of my mind being vastly greater than the torment of my body; and it seemed to me that I found a perfect willingness, and sweet quietness and alacrity of soul, in consenting that it should be so, if it were most for the glory of God; so that there was no hesitation, doubt, or darkness in my mind, attending the thoughts of it, but my resignation seemed to be clear, like a light that shone through my soul. I continued saying, `Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus! glorify thyself in me, in my body and my soul,'--with a calm and sweetness of soul, which banished all reluctance. The glory of God seemed to overcome me and swallow me up, and every conceivable suffering, and every thing that was terrible to my nature, seemed to shrink to nothing before it. This resignation continued in its clearness and brightness the rest of the night, and all the next day, and the night following, and on Monday in the forenoon, without interruption or abatement. All this while, whenever I thought of it, the language of my soul was, with the greatest fulness and alacrity, `Amen, Lord Jesus! Amen, Lord Jesus!' In the afternoon of Monday, it was not quite so perceptible and lively, but my mind remained so much in a similar frame, for more than a week, that I could never think of it without an inexpressible sweetness in my soul.

"After I had felt this resignation on Saturday night, for some time as I lay in bed, I felt such a disposition to rejoice in God, that I wished to have the world join me in praising him; and was ready to wonder how the world of mankind could lie and sleep, when there was such a God to praise, and rejoice in, and could scarcely forbear calling out to those who were asleep in the house, to arise, and rejoice, and praise God. When I arose on the morning of the sabbath, I felt a love to all mankind, wholly peculiar in its strength and sweetness, far beyond all that I had ever felt before. The power of that love seemed to be inexpressible. I thought, if I were surrounded by enemies, who were venting their malice and cruelty upon me, in tormenting me, it would still be impossible that I should cherish any feelings towards them but those of love, and pity, and ardent desires for

their happiness. At the same time I thought, if I were cast off by my nearest and dearest friends, and if the feelings and conduct of my husband were to be changed from tenderness and affection, to extreme hatred and cruelty, and that every day, I could so rest in God, that it would not touch my heart, or diminish my happiness. I could still go on with alacrity in the performance of every act of duty, and my happiness remain undiminished and entire.

"I never before felt so far from a disposition to judge and censure others, with respect to the state of their hearts, their sincerity, or their attainments in holiness, as I did that morning. To do this, seemed abhorrent to every feeling of my heart. I realized also, in an unusual and very lively manner, how great a part of Christianity lies in the performance of our social and relative duties to one another. The same lively and joyful sense of spiritual and divine things continued throughout the day--a sweet love to God and all mankind, and such an entire rest of soul in God, that it seemed as if nothing that could be said of me, or done to me, could touch my heart, or disturb my enjoyment. The road between heaven and my soul seemed open and wide, all the day long; and the consciousness I had of the reality and excellence of heavenly things was so clear, and the affections they excited so intense, that it overcame my strength, and kept my body weak and faint, the great part of the day, so that I could not stand or go without help. The night also was comforting and refreshing.

"This delightful frame of mind was continued on Monday. About noon, one of the neighbours who was conversing with me, expressed himself thus, `One smile from Christ is worth a thousand million pounds,' and the words affected me exceedingly, and in a manner which I cannot express. I had a strong sense of the infinite worth of Christ's approbation and love, and at the same time of the grossness of the comparison; and it only astonished me, that any one could compare a smile of Christ to any earthly treasure.--Towards night, I had a deep sense of the awful greatness of God, and felt with what humility and reverence we ought to behave ourselves before him. Just then Mr. W ----came in, and spoke with a somewhat light, smiling air, of the flourishing state of religion in the town; which I could scarcely bear to see. It seemed to me, that we ought greatly to revere the presence of God, and to behave ourselves with the utmost solemnity and humility, when so great and holy a God was so remarkably present, and to rejoice before him with trembling.--In the evening, these words, in the Penitential Cries,--`The Comforter is come!'--were accompanied to my soul with such conscious certainty, and such intense joy, that immediately it took away my strength, and I was falling to the floor; when some of those who were near me caught me and held me up. And when I repeated the words to the by-standers, the strength of my feelings was increased. The name--`The Comforter'--seemed to denote that the Holy Spirit was the only and infinite Fountain of comfort and joy, and this seemed real and certain to my mind. These words--`the comforter'--seemed as it were immensely great, enough to fill heaven and earth.

"On Tuesday after dinner, Mr. Buell, as he sat at table, began to discourse about the glories of the upper world; which greatly affected me, so as to take away my strength. The views and feelings of the preceding evening, respecting the Great Comforter, were renewed in the most lively and joyful manner; so that my limbs grew cold, and I continued to a considerable degree overcome for about an hour, earnestly expressing to those around me, my deep and joyful sense of the presence and divine excellence of the Comforter, and of the glories of heaven.

"It was either on Tuesday or Wednesday, that Mr. W ----came to the house, and informed what account Mr. Lyman, who was just then come from Leicester, on his way from Boston, gave of Mr. Edwards's success, in making peace and promoting religion at Leicester. The intelligence inspired me with such an admiring sense of the great goodness of God, in using Mr. Edwards as the instrument of doing good, and promoting the work of salvation, that it immediately overcame me, and took away my strength, so that I could no longer stand on my feet. On Wednesday night, Mr. Clark, coming in with Mr. Buell and some of the people, asked me how I felt. I told him that I did not feel at all times alike, but this I thought I could say, that I had given up all to God; and there is nothing like it, nothing like giving all up to him, esteeming all to be his, and resigning all at his call. I told him that, many a time within a twelvemonth, I had asked myself when I lay down, How I should feel, if our house and all our property in it should be burnt up, and we should that night be turned out naked; whether I could cheerfully resign all to God; and whether I so saw that all was his, that I could fully consent to his will, in being deprived of it? and that I found, so far as I could judge, an entire resignation to his will, and felt that, if he should thus strip me of every thing, I had nothing to say, but should, I thought, have an entire calm and rest in God, for it was his own, and not mine. After this, Mr. Phelps gave us an account of his own feelings, during a journey from which he had just returned; and then Mr. Pomeroy broke forth in the language of joy, and thankfulness, and praise, and continued speaking to us nearly an hour, leading us all the time to rejoice in the visible presence of God, and to adore his infinite goodness and condescension. He concluded by saying, `I would say more if I could; but words were not made to express these things.' This reminded me of the words of Mrs. Rowe:

`More I would speak, but all my words are faint: Celestial Love, what eloquence can paint? No more, by mortal words, can be expressed; But vast Eternity shall tell the rest:' And my former impressions of heavenly and divine things were renewed with so much power, and life, and joy, that my strength all failed me, and I remained for some time faint and exhausted. After the people had retired, I had a still more lively and joyful sense of the goodness and all-sufficiency of God, of the pleasure of loving him, and of being alive and active in his service, so that I could not sit still, but walked the room for some time, in a kind of transport. The contemplation was so refreshing and delightful, so much like a heavenly feast within the soul, that I felt an absolute indifference as to any external circumstances; and, according to my best remembrance, this enlivening of my spirit continued so, that I slept but little that night.

"The next day, being Thursday, between ten and eleven o'clock, and a room full of people being collected, I heard two persons give a minute account of the enlivening and joyful influences of the Holy Spirit on their own hearts. It was sweet to me to see others before me in their divine attainments, and to follow after them to heaven. I thought I should rejoice to follow the negro servants in the town to heaven. While I was thus listening, the consideration of the blessed appearances there were of God's being there with us, affected me so powerfully, that the joy and transport of the preceding night were again renewed. After this they sang a hymn, which greatly moved me, especially the latter part of it, which speaks of the ungratefulness of not having the praises of Christ always on our tongues. Those last words of the hymn seemed to fasten on my mind, and as I repeated them over, I felt such intense love to Christ, and so much delight in praising him, that I could hardly forbear leaping from my chair and singing aloud for joy and exultation. I continued thus extraordinarily moved until about one o'clock, when the people went

away."

I am well aware, that very different views will be formed of the preceding narrative, by different individuals. Those who have no conception of what is meant by the religion of the heart, will doubtless pronounce it the offspring of a diseased body, or a distempered brain. Others, who profess the religion of Christ, but whose minds usually come in contact with nothing which is not merely palpable--with nothing but what they can either see, or hear, or feel, or taste--will probably regard it as the effect of mere enthusiasm. While others, who are both more intellectual and more spiritual in their objects of contemplation, will at once perceive that the state of mind therein described, is one to which they themselves are chiefly or wholly strangers; and will therefore very naturally and rationally wish to learn somewhat more minutely the circumstances of the individual, who was the subject of these spiritual discoveries, as well as their actual effect upon her character. On these points, the testimony of Mr. Edwards is full and explicit; and from his authority we state the following facts. At this time, Mrs. Edwards had been long, in an uncommon manner, growing in grace, and rising by very sensible degrees to higher love to God, weanedness from the world, and mastery over sin and temptation, through great trials and conflicts, and long-continued struggling and fighting with sin, and earnest and constant prayer and labour in religion, and engagedness of mind in the use of all means, attended with a great exactness of life; and this growth had been attended not only with a great increase of religious affections, but with a most visible alteration of outward behaviour; particularly in living above the world, and in a greater degree of stedfastness and strength in the way of duty and self-denial: maintaining the christian conflict against temptations, and conquering from time to time under great trials; persisting in an unmoved, untouched calm and rest, under the changes and accidents of time, such as seasons of extreme pain and apparent hazard of immediate death. These transports did not arise from bodily weakness, but were greatest in the best state of health. They were accompanied with a lively sense of the greatness of God, and her own littleness and vileness; and had abiding effects in the increase of the sweetness, rest, and humility, which they left upon the soul, and in a new engagedness of heart to live to the honour of God, and to watch and fight against sin. They were attended with no enthusiastical disposition to follow impulses or supposed revelations, nor with any appearance of spiritual pride; but on the contrary with a very great increase of meekness and humility, and a disposition in honour to prefer others, as well as with a great aversion to judging others, and a strong sense of the importance of moral, social duties. They were accompanied with an extraordinary sense of the awful majesty of God, so as frequently to take away the bodily strength; with a sense of the holiness of God, as of a flame infinitely pure and bright, so as oftentimes to overwhelm soul and body, with an extraordinary view of the infinite terribleness of his wrath, of the exceeding sinfulness of her own heart, and of a desert of that wrath for ever; with an intense sorrow for sin, so as entirely to prostrate the strength of the body; with a clear certainty of the truth of the great things revealed in the gospel; with an overwhelming sense of the glory of the work of redemption, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, of the glorious harmony of the divine attributes appearing therein, as that wherein mercy and truth are met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other; with a sight of the glorious sufficiency of Christ, a constant immovable trust in God, an overwhelming sense of his glorious unsearchable wisdom, a sweet rejoicing at his being infinitely and unchangeably happy, independent, and all-sufficient, at his reigning over all, and doing his own will with uncontrollable power and sovereignty; with a delightful sense of the glory of the Holy Spirit as the great Comforter; with intense desires for the

honour and glory of God’s name, a clear and constant preference of it, not only to her own temporal interests, but to her spiritual comfort; with a willingness to live and die in spiritual darkness, if the honour of God required it, a great lamenting of ingratitude, intense longings and faintings after higher love to Christ, and greater conformity to him--particularly to be more perfect in humility and adoration; with great delight in singing praises to God and Jesus Christ, a desire that this present life might be one continued song of praise, and an overcoming pleasure at the thought of spending eternity in that exercise; with a living by faith in a very unusual manner; with a uniform distrust of her own strength, and a great dependence on God for help; with intense longings that all Christians might be fervent in love, and active in the service of God; with taking pleasure in watchfulness and toil, self-denial and bearing the cross; with a melting compassion for those who were in a state of nature, and for Christians under darkness, a universal benevolence to all mankind, a willingness to endure any suffering for the conversion of the impenitent--her compassion for them being often to that degree, that she could find no support nor rest, but in going to God and pouring out her soul in prayer for them; with earnest desires that the then existing work of Divine grace might be carried on with greater purity, and freedom from all bitter zeal, censoriousness, spiritual pride, and angry controversy, and that the kingdom of Christ might be established through the earth, as a kingdom of holiness, peace, and joy; with unspeakable delight in the thoughts of heaven, as a world of love, where love shall be the saints’ eternal food, where they shall dwell in the light of love, and where the very air and breath will be nothing but love; with intense love to the people of God, as to those who will soon wear his perfect image; with earnest desires that others might love God better than herself, and attain to higher degrees of holiness; with a delight in conversing on the most spiritual and heavenly things in religion, often engaging in such conversation, with a degree of feeling too intense to be long endured; and with a lively sense of the importance of charity to the poor, as well as of the need which ministers have of the influences of the Holy Spirit, and earnest longings and wrestlings with God for them in prayer. She had also, according to Mr. Edwards, the greatest, fullest, longest continued, and most constant assurance of the favour of God, and of a title to future glory, that he ever saw any appearance of, in any person;--enjoying, especially near the time in which he made this statement, to use her own expression, the riches of Full Assurance; as well as an uninterrupted, entire resignation to God, with respect to health or sickness, ease or pain, life or death, and an entire resignation of the lives of her nearest earthly friends. These things were attended with a constant, sweet peace and serenity of soul, without a cloud to interrupt it, a continual rejoicing in all the works of nature and providence, a wonderful access to God by prayer, sensibly conversing with him, as much as if Christ were here on earth; frequent, plain, sensible, and immediate answers of prayer, all tears wiped away, all former troubles and sorrows of life forgotten, excepting sorrow for sin, doing every thing for God and his glory, doing it as the service of love, with a continual uninterrupted cheerfulness, peace, and joy. "O how good," she once observed, "is it to work for God in the day time, and at night to lie down under his smiles." Instead of slighting the means of grace in consequence of these discoveries, she was never more sensible of her need of instruction; instead of regarding herself as free from sin, she was led by her clearer sight of the Divine holiness, to perceive more fully the sinfulness of her own heart; instead of neglecting the business of life, she performed it with greater alacrity, as a part of the service of God--declaring that, when thus done, it was as delightful as prayer itself. At the same time, she discovered an extreme anxiety to avoid every sin, and to discharge every moral obligation, was most exemplary

in the performance of every social and relative duty, exhibited great inoffensiveness of life and conversation, great meekness, gentleness, and benevolence of spirit, and avoided, with remarkable conscientiousness, all those things which she regarded as failings in her own character. To those who, after reading this statement of facts, still regard the preceding narrative as the offspring of enthusiasm, we shall draw our reply from Mr. Edwards himself: "Now if such things are enthusiasm, and the offspring of a distempered brain; let my brain be possessed evermore of that happy distemper! If this be distraction; I pray God that the world of mankind may all be seized with this benign, meek, beneficent, beatific, glorious distraction! What notion have they of true religion, who reject what has here been described? What shall we find to correspond with these expressions of Scripture, The peace of God, that passeth all understanding: Rejoicing with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: God's shining into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ: With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of God, and being changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord: Being called out of darkness into marvellous light: and having the day-star arise in our hearts? What, let me ask, if these things that have been mentioned do not correspond with these expressions; what else can we find that does correspond with them?"

Mr. Edwards adds, that he had witnessed many instances, in Northampton and elsewhere, of other persons, which were in general of the same kind with these, though not so high in degree, in any instance; and, in many of them, not so pure and unmixed, or so well regulated. In some individuals, who discovered very intense religious affections, there was obviously a great mixture of nature with grace, and in some a sad degenerating of religious affections; yet, in most instances, they were uniform in their character, and obviously the result of fervent piety. That such full and clear discoveries of the Divine excellency and glory, as those recited in the preceding narrative, are uncommon, is unhappily too true: still they are far from being singular; for accounts of a similar nature may be found in the private diaries of men of distinguished piety, in almost every age of the church. [25] They are not however probably more uncommon, than are great attainments in piety; and, when enjoyed by those who have made such attainments, ought, in no respect, to be regarded as surprising. There is certainly in God a goodness and a glory, infinitely surpassing the comprehension of the highest created beings. This goodness and glory, which constitutes the Divine beauty and loveliness, God is able to reveal to the mind of every intelligent creature, as far as his faculties extend. If the mind, to which this revelation is made, has a supreme relish for holiness; the discovery of this spiritual beauty of the Divine mind will communicate to it an enjoyment, which is pure and heavenly in its nature; and the degree of this enjoyment, in every case, will be proportioned to the measure of the faculties, and to the fulness of the discovery. This is obviously true in the heavenly world. God there reveals his glory--not in all its infinite brightness: this, he cannot do to a created intelligence: he reveals it--in as strong an effulgence as the minds of saints and angels can endure. Were a revelation, equally clear and full, to be made to one of us here on earth, it would obviously overwhelm and destroy the life of the body; for John, even when he beheld the glorified body of Christ, fell at his feet as dead. In proportion as an individual is possessed of holiness, so much more near does he come to God, and so much more clear and distinct is his perception of his true character. "If a man love me," says Christ, "he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Such discoveries of the Divine beauty and glory are therefore the promised reward, as well as the natural consequence, of distinguished holiness; and a well

authenticated narrative, of the manner in which they were made, in a given instance, even if they were unusual in degree, instead of exciting our distrust or surprise, should lead us, with a noble emulation, to "press forward towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

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[24] Probably the 91st Hymn of the 2d Book, beginning with "O the delights, the heavenly joys, The glories of the place."

[25] As examples of this nature, the reader is referred to the writings of Flavel, L. Baxter, and Brainerd, and of Mr. Edwards himself.

06.12. CHAPTER XII.

CHAPTER XII.

EXTENT OF THE REVIVAL OF 1740-1748--AUSPICIOUS OPENING--OPPOSED BY ITS ENEMIES: AND INJURED BY ITS FRIENDS--"THOUGHTS ON THE REVIVAL IN NEW ENGLAND"--ATTESTATIONS OF NUMEROUS MINISTERS--CAUSES OF ITS DECLINE--INFLUENCE OF MR. WHITEFIELD, MR. TENNENT, AND OTHERS--INFLUENCE OF MR. EDWARDS'S PUBLICATIONS IN SCOTLAND--GREAT REVIVAL OF RELIGION THERE--HIS CORRESPONDENTS IN THAT COUNTRY--LETTER TO MR. M'CULLOCH--ANSWER TO DO--LETTER FROM MR. ROBE. The reader can scarcely need to be informed, that the revival of religion, of which we have been speaking, was not confined to Northampton. It began there, and at Boston, and many other places, in 1740, and in that, and the three following years, prevailed, to a greater or less degree, in more than one hundred and fifty congregations in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; as well as in a considerable number more, in Maryland and Virginia, in 1744. At its commencement, it appears to have been, to an unusual degree, a silent, powerful, and glorious work of the Spirit of God--the simple effect of truth applied to the conscience, and accompanied by his converting grace. So auspicious indeed was the opening of this memorable work of God, and so rapid its progress, that the promised reign of Christ on the earth was believed, by many, to be actually begun. Had it continued of this unmixed character, so extensive was its prevalence, and so powerful its operation, it would seem that in no great length of time, it would have pervaded the western world. As is usual in such cases, it was opposed by the enemies of vital religion, and with a violence proportioned to its prevalence and power. But its worst enemies were found among its most zealous friends: and Mr. Edwards appear to have been early aware, that the measures too generally resorted to, by many of them, to extend its influence over the whole country, as well as throughout every town and village where it was actually begun, were only adapted to introduce confusion and disorder, as far as they prevailed. To check these commencing evils, if possible, and to bear his own testimony to the work as a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, he prepared and published his "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England, in 1740." In this treatise, after presenting evidence most clear and convincing that the attention to religion, of which he speaks, was a glorious work of God, and showing the obligations which all were under, to acknowledge and promote it, as well as the danger of the contrary conduct; he points out various particulars in which its friends had been injuriously blamed, then exhibits the errors and mistakes into which they had actually fallen, and concludes by showing positively, what ought to be done to promote it. This work, which was published in 1742, excited a very deep interest in the American churches, and was immediately republished in Scotland. The author, from his uncommon acquaintance with the Scriptures, the soundness of his theological views, his intuitive discernment of the operations of the mind, his knowledge of the human heart both before and after its renovation by the Spirit of God, his familiarity with revivals of religion, his freedom from enthusiasm, and his utter aversion to extravagance and disorder, was admirably qualified to execute it in the happiest manner: and,

from the time of its first publication, it has been, to a very wide extent, the common text-book of evangelical divines, on the subject of which it treats. If the reader will examine the various accounts of revivals of religion, he will find that no one of them, anterior to this, furnishes an explanation of the subject, in accordance with the acknowledged principles of mental philosophy. In 1743, about one hundred and sixty ministers published their attestations to this work, as in their own view a genuine work of the Spirit of God, and as having been extraordinary and remarkable; on account of the numbers who discovered a deep anxiety for their salvation; on account of its rapid progress from place to place; and on account of the power with which it was carried on. Yet, while they bear witness to the great numbers who appeared to have become real Christians, to the extensive reformation of morals which it occasioned, and to a greater prevalence of religion than they had before witnessed; many of them also regret the extravagances and irregularities, which in some places had been permitted to accompany it. Among these, they particularly point out--a disposition to make secret impulses on the mind a rule of duty laymen invading the ministerial office, and under a pretence of exhorting, setting up preaching--ministers invading each other's provinces--indiscreet young men rushing into particular places, and preaching on all occasions--unscriptural separations of churches, and of ministers from their churches--a rash judging of the religious state of others--and a controversial, uncharitable, and censorious spirit.

There can be no doubt, that both parts of this statement are true. Although this most extensive work of grace opened on New England, in 1740 and 1741, in a manner eminently auspicious; yet in the two following years, it assumed, in various places, a somewhat different aspect, and was unhappily marked with irregularity and disorder. This was doubtless owing, in some degree, to the fact, that many ministers of wisdom and sound discretion, not adverting sufficiently to the extent and importance of the apostolic exhortation, "Let all things be done decently and in order," either encouraged, or did not effectually suppress, outcries, falling down and swooning, in the time of public and social worship, the speaking and praying of women in the church and in mixed assemblies, the meeting of children by themselves for religious worship, and singing and praying aloud in the streets; but far more to the unrestrained zeal of a considerable number of misguided men--some of them preachers of the gospel, and others lay exhorters--who, intending to take Mr. Whitefield as their model, travelled from place to place, preaching and exhorting wherever they could collect an audience; pronounced definitively and unhesitatingly with respect to the piety of individuals, both ministers and private Christians; and whenever they judged a minister, or a majority of his church, destitute of piety--which they usually did, not on account of their false principles or their irreligious life, but for their want of an ardour and zeal equal to their own--advised, in the one case, the whole church to withdraw from the minister; and in the other, a minority to separate themselves from the majority, and to form a distinct church and congregation. This indiscreet advice had, at times, too much influence, and occasioned in some places the sundering of churches and congregations, in others the removal of ministers, and in others the separation of individuals from the communion of their brethren. It thus introduced contentions and quarrels into churches and families, alienated ministers from each other, and from their people, and produced, in the places where these consequences were most discernible, a wide-spread and riveted prejudice against revivals of religion. It is deserving perhaps of inquiry, Whether the subsequent slumber of the American church, for nearly seventy years, may not be ascribed, in an important degree, to the fatal re-action of these unhappy measures.

There can be no doubt that on Mr. Whitefield (although by his multiplied and successful labours he was the means of incalculable good to the churches of America, as well as to those of England and Scotland) these evils are, to a considerable degree, to be charged, as having first led the way in this career of irregularity and disorder. He did not go as far as some of his followers; but he opened a wide door, and went great lengths, in these forbidden paths; and his imitators, having less discretion and experience, ventured, under the cover of his example, even beyond the limits which he himself was afraid to pass. His published journals show, that he was accustomed to decide too authoritatively, whether others, particularly ministers, were converted; as well as to insist that churches ought to remove those, whom they regarded as unconverted ministers; and that individual Christians or minorities of churches, where a majority refused to do this, were bound to separate themselves. Mr. Edwards, wholly disapproving of this conduct, conversed with Mr. Whitefield freely, in the presence of others, about his practice of pronouncing ministers, and other members of the christian church, unconverted; and declares that he supposed him to be of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry; and that he supposed that he endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable thereto. The same may be said, in substance, of Mr. G. Tennent, Mr. Finley, and Mr. Davenport, all of whom became early convinced of their error, and with christian sincerity openly acknowledged it. At the same time, while these things were to be regretted in themselves, and still more so in their unhappy consequences, the evidence is clear that, in far the greater number of places, these irregularities and disorders, if in any degree prevalent, were never predominant; and that the attention to religion in these places, while it continued, was most obviously a great and powerful work of the Spirit of God. The testimony of the ministers of those places, on these points, is explicit. It is given with great caution, and with the utmost candour; it acknowledges frankly the evils then experienced; and it details the actual moral change wrought in individuals and in society at large, in such a manner, that no one, who believes in regeneration as the work of the Holy Spirit, can doubt that this change was effected by the finger of God.

Though the attention to religion, at this period, was more powerful and more universal at Northampton, than in almost any other congregation, there was yet scarcely one in which so few of these evils were experienced. The reason was, that their spiritual guide had already formed, in his own mind, settled principles respecting a genuine revival of religion--as to its cause, its nature, and in the most important points, as to the manner in which it was to be treated. He regarded it as caused--not by appeals to the feelings or the passions, but--by the truth of God brought home to the mind, in a subordinate sense by the preaching of the gospel, but in a far higher sense by the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit. He considered such an event, so far as man is concerned, as the simple effect of a practical attention to truth, on the conscience and the heart. He felt it to be his great, and in a sense his only, duty, therefore, to urge divine truth on the feelings and consciences of his hearers, with all possible solemnity and power. How he in fact urged it, his published sermons will show.

Yet even in Northampton many things occurred, which not only were deviations from decorum and good sense, but were directly calculated, as far as they prevailed, to change that which, in its commencement, was, to an uncommon degree, a silent and powerful work of Divine grace, into a scene of confusion and disorder. This was owing chiefly to contagion from without. "The former part of the revival of religion, in 1740 and 1741, seemed to be much more pure, having less of a

corrupt mixture than in that of 1735 and 1736.--But in 1742, it was otherwise: the work continued more pure till we were infected from abroad. Our people hearing of, and some of them seeing, the work in other places, where there was a greater visible commotion than here, and the outward appearances were more extraordinary, their eyes were dazzled with the high professions and great show that some made, who came in hither from other places. That these people went so far before them in raptures and violent emotions of the affections, and a vehement zeal, and what they called boldness for Christ, our people were ready to think was owing to far greater attainments in grace and intimacy with heaven. These things had a strange influence on the people, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy tincture, from which it was a hard and long labour to deliver them, and from which some of them are not fully delivered to this day." In many parishes, where the attention to religion commenced in 1742, it was extensively, if not chiefly, of this unhappy character. This was particularly true in the eastern part of Connecticut, and in the eastern and southeastern part, and some of the more central parishes, of Massachusetts. Churches and congregations were torn asunder, many ministers were dismissed, churches of a separatical character were formed, the peace of society was permanently broken up, and a revival of religion became extensively, in the view of the community, another name for the prevalence of fanaticism, disorder, and misrule. This unhappy and surprising change should prove an everlasting beacon to the church of God.

I have already had occasion to remark, that the "Narrative of Surprising Conversions" was repeatedly published, and extensively circulated, throughout England and Scotland. The same was true of Mr. Edwards's Five Sermons preached during the revival of religion in 1734-5, and of his discourse on "the Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God." The effect of these publications, particularly of the first, was in the latter country great and salutary. The eyes both of ministers and Christians were extensively opened to the fact, that an effusion of the Spirit, resembling in some good degree those recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, might take place, and might rationally be expected to take place, in modern times, in consequence of the direct and powerful application of similar means. Scotland was at that time favoured with the labours of many clergymen, greatly respected for their piety and talents; among whom were the Rev. William M'Culloch of Cambuslang, the Rev. John Robe of Kilsyth, the Rev. John M'Laurin of Glasgow, the Rev. Thomas Gillespie of Carnock, the Rev. John Willison of Dundee, and the Rev. John Erskine of Kirkintillock, afterwards Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh. These gentlemen, and many of their associates in the ministry, appear, at the time of which we are speaking, to have preached, not only with great plainness and fervency, but with the strongest confidence of immediate and great success; and, as a natural consequence, the church of Scotland soon witnessed a state of things, to which she had long been a stranger. In February, 1742, a revival of religion began at Cambuslang, the parish of Mr. M'Culloch, four miles from Glasgow, resembling in its power and rapidity, and the number of conversions, that in Northampton, in 1734-5; and in the course of that year, scenes of a similar nature were witnessed in Kilsyth, Glasgow, Dundee, Carnock, Kirkintillock, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and upwards of thirty towns and villages, in various parts of that kingdom. Thus the darkness which covers the earth was dispersed, for a season, from over these two countries, and the clear light of heaven shone down upon them, with no intervening cloud. In such circumstances, it might naturally be expected, that the prominent clergymen in both, feeling a common interest, and being engaged in similar labours, would soon open a mutual correspondence. The first of Mr. Edwards's correspondents in Scotland, was the Rev. Mr.

M’Laurin of Glasgow; but, unfortunately, I have been able to procure none of the letters which passed between them. That gentleman, in the early part of 1743, having informed Mr. Edwards that his friend, Mr. M’Culloch of Cambuslang, had intended to write to him with a view of offering a correspondence, but had failed of the expected opportunity; Mr. Edwards addressed to the latter the following letter.

"To the Rev. William M’Culloch, Cambuslang.

Northampton, May 12, 1743. rev. and dear sir,

Mr. M’Laurin of Glasgow, in a letter he has lately sent me, informs me of your proposing to write a letter to me, and of your being prevented by the failing of the expected opportunity. I thank you Rev. Sir, that you had such a thing in your heart. We were informed last year, by the printed and well attested narrative, of the glorious work of God in your parish; which we have since understood has spread into many other towns and parishes in that part of Scotland; especially are we informed of this by Mr. Robe’s Narrative, and I perceive by some papers of the Weekly History, sent me by Mr. M’Laurin of Glasgow, that the work has continued to make glorious progress at Cambuslang, even till it has prevailed to a wonderful degree indeed. God has highly favoured and honoured you, dear Sir, which may justly render your name precious to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ. We live in a day wherein God is doing marvellous things: in that respect, we are distinguished from former generations. God has wrought great things in New England, which, though exceedingly glorious, have all along been attended with some threatening clouds; which, from the beginning, caused me to apprehend some great stop or check to be put to the work, before it should be begun and carried on in its genuine purity and beauty, to subdue all before it, and to prevail with an irresistible and continual progress and triumph; and it is come to pass according to my apprehensions. But yet I cannot think otherwise, than that what has now been doing, is the forerunner of something vastly greater, more pure, and more extensive. I can’t think that God has come down from heaven, and done such great things before our eyes, and gone so much beside and beyond his usual way of working, and wrought so wonderfully, and that he has gone away with a design to leave things thus. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? And will God, when he has wrought so wonderfully, and made the earth to bring forth in one day, bring to the birth and not cause to bring forth? And shall he cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? Isaiah 66:8-9. I live upon the brink of the grave, in great infirmity of body, and nothing is more uncertain, than whether I shall live to see it: but, I believe God will revive his work again before long, and that it will not wholly cease till it has subdued the whole earth. But God is now going and returning to his place, till we acknowledge our offence, and, I hope, to humble his church in New England, and purify it, and so fit it for yet greater comfort, that he designs in due time to bestow upon it. God may deal with his church, as he deals with a particular saint; commonly, after his first comfort, the clouds return, and there is a season of remarkable darkness, and hiding of God’s face, and buffetings of Satan; but all to fit for greater mercy; and as it was with Christ himself, who, presently after the heavens were opened above his head, and the Spirit was poured out upon him, and God wonderfully testified his love to him, was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil forty days. I hope God will show us our errors, and teach us wisdom by his present withdrawings. Now in the day of adversity, we have time and cause to consider, and begin now to have opportunity to see, the consequences of our conduct. I wish that God’s ministers and people, every where, would take warning by our errors, and the calamities that are

the issue of them. I have mentioned several things, in my letters to Mr. M'Laurin and Mr. Robe; another I might have mentioned, that most evidently proves of ill consequence, that is, we have run from one extreme to another, with respect to talking of experiences; that whereas formerly there was too great a reservedness in this matter, of late many have gone to an unbounded openness, frequency, and constancy, in talking of their experiences, declaring almost every thing that passes between God and their own souls, every where and before every body. Among other ill consequences of such a practice, this is one, that religion runs all into that channel; and religion is placed very much in it, so that the strength of it seems to be spent in it; that other duties, that are of vastly greater importance, have been looked upon as light in comparison of this, so that other parts of religion have been really much injured thereby: as when we see a tree excessively full of leaves, we find so much less fruit; and when a cloud arises with an excessive degree of wind, we have the less rain. How much, dear Sir, does God's church at such a day need the constant gracious care and guidance of our good Shepherd; and especially, we that are ministers.

I should be glad, dear Sir, of a remembrance in your prayers, and also of your help, by informations and instructions, by what you find in your experience in Scotland. I believe it to be the duty of one part of the church of God thus to help another.

I am, dear Sir, your affectionate Brother and servant in Jesus Christ, jonathan edwards." The following is the answer of Mr. M'Culloch to the preceding letter.

"Cambuslang, Aug. 13, 1743. rev. and dear sir, The happy period in which we live, and the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, wherewith you first were visited, in Northampton, in the year 1734; and then, more generally, in New England, in 1740, and 1741; and then we, in several places in Scotland, in 1742, and 1743; and the strong opposition made to this work, with you and with us, checked by an infinitely superior power; often brings to my mind that prophecy, Isaiah 49:19. "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." I cannot help thinking that this prophecy eminently points at our times; and begins to be fulfilled in the multitudes of souls that are bringing in to fear the Lord, to worship God in Christ, in whom his name is, and to see his glory in his sanctuary. And it is, to me, pretty remarkable, that the prophet here foretells they should do so, in the period he points at, not from east to west, but from west to east; mentioning the west before the east, contrary to the usual way of speaking in other prophecies, as where Malachi foretells, that the name of the Lord should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising of the sun to the west, (Malachi 1:11) and our Lord Jesus, that many should come from the east and west, &c. (Matthew 8:11) And in this order it was, that the light of the gospel came to dawn on the several nations, in the propagation of it through the world. But the prophet here, under the conduct of the Holy Spirit, who chooses all his words in infinite wisdom, puts the west before the east; intending, as I conceive, thereby to signify, that the glorious revival of religion, and the wide and diffusive spread of vital Christianity, in the latter times of the gospel, should begin in the more westerly parts, and proceed to these more easterly. And while it should be doing so, or shortly after, great opposition should arise, the enemy should come in as a flood: Satan should, with great violence, assault particular believing souls; and stir up men to malign and reproach the work of God; and, it's likely also, raise a terrible persecution against the church. But while the enemy might seem, for a time, to be thus carrying all before him, the Spirit of the Lord should lift up a standard against him; give a banner to them that fear him, and animate them to

display it for the truth, and make his word mightily to prevail, and bear down all opposing power. For on what side soever the Almighty and Eternal Spirit of Jehovah lifts up a standard, there the victory is certain; and we may be sure he will lift it up in defence of his own work. The Chaldee paraphrase makes the words in the latter part of this verse, to allude to the river Euphrates, when it breaks over all its banks, and overflows the adjacent plains: thus when persecutors shall come in, as the inundation of the river Euphrates, they shall be broke in pieces by the word of the Lord. The whole of this verse seems to me to have an aspect to the present and past times, for some years. The Sun of righteousness has been making his course from west to east, and shedding his benign and quickening influences, on poor forlorn and benighted souls, in places vastly distant from one another. But clouds have arisen and intercepted his reviving beams. The enemy of salvation has broke in as an overflowing flood, almost overwhelmed poor souls, newly come into the spiritual world, after they had got some glimpse of the glory of Christ, with a deluge of temptations; floods of ungodly men, stirred up by Satan, and their natural enmity at religion, have affrighted them; mistaken and prejudiced friends have disowned them. Many such things have already befallen the subjects of this glorious work of God of late years. But I apprehend more general and formidable trials are yet to come: and that the enemy's coming in as a flood, may relate to a flood of errors or persecutions of fierce enemies, rushing in upon the church and threatening to swallow her up. But our comfort is, that the Spirit of the Lord of hosts will lift up a standard, against all the combined powers of earth and hell, and put them to flight; and Christ having begun to conquer, so remarkably, will go on from conquering to conquer, till the whole earth be filled with his glory. Revelation 12:15, Isaiah 17:12-13.

I mention these things, dear Sir, not for your information, for I know that I can add nothing to you; but to show my agreement with you, in what you express as your sentiments, that what has now been a doing is the forerunner of something vastly greater, more pure, and more extensive, and that God will revive his work again, ere long, and that it will not wholly cease, till it has subdued the whole earth: and, without pretending to prophecy, to hint a little at the ground of my expectations. Only I'm afraid (which is a thing you do not hint at) that before these glorious times, some dreadful stroke or trial may yet be abiding us. May the Lord prepare us for it. But as to this, I cannot and dare not peremptorily determine. All things I give up to farther light, without pretending to fix the times and seasons for God's great and wonderful works, which he has reserved in his own power, and the certain knowledge of which he has locked up in his own breast." The same conveyance brought Mr. Edwards the following letter, from the Rev. Mr. Robe, of Kilsyth.

"Kilsyth, Aug. 16, 1743. rev. sir, and very dear brother,

We acknowledge, with praise and thanks, the Lord's keeping his work hitherto, with us, free from those errors and disorders, which, through the subtilty of the serpent, and corruptions even of good men, were mixed with it in New England. As this was no more just ground of objection against what was among you, being a real work of the Holy Spirit, than the same things were against the work of God in Corinth, and other places, at the first conversion of the pagans, and afterwards at the reformation from popery; so the many adversaries to this blessed work here, have as fully made use of all those errors, disorders, and blemishes, against it there, as objections, as if they had really been here. The most unseasonable accounts from America, the most scurrilous and bitter pamphlets, and representations from mistaking brethren, were much and zealously propagated. Only it was overruled by Providence, that those letters and papers

dropped what was a real testimony to the goodness of the work they designed to defame and render odious. Many thinking persons concluded, from the gross calumnies forged and spread against the Lord's work here, within a few miles of them, that such stories from America could not be much depended on.

What you write about the trial of extraordinary joys and raptures, by their concomitants and effects, is most solid; and our practice, by all I know, hath been conformable to it. It hath been in the strongest manner declared, that no degree of such rapturous joys evidenced them to be from God, unless they led to God, and carried with them those things which accompany salvation. Such conditional applications of the promises of grace and glory as you justly recommend, hath been all along our manner. A holy fear of caution and watchfulness, hath been much pressed upon the subjects of this work, who appeared to believe through grace. And what is greatly comfortable, and reason of great praise to our God, is, that there is, as is yet known to any one in these bounds, no certain instance of what can be called apostacy; and not above four instances of any who have fallen into any gross sin. As to the state and progress of this blessed work here, and in other places, it is as followeth. Since the account given in the several prints of my Narrative, which I understand is or will be at Boston; the awakening of secure sinners hath and doth continue in this congregation; but not in such multitudes as last year, neither can it be reasonably expected. What is ground of joy and praise is, that there scarce hath been two or three weeks, but wherein I have some instance of persons newly awakened, besides several come to my knowledge who have been awakened, and appear in a most hopeful state, before they were known to me. Of which I had an instance yesterday, of a girl awakened, as she saith, in October last. I have, at writing this, an instance of a woman who appears to have obtained a good issue of her awakening last year; though I supposed it had come to nothing, through her intermitting to come to me of a long time. There is this difference in this parish betwixt the awakening last year and now; that some of their bodies have been affected by their fears, in a convulsive or hysteric way; and yet the inward distress of some of them hath been very sharp. I have seen two or three, who have fainted under apprehension of the hiding of God's face, or of their having received the Lord's supper unworthily. In some of the neighbouring congregations, where this blessed work was last year, there are instances of discernible awakenings this summer. In the large parish of St. Ninians, to the north of this, I was witness to the awakening of some, and conversed with others awakened, the middle of July last. In the parish of Sintrie to the west of St. Ninians there were several newly awakened at the giving the Lord's supper, about the end of July. In Gargunnock, Kippen, Killern, farther north and west, the Lord's work is yet discernible. At Muthel, which is about twenty miles north from this, the minister wrote me about the middle of July, that this blessed work, which hath appeared there since last summer as at Cambuslang, yet continued; and hath spread into other parishes, and reacheth even to the Highlands bordering upon that parish.

I am not without hopes of having good accounts of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the shires of Rosse and Nairn among the northernmost parts of Scotland. There was more than ordinary seriousness, in some parishes, in hearing the word, and in a concern about their souls, in the spring, when I saw some godly ministers from those bounds. This more than ordinary seriousness in hearing, and about communion times, is observable in several parts in Scotland, this summer. Societies for prayer setting up where there were none, and in other places increasing. A concern among the young are in some of the least hopeful places in Scotland, particularly in the Meuse

near the English borders. There is a great likelihood of the Lord’s doing good by the gospel, in this discernible way, in those bounds. Mr. M’Laurin, my dear brother, gives you an account of the progress of this work to the west of Glasgow, and other places. There have been very extraordinary manifestations of the love of God, in Christ Jesus, unto this people, in the use of the holy supper, and in the dispensation of the word about that time, this summer; which hath made the Lord’s people desire it a second time in these congregations during the summer season. It was given here upon the first sabbath of July, and is to be given here next Lord’s day, a second time, upon such a desire. Your affectionate brother and servant In our dearest Lord, james robe."

06.13. CHAPTER XIII.

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH DAVID BRAINERD--SEPARATIONS FROM CHURCHES--LETTER TO REV. MR. WHITMAN--CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. CLAP--CHARACTER OF THAT GENTLEMAN--SERMON AT THE ORDINATION OF MR. ABERCROMBIE--LETTER TO MR. M'CULLOCH--VIEWS OF THE PROPHECIES RELATIVE TO THE CHURCH--SERMON AT THE ORDINATION OF MR. BUELL. In September, 1743, Mr. Edwards, while attending the public commencement at New-Haven, first became acquainted with David Brainerd, then a missionary at Kaunaumeek. Brainerd, when a sophomore in college, in consequence of some indiscreet remarks, uttered in the ardour of his religious zeal, respecting the opposition of two of the faculty to the preaching of Mr. Whitefield, but which a generous mind would have wholly disregarded, had been expelled from the college. As this was the commencement, at which his class were to receive the degree of A.B., he came to New-Haven to attempt a reconciliation with the faculty, and made to them a truly humble and christian acknowledgment of his fault. "I was witness," says Mr. Edwards, "to the very christian spirit which Brainerd showed at that time; being then at New-Haven, and one whom he thought fit to consult on that occasion. There truly appeared in him a great degree of calmness and humility; without the least appearance of rising of spirit for any ill-treatment which he supposed he had suffered, or the least backwardness to abase himself before those, who, as he thought, had wronged him. What he did was without any objection or appearance of reluctance, even in private to his friends, to whom he freely opened himself. Earnest application was made on his behalf, that he might have his degree then given him; and particularly by the Rev. Mr. Burr of Newark, one of the correspondents of the Honourable Society in Scotland; he being sent from New Jersey to New-Haven, by the rest of the commissioners, for that end; and many arguments were used, but without success. He desired his degree, as he thought it would tend to his being more extensively useful; but still, when he was denied it, he manifested no disappointment nor resentment."

I have already alluded to the numerous separations of individual members, from the churches to which they belonged, which occurred about this period, and usually for the alleged want of piety, either of the minister or of the church. As these commonly took place without a regular dismission, it became a practical question of some interest, how the withdrawing members should be treated. Mr. Edwards, having been consulted on this subject, with reference to some of the members of the second church in Hartford, who had thus withdrawn, addressed the following letter to the minister of that church.

"To the Rev. Elnathan Whitman, of Hartford, Connecticut.

Northampton, Feb. 9, 1744. rev. and dear sir,

Mr. P--was here this week, and requested my opinion, with respect to the proper treatment of a number of persons, who have absented themselves from your meeting, and have since attended

public worship in W ----. I declined giving any opinion, except a very general one, to him; but, on reflection, have concluded to express my thoughts to you, as a friend, leaving you to attach to them such weight as you may see cause.

"As to differences, among professing Christians, of opinion and practice, about things that appertain to religion, and the worship of God, I am ready to think that you and I are agreed, as to the general principles of liberty of conscience; and that men's using methods with their neighbours, to oblige them to a conformity to their sentiments or way, is in nothing so unreasonable, as in the worship of God; because that is a business, in which each person acts for himself, with his Creator and Supreme Judge, as one concerned for his own acceptance with him; and on which depends his own, and not his neighbour's, eternal happiness, and salvation from everlasting ruin. And it is an affair, wherein every man is infinitely more concerned with his Creator than he is with his neighbour. And so I suppose that it will be allowed, that every man ought to be left to his own conscience, in what he judges will be most acceptable to God, or what he supposes is the will of God, as to the kind, or manner, or means of worship, or the society of worshippers he should join with in worship. Not but that a great abuse may be made of this doctrine of liberty of conscience in the worship of God. I know that many are ready to justify every thing in their own conduct, from this doctrine, and I do not suppose that men's pretence of conscience is always to be regarded, when made use of to justify their charging the society of worshippers they unite with, or the means of their worship, or indeed the kind or manner of their worship. Men may make this pretence at times under such circumstances, that they may, obviously, be worthy of no credit in what they pretend. It may be manifest from the nature and circumstances of the case, and their own manner of behaviour, that it is not conscience, but petulancy, and malice, and wilfulness, and obstinacy, that influence them. And, therefore, it seems to me evident, that, when such pleas are made, those that are especially concerned with them as persons that are peculiarly obliged to take care of their souls, have no other way to do, but to consider the nature and circumstances of the case, and from thence to judge whether the case be such as will admit of such a plea, or whether the nature of things will admit of such a supposition, that the men act conscientiously in what they do, considering all things that appertain to the case. And in this, I conceive, many things are to be considered and laid together, as--the nature of that thing is the subject of controversy, or wherein they differ from others, or have changed their own practice--the degree in which it is disputable, or how it may be supposed liable to diversity of opinion, one way or the other, as to its agreeableness to the word of God, and as to the importance of it, with regard to men's salvation or the good of their souls--the degree of knowledge or ignorance of the persons, the advantages they had for information, or the disadvantages they have been under, and what has been in their circumstances that might mislead the judgment--the principles that have been instilled into them--the instructions they have received from those, of whose piety and wisdom they have had a high opinion, which might misguide the judgment of persons of real honesty, and sincerity, and tender conscience--the example of others--the diversity of opinion among ministers--the general state of things in the land--the character of the persons themselves--and the manner of their behaviour in the particular affair in debate.

Now, Sir, with regard to those persons that have gone from you, to W--however you may look upon their behaviour herein as very disorderly, yet, if you suppose (the case being considered with all its circumstances) that there was any room for charity, that it might be through infirmity,

ignorance, and error of judgment, so that they might be truly conscientious in it; that is, might really believe it to be their duty, and what God required of them, to do as they have done; you would, I imagine, by no means think, that they ought to be proceeded with, in the use of such means as are proper to be used with contumacious offenders, or those that are stubborn and obstinate in scandalous vice and wilful wickedness; or that you would think it proper to proceed with persons, towards whom there is this room left for charity, that possibly they may be honest and truly conscientious, acting as persons afraid to offend God, so as to cut them off from the communion of the Lord, and cast them forth into the visible kingdom of Satan, to be as harlots and publicans.

Now, it may be well to examine, whether it can positively be determined, when all things are taken into consideration with respect to these persons, who have absented themselves from your assembly, that it is not possible in their case, that this might really be their honest judgment, that it was their duty to do so, and that God required it of them, and that they should greatly expose the welfare of their own souls, in attending no other public worship but that in your congregation. I suppose these persons are not much versed in casuistical divinity. They are of the common people, whose judgments, in all nations and ages, are exceedingly led and swayed. They are not very capable of viewing things in the extent of their consequences, and of estimating things in their true weight and importance. And you know, dear Sir, the state that things have been in, in the country. You know what opinions have lately prevailed, and have been maintained and propagated, by those that have been lifted up to heaven, in their reputation for piety and great knowledge in spiritual things, with a great part of the people of New England. I do not pretend to know what has influenced these people, in particular; but I think, under these circumstances, it would be no strange thing, if great numbers of the common people in the country, who are really conscientious, and concerned to be accepted with God, and to take the best course for the good of their souls, should really think in their hearts that God requires them to attend the ministry of those that are called New Light Ministers, and that it would be dangerous to their souls, and what God approved not of, ordinarily to attend the ministry of others; yea, I should think it strange if it were otherwise. It ought to be considered, how public controversy, and a great and general cry in matters of religion, strongly influences the conduct of multitudes of the common people, how it blinds their minds, and wonderfully misleads their judgments. And the rules of the gospel, and the example of the apostles, most certainly require that great allowances be made in such cases. And particularly the example of the apostle Paul, with regard to great numbers of professing Christians, in the church of Corinth; who, in a time of great and general confusion in that church, through the evil instructions of teachers whom they admired, who misled and blinded their judgments, ran into many and great disorders in their worship, and woeful schisms and divisions among themselves--particularly with regard to ministers, and even with regard to the apostle Paul himself, whom many of them seem for a time to have forsaken, to follow others who set up themselves in opposition to him; though, as he says, he had been their father who begat them through the gospel. Yet with how much gentleness does the apostle treat them, still acknowledging them as brethren; and though he required church censures to be used with regard to the incestuous person, yet there is no intimation of the apostle taking any such course, with those that had been misled by these false teachers, or with any that had been guilty of these disorders, except with the false teachers themselves. But as soon as they are brought off from following these false apostles any longer, he embraces them without further ado, with all the love and tenderness of a father; burying all their censoriousness, and schisms, and disorders, at the Lord’s supper, as well as their

ill treatment of him, the extraordinary messenger of Christ to them. And, indeed, the apostle never so much as gave any direction for the suspension of any one member from the Lord's supper, on account of these disorders, or from any other part of the public worship of God; but instead of this, gives them directions how they shall go on to attend the Lord's supper, and other parts of worship, in a better manner. And he himself, without suspension or interruption, goes on to call and treat them as beloved brethren, Christians, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints; and praises God in their behalf, for the grace that is given to them by Christ Jesus; and often and abundantly exhibits his charity towards them, in innumerable expressions which I might mention. And nothing is more apparent than that he does not treat them as persons, with respect to whom there lies a bar in the way of others treating them with the charity that belongs to saints, and good and honest members of the christian church, until the bar be removed by a church process. And, indeed, the insisting on a church process with every member that has behaved disorderly, in such a state of general confusion, is not a way to build up the church of God, (which is the end of church discipline,) but to pull it down. It will not be the way to cure a diseased member, but to bring a disease on the whole body.

I am not alone in these sentiments; but I have reason to think that Col. Stoddard, from the conversation I have had with him, is in the like way of thinking. There came hither, the last fall, two young men belonging to the church at New-Haven, who had been members of Mr. Noyes's church, but had left it and joined the separate church, and entered into covenant with it, when that church was embodied. This was looked upon as a crime, that ought not to be passed over, by Mr. Noyes and the rector. They declared themselves willing to return to Mr. Noyes's meeting; but a particular confession was required of them in the meeting-house. Accordingly, each of them had offered a confession, but it was not thought sufficient; but it was required that they should add some things, of which they thought hard; and they consulting me about it, I acquainted Col. Stoddard with the affair, and desired his thoughts. He said he looked upon it unreasonable to require any confession at all; and that, considering the general state of confusion that had existed, and the instructions and examples these young men had had, it might well be looked upon enough, that they were now willing to change their practice, and return again to Mr. Noyes's meeting. Not that you, Rev. Sir, are obliged to think as Col. Stoddard does; yet I think, considering his character and relation, his judgment may well be of so much weight, as to engage you the more to attend to and weigh the reasons he gives. The objections, that these persons may have had against ordinarily attending your meeting, may be very trivial; but yet I suppose that, through infirmity, the case may be so with truly honest Christians, that trivial things may have great weight in their consciences, so as to have fast hold of them, until they are better enlightened: as in the former times of the country, it was with respect to the controversy between presbyterians and congregationalists. It was, as I have heard, in those days real matter of question with some, whether a presbyterian, living and dying such, could be saved. Some presbyterians, that have lived with us, have desired baptism for their children, who yet lived in neglect of the ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ, because of a difference in some trivial circumstances of the administration, from the method of the church of Scotland. This matter being discoursed of, it was thought by Col. Stoddard in particular, that their neglect ought to be borne with, and they ought to be looked upon as Christians, and their children received to baptism; because, however trivial the foundation of their scruples were, yet through ignorance they might be honest and conscientious in them. As to the church covenant, that these persons have entered into, wherein they have obliged themselves

ordinarily to join in the worship of that church; I suppose none interpret the promises of a church covenant in such a sense, as to exclude all reserves of liberty, in case of an alteration of the judgment, in the affairs of conscience and religion, in one respect or another. As if a person, after incorporating with a congregational church, should become a conscientious episcopalian, or anabaptist, or should, by any change of judgment, come to think the means or manner of worship unlawful; and so in other respects that might be mentioned. And if it be so that these persons, in some of their conversation and behaviour, have manifested a contentious, froward spirit, at the time of their withdrawing from your church; I confess this gives greater ground of suspicion of the sincerity of their plea of conscience; yet, as to this, I humbly conceive allowances must be made. It must be considered, that it is possible that persons, in an affair of this nature, may, in the thing itself, be conscientious, and yet, in the course of the management of it, may be guilty of very corrupt mixtures of passion and every evil disposition; as indeed is commonly the case with men, in long controversies of whatever nature, and even with conscientious men. And therefore it appears to me, that if persons in such a case are not obstinate, in what is amiss in them in this respect, and don't attempt to justify their frowardness and unchristian speeches, they notwithstanding may deserve credit, when they profess themselves conscientious in the affair in general.

Thus, dear Sir, I have freely communicated to you some of my thoughts, with regard to some of the concerns of this difficult day, which prove a trouble to you; not however with any aim at directing your conduct, but merely to comply with the request to which I have alluded. I am fully sensible, that I am not the pastor of the second church of Hartford; and I only desire you would impartially consider the reasons I have offered. Begging of Christ, our common Lord, that he would direct you in your theory and practice, to that which will be acceptable in his sight, I remain, Rev. Sir, Your friend and brother, jonathan edwards." In May, 1743, Mr. Edwards went, as he often did, to Boston, to attend the convention of the clergy, which is held the day after the General Election. He was on horseback, and had his eldest daughter on a pillion behind him. At Brookfield, they fell in company with the Rev. Mr. Clap, rector of Yale College, his wife and son-in-law, also on horseback, with several others, all traveling in the same direction; and Mr. Edwards, joining the company, rode side by side with Mr. Clap, during a considerable part of the journey. At the commencement of Harvard college in the following year, 1744, Mr. Clap stated, before a large number of gentlemen, both at Boston and Cambridge, that, while riding through Leicester, in May of the year preceding, he was informed by Mr. Edwards, that Mr. Whitefield told him, "that he had the design of turning out of their places the greater part of the ministers of New England, and of supplying their pulpits with ministers from England, Scotland, and Ireland." This statement surprised those who heard it; yet, coming from such a source, it was believed, and extensively circulated. Mr. Edwards heard of it with astonishment, and without hesitation denied that he had said so. Mr. Clap, hearing of this denial, addressed a letter to Mr. Edwards, dated Oct. 12, 1744, in which he stated anew the alleged conversation, in the same terms; but before the latter received it, he had forwarded a letter to Mr. Clap, dated Oct. 18, 1744, showing him his mistake, and calling on him to correct it. On Oct. 29th, he wrote a reply to Mr. Clap's letter of the 12th; and receiving another, dated Oct. 28th, before he sent it, he replied to that also in the postscript, under date of Nov. 3d. Mr. Clap, finding that Mr. Edwards's contradiction of his statement was believed; and having heard, though incorrectly, that Mr. Edwards was about to publish such a contradiction; incautiously published a letter to his friend in Boston, in which he not only re-asserted his former

statement, but declared that Mr. Edwards, in his private correspondence with him on the subject, had made a declaration, equally full and strong, to the same point. Mr. Edwards published a reply, in a letter to his friend in Boston, dated Feb. 4, 1745; in which he gave his two letters of Oct. 18, and Oct. 29, with the postscript of Nov. 3; from which it appears that, instead of admitting the truth of Mr. Clap's statement, he had most explicitly and solemnly denied it; and, in order to show how Mr. Clap might have been led into the mistake, acknowledged that he himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield was formerly of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry; and that he himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable to it; and that all he had ever stated to any one was, his own opinion merely, and not any declared design of Mr. Whitefield. He also admitted, that Mr. Whitefield told him he intended to bring over a number of young men, to be ordained by the Messrs. Tennents, in New Jersey. He then asks, whether this is the same thing as Mr. Clap asserted, and suggests a variety of arguments, which seem absolutely conclusive, that he could never have made such a statement.

Mr. Clap, in reply to this, in a letter to Mr. Edwards, dated April 1, 1745, enters seriously upon the task of showing that Mr. Edwards's assertion--"that Mr. Whitefield told him, that he intended to bring over a number of young men, to be ordained by the Messrs. Tennents, in New Jersey"--connected with the assertion--that Mr. Edwards himself supposed, that Mr. Whitefield was formerly of the opinion, that unconverted ministers ought not to be continued in the ministry, and that Mr. Edwards himself supposed that Mr. Whitefield endeavoured to propagate this opinion, and a practice agreeable to it--was equivalent to Mr. Edwards's saying, that Mr. Whitefield told him, "that he had the design of turning out of their places the greater part of the ministers of New England, and of supplying their places with ministers from England, Scotland, and Ireland."

Mr. Edwards, in a letter to Mr. Clap, of May 20, 1745, after exposing in a few words the desperate absurdity of this attempt, enters on the discussion of the question--Whether he ever made such a statement to Mr. Clap?--with as much calmness as he afterwards exhibited in examining the question of a self-determining power; and with such logical precision of argument, that probably no one of his readers ever had a doubt left upon his mind, with regard to it;--no, not even his antagonist himself; for he never thought proper to attempt a reply; and in the public protest of the faculty of Yale college, against Mr. Whitefield, he and his associates in office say, in alluding to this very conversation, "You told the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Northampton, that you intended to bring over a number of young men from England, to be ordained by the Tennents." Those who have an opportunity of reading these communications, will find, in those of Mr. Edwards, an example of a personal controversy, conducted throughout, and to a very uncommon degree, in the spirit of the gentleman and the Christian. This occurred at a period of great excitement, when many ministers had been removed, and many churches rent asunder; and when the minds of men were of course prepared beforehand to believe every thing that favoured their own side of the question. Mr. Clap was in this case obviously mistaken; still he was truly a man of respectability and worth. He had a powerful mind, rich in invention, and stored with knowledge, was profoundly versed in mathematics, physics, and astronomy, as well as the principles of law, and proved an able instructor and governor of the institution over which he presided. He was elected by a board of trustees, exclusively Arminian in sentiment, and all his associates in office held the same tenets. At the same time, though he entered warmly into the controversy relative to Mr. Whitefield, from a

full conviction that it was his design to occasion the separation of churches, and to procure as far as possible the ejectment of all whom he regarded as unconverted ministers; and was doubtless happy in supposing himself able to prove that such was his avowed design, on the testimony of one of his warmest friends; yet he was far from taking the low ground of orthodoxy assumed by many on the same side, but always adhered to the doctrines of grace, and ultimately became their champion. Some time after this, he showed his magnanimity, by introducing the Essay on the Freedom of the Will, as a classic in the college. In August, 1744, Mr. Edwards preached the sermon entitled, "The True Excellency of a Gospel Minister," at the ordination of Mr. Robert Abercrombie, to the ministry of the gospel, at Pelham. This gentleman was from Scotland, having been made known to Mr. Edwards by his correspondents in that country; and through his kind offices was introduced to the people at Pelham. The sermon was immediately published. The reader will probably recollect, that Mr. M'Culloch, in his letter of August 13, 1743, had expressed the opinion, that the church of God, previous to her ultimate extension and triumph, was destined to meet with "more extensive and formidable trials," than she had ever before experienced. Mr. Edwards, from a minute investigation of the scriptural prophecies, having been convinced that this, which was at that time the commonly received opinion of the church, was erroneous; expresses his dissent from it in the following answer.

"To the Rev. Mr. M'Culloch.

Northampton, March 5, 1744. rev. and dear sir,

I return you thanks for your most obliging, entertaining, and instructive letter, dated Aug. 13, 1743, which I received about the latter end of October: my answering which has been unhappily delayed, by reason of my distance from Boston, and not being able to find any opportunity to send thither, till the ship was gone that brought your letter; which I much regretted. My delaying to answer has been far from arising from any indifference with respect to this correspondence, by which I am sensible I am highly honoured and privileged.

"Tis probable that you have been informed, by other correspondents, before now, what the present state of things in New England is: it is, indeed, on many accounts very melancholy; there is a vast alteration within these two years; for about so long I think it is, since the Spirit of God began to withdraw, and this great work has been on the decline. Great numbers in the land, about two years ago, were raised to an exceedingly great height in joy and elevation of mind; and through want of watchfulness, and sensibleness of the danger and temptation that there is in such circumstances, many were greatly exposed, and the devil taking the advantage, multitudes were soon, and to themselves insensibly, led far away from God and their duty; God was provoked that he was not sanctified in this height of advancement, as he ought to have been; he saw our spiritual pride and self-confidence, and the polluted flames that arose of intemperate, unhallowed zeal; and he soon, in a great measure, withdrew from us; and the consequence has been, that the enemy has come in like a flood, in various respects, until the deluge has overwhelmed the whole land. There had from the beginning been a great mixture, especially in some places, of false experiences, and false religion with true; but from about this time, the mixture became much greater, many were led away with sad delusions; and this opened the door for the enemy to come in like a flood in another respect, it gave great advantages to these enemies and opposers of this work, furnished them with weapons and gave them new courage, and has laid the friends of the work under such

disadvantage, that nothing that they could do would avail any thing to withstand their violence. And now it is come to that, that the work is put to a stop every where, and it is a day of the enemy's triumph; but I believe also a day of God's people's humiliation, which will be better to them in the end than their elevations and raptures. The time has been amongst us when the sower went forth to sow, and we have seen the spring wherein the seed sprang up in different sorts of ground, appearing then fair and flourishing; but this spring is past, and we now see the summer, wherein the sun is up with a burning heat, that tries the sorts of ground; and now appears the difference, the seed in stony ground, where there was only a thin layer of earth on a rock, withers away, the moisture being dried out; and the hidden seeds and roots of thorns, in unsubdued ground, now spring up and choke the seed of the word. Many high professors are fallen, some into gross immoralities, some into a rooted spiritual pride, enthusiasm, and an incorrigible wildness of behaviour, some into a cold frame of mind, showing a great indifference to the things of religion. But there are many, and I hope those the greater part of those that were professed converts, who appear hitherto like the good ground, and notwithstanding the thick and dark clouds, that so soon follow that blessed sunshine that we have had; yet I cannot but stedfastly maintain a hope and persuasion that God will revive his work, and that what has been so great and very extraordinary, is a forerunner of a yet more glorious and extensive work.--It has been slanderously reported and printed concerning me, that I have often said, that the Millennium was already begun, and that it began at Northampton. A doctor of divinity in New England has ventured to publish this report to the world, from a single person, who is concealed and kept behind the curtain: but the report is very diverse from what I have ever said. Indeed I have often said, as I say now, that I looked upon the late wonderful revivals of religion as forerunners of those glorious times so often prophesied of in the Scripture, and that this was the first dawning of that light, and beginning of that work, which, in the progress and issue of it, would at last bring on the church's latter-day glory; but there are many that know that I have from time to time added, that there would probably be many sore conflicts and terrible convulsions, and many changes, revivings, and intermissions, and returns of dark clouds, and threatening appearances, before this work shall have subdued the world, and Christ's kingdom shall be every where established and settled in peace, which will be the lengthening of the Millennium or day of the church's peace, rejoicing, and triumph on earth, so often spoken of. I was much entertained and delighted, dear Sir, with your thoughts on that text in Isaiah 59:19 which you signify in your letter, and so have many others been to whom I have communicated them; and as to what you say of some dreadful stroke or trial yet abiding, before the happy days of the promised peace and prosperity of the church, I so far agree with you, that I believe that, before the church of God shall have obtained the conquest, and the visible kingdom of Satan on earth shall receive its overthrow, and Christ's kingdom of grace be every where established on its ruins, there shall be a great and mighty struggle between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan, attended with the greatest and most extensive convulsions and commotion, that ever were upon the face of the earth, wherein doubtless many particular Christians will suffer, and perhaps some parts of the church.

"But that the enemies of the church of God should ever gain such advantages against her any more, as they have done in times past, that the victory should ever any more be on their side, or that it shall ever be given to the beast again to make war with the saints, and to prevail against them, and overcome them, (as in Revelation 13:7 and Revelation 11:7 and Daniel 7:21) to such a degree as has been heretofore, is otherwise than I hope. Though in this I would be far from setting

up my own judgment, in opposition to others, who are more skilled in the prophecies of Scripture than I am. I think that what has mainly induced many divines to be of that opinion, is what is said in Revelation 11:1-19 concerning the slaying of the witnesses, Revelation 11:7-8. `And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast, that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,' &c. The event here spoken of, seems evidently to be that wherein the enemies of the church gain the greatest advantage against her that ever they have, and have the greatest conquest of her that ever they obtained, and bring the church nearest to a total extinction. For a long time the church is very small, represented by two witnesses, and they had been long in a very low state, prophesying in sackcloth; but now they are dead and their enemies triumph over them, as having gotten a complete victory, and look upon it that they are now past all possibility of recovery, there being less prospect of the church's restoration than ever there was before. But are we to expect this, dear Sir, that Satan will ever find means to bring things to pass, that after all the increase of light that has been in the world, since the Reformation, there shall be a return of a more dark time than in the depth of the darkness of popery, before the Reformation, when the church of God shall be nearer to a total extinction, and have less of visibility, all true religion and light be more blotted out of the memories of mankind, Satan's kingdom of darkness be more firmly established, all monuments of true religion be more abolished, and that the state of the world should be such, that it should appear further from any hope of a revival of true religion than it ever has done; is this conceivable or possible, as the state of things now is all over the world, even among papists themselves, without a miracle, a greater than any power short of divine can effect, without a long tract of time, gradually to bring it to pass, to introduce the grossest ignorance and extinguish all memory and monuments of truth; which was the case in that great extinction of true religion that was before the Reformation. And besides, if we suppose this war of the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit with the witnesses, wherein he overcomes them and kills them, to be that last war which the church shall have with the beast, that great and mighty conflict that shall be just before the final overthrow of antichrist, that we read of in Revelation 16:1-21 the Revelation 16:13-21, and in Revelation 19:1-21 how shall we make them consist together? In Revelation 11:1-19 the church conflicts in sorrow, clothed in sackcloth, and in blood; in Revelation 19:1-21 the saints are not represented as fighting in sorrow and blood, though the battle be exceedingly great, but in strength, glory, and triumph. Their Captain goes forth to this battle, in great pomp and magnificence, on a white horse, and on his head many crowns, and on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and the saints follow him, not in sackcloth, but coming forth on white horses, clothed in pure linen, clean and white, the raiment of triumph, the same raiment that the saints appear in, Revelation 7:14 when they appear with palms in their hands, after they had washed their robes, that had been stained with their own blood, and made themselves white in the blood of the Lamb. In the conflict spoken of in chap. xi. the beast makes war with the witnesses, and overcomes them, and kills them: the same is foretold, Daniel 7:21 and Revelation 13:7. But in that last great battle, just before the fall of antichrist, we find the reverse of this; the church shall obtain a glorious victory over the beast, and the beast is taken and cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 17:14. `These shall make war with the Lamb; and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of Lords and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful:' compared with Revelation 19:16, to the end, and Revelation 16:16-17. In that conflict, Revelation 11:1-19 the beast has war with the witnesses, and kills them,

and their dead bodies lie unburied, as if it were to be meat for the beasts of the earth and fowls of heaven; but in that last conflict, Christ and his church shall slay their enemies, and give their dead bodies to be meat for the beasts of the earth and fowls of heaven, Revelation 19:17. &c. There is no manner of appearance in the descriptions that are given of that great battle, of any great advantages gained in it against the church, before the enemy is overcome, but all appearance of the contrary. The descriptions in Revelation 16:1-21 and Revelation 19:1-21 will by no means allow of such an advantage, as that of the overcoming and slaying of the church, or people of God, and their lying for some time unburied, that their dead bodies may be for their enemies to abuse and trample on, and make sport with. In Revelation 16:1-21 we have an account of their being gathered together into the place called Armageddon; and then the first thing we hear of after that, is the pouring out of the seventh vial of God's wrath, and a voice saying, It is done; and so in Revelation 19:1-21 we read of the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies being gathered together, to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army; and then the next thing we hear of is the beast's being taken, &c. The event of the conflict of the beast with the church, chap. xi. is the triumph of the church's enemies, when they of the people, and kindred, and tongues, and nations, and they that dwell on the earth, shall see the dead bodies of the saints lying in the streets, and shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another. But the event of that great and last battle, before the fall of antichrist, is quite the reverse of this, even the church's triumphing over their enemies, as being utterly destroyed. Those events, that are consequent on the issue of the war with the witnesses, Revelation 11:1-19 do in no wise answer to those, that are represented as consequent on that last conflict of antichrist with the church. `Tis said that when the witnesses ascended into heaven, the same hour there was an earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand! but this don't seem at all to answer what is described, Revelation 16:1-21 and Revelation 19:1-21. The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath; and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And it had been said before, that there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And in Revelation 19:1-21 instead of slaying seven thousand men, it seems as if there was a general slaughter of all the enemies of the church, through the world. And besides, if we read this Revelation 11:1-19 through, we shall see that the falling of the tenth part of the city and the rising of the witnesses, and their standing on their feet and ascending into heaven, are represented there as entirely distinct from the accomplishment of the church's glory, after the fall of antichrist, and God's judging and destroying the enemies of the church. The judgment here spoken of, as executed on God's enemies, are under another woe, and the benefits bestowed on the church, are under another trumpet: for immediately after the account of the rising and ascending of the witnesses, and its consequences, follow these words, Revelation 11:14-15. `The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.' And in the following verses, we have an account of the praises sung to God on the occasion; and in the last verse we have a brief hint of that same great earthquake, and the great hail, and those thunders, and lightnings, and voices, that we have an account of in the latter part of Revelation 16:1-21 so that the earthquake mentioned in the last verse of Revelation 11:1-19. seems to be the

great earthquake, that attends the last great conflict of the church and her enemies, rather than that mentioned Revelation 11:13. The grand objection against all this is, that it is said, that the witnesses should prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth; and when they have finished their testimony, the beast should make war against them, and kill them, &c. and that it seems manifest that after this they are no longer in sackcloth; for henceforward they are in an exalted state in heaven: and that therefore, seeing the time of their wearing sackcloth is one thousand two hundred and sixty days, i.e. during the time of the continuance of antichrist; hence their being slain, and their rising again, must be at the conclusion of this period, at the end of antichrist's reign. In answer to which I would say, with submission to better judgments, that I humbly conceive that we can justly infer no more from this prophecy than this, viz. that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days is the proper time (as it were) of the church's trouble and bondage, or being clothed in sackcloth, because it is the appointed time of the reign of antichrist; but this don't hinder but that God, out of great compassion to his church, should, in some respect, shorten the days, and grant that his church should in some measure anticipate the appointed great deliverance that should be at an end of these days, as he has in fact done in the Reformation; whereby his church has had a great degree of restoration granted her, from the darkness, power, and dominion of antichrist, before their proper time of restoration, which is at the end of the one thousand two hundred and sixty days; and so the church, through the compassion of her Father and Redeemer, anticipates her deliverance from her sorrows; and has, in some respects, an end put to her testifying in sackcloth, as many parts of the church are henceforward brought out from under the dominion of the antichristian powers, into a state of liberty; though in other respects, the church may be said still to continue in her sackcloth, and in the wilderness, (as Revelation 12:14) till the end of the days. And as to the witnesses standing on their feet, and ascending into heaven; I would propose that it may be considered, Whether any more can be understood by it, than the protestant church's being now (at least as to many parts of it) able to stand on her own legs, and in her own defence, and being raised to such a state, that she henceforward is out of the reach of the Romish powers; that, let them do what they will, they shall never any more be able to get the church under their power, as they had before; as oftentimes in the Scriptures God's people dwelling in safety, out of the reach of their enemies, is represented by their dwelling on high, or being set on high; Psalms 109:1. Isaiah 33:16. Psalms 119:29 and Psalms 91:14 and Psalms 107:41. Proverbs 29:25; and the children of Israel, when brought out of Egypt, were said to be carried on eagle's wings, that is lofty in its flight, flies away towards heaven where none of her enemies can reach her.

I might here observe, that we have other instances of God's shortening the days of his church's captivity and bondage, either at the beginning or latter end, in some measure parallel with this. Thus the proper time of the bondage of the posterity of Abraham, in a strange land, was four hundred years, Genesis 15:13; but yet God in mercy delayed their bondage, whereby the time was much shortened at the beginning. So the time wherein it was foretold, that the whole land of Israel should be a desolation and an astonishment, and the land should not enjoy her sabbaths, was seventy years, Jeremiah 25:11-12; and these seventy years are dated in 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 from Zedekiah's captivity; and yet from that captivity to Cyrus's decree was about fifty-two years, though it was indeed about seventy years before the temple was finished. So the proper time of the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes, wherein both the sanctuary and the host should be trodden under-foot by him, was two thousand and three hundred days, Daniel 7:13-14 and yet God

gave Israel a degree of deliverance by the Maccabees, and they were holpen with a little help, and the host ceased to be trodden under-foot before that time was expired. Daniel 11:32, Daniel 11:34. But in these things, dear Sir, I am by no means dogmatical; I do but humbly offer my thoughts on what you suggested in your letter, submitting them to your censure. `Tis pity that we should expect such a terrible devastation of the church, before her last and most glorious deliverance, if there be no such thing to be expected. It may be a temptation to some of the people of God, the less earnestly to wish and pray for the near approach of the church's glorious day, and the less to rejoice in the signs of its approach.

But, let us go on what scheme we will, it is most apparent from the Scriptures, that there are mighty strugglings to be expected, between the church of God and her enemies, before her great victory; and there may be many lesser strugglings before that last, and greatest, and universal conflict. Experience seems to show that the church of God, according to God's method of dealing with her, needs a great deal gradually to prepare her for that prosperity and glory that he has promised her on earth; as the growth of the earth, after winter, needs gradually to be prepared for the summer heat: I have known instances, wherein by the heat's coming on suddenly in the spring, without intermissions of cold to check the growth, the branches, many of them, by a too hasty growth, have afterwards died. And perhaps God may bring on a spiritual spring as he does the natural, with now and then a pleasant sunshiny season, and then an interruption by clouds and stormy winds, till at length, by the sun more and more approaching, and the light increasing, the strength of the winter is broken. We are extremely apt to get out of the right way. A very great increase of comfort that is sudden, without time and experience, in many instances, has appeared to wound the soul, in some respects, though it seems to profit it in others. Sometimes, at the same time that the soul seems wonderfully delivered from those lusts, that are more carnal and earthly, there is an insensible increase of those that are more spiritual; as God told the children of Israel, that he would put out the former inhabitants of the land of Canaan, by little and little, and would not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field should increase upon them.--We need much experience, to teach us the innumerable ways that we are liable to err, and to show us the evil and pernicious consequences of those errors. If it should please God, before many years, to grant another great revival of religion in New England, we should perhaps be much upon our guard against such errors as we have run into, and which have undone us this time, but yet might run insensibly into other errors that now we think not of.

You inquire of me, Rev. Sir, whether I reject all those for counterfeits that speak of visions and trances. I am far from doing of it: I am and always have been, in that matter, of the same opinion that Mr. Robe expresses, in some of those pamphlets Mr. M'Laurin sent me, that persons are neither to be rejected nor approved on such a foundation. I have expressed the same thing in my discourse on `the Marks of a Work of the True Spirit,' and have not changed my mind.

I am afraid, dear Sir, that I have been too bold with you, in being so lengthy and tedious, and have been too impertinent and forward to express my opinion upon this and that; but I consider myself as writing to a candid, christian friend and brother, with whom I may be free and bold, and from whom I may promise myself excuse and forgiveness. Dear brother, asking your earnest prayers for me and for New England, I am your affectionate brother, and engaged friend and servant, jonathan edwards." The opinion here expressed by Mr. Edwards, was not the result of a slight and cursory examination of the subject in discussion. He had a considerable time before examined, at

great length, the prophecies of Daniel and John, with regard to this very point; and, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, had been convinced that the opinion, then commonly received, that the severest trials of the church were yet future, was erroneous. The Rev. Samuel Buell, whom I have already mentioned, as having preached at Northampton during the absence of Mr. Edwards, in January, 1742, with uncommon fervour and success, continued his labours, as an evangelist among the churches, upwards of four years; and at length accepted of an invitation from the people of East Hampton, a village in the S. E. corner of Long Island, to become their minister. At his request, Mr. Edwards went to East Hampton, and there preached his installation sermon, on the 19th of September, 1746, from Isaiah 62:4-5.

06.14a. CHAPTER XIV.

CHAPTER XIV.

MISTAKES EXTENSIVELY PREVALENT AT THIS TIME, AS TO THE NATURE AND EVIDENCES OF TRUE GODLINESS--"TREATISE ON RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS"--DESIGN AND CHARACTER OF THE WORK--REPUBLISHED ABROAD--LETTER FROM MR. GILLESPIE CONCERNING IT--LETTER FROM MR. EDWARDS TO MR. M'CULLOCH--REPLY TO MR. GILLESPIE--PROPOSAL MADE IN SCOTLAND, FOR UNITED EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER--EFFORTS OF MR. EDWARDS TO PROMOTE IT--LETTER TO MR. M'CULLOCH--"HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER." MISTAKES EXTENSIVELY PREVALENT AT THIS TIME, AS TO THE NATURE AND EVIDENCES OF TRUE GODLINESS--"TREATISE ON RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS"--DESIGN AND CHARACTER OF THE WORK--REPUBLISHED ABROAD--LETTER FROM MR. GILLESPIE CONCERNING IT--LETTER FROM MR. EDWARDS TO MR. M'CULLOCH--REPLY TO MR. GILLESPIE--PROPOSAL MADE IN SCOTLAND, FOR UNITED EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER--EFFORTS OF MR. EDWARDS TO PROMOTE IT--LETTER TO MR. M'CULLOCH--"HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER." From the facts already recited, it will be obvious to the reader, that few ministers, even in the course of a long ministry, have as full an opportunity of learning, from their own observation, the true nature of a revival of religion, and the differences between imaginary and saving conversion, as Mr. Edwards had now enjoyed. He had early discovered, that there was a radical difficulty attending not only every revival of religion, but, in a greater or less degree, also, every instance of supposed conversion:--a difficulty arising from erroneous conceptions, so generally entertained, respecting the question, What is the nature of true religion? or, What are the distinguishing marks of that holiness, which is acceptable in the sight of God?--Perceiving, at an early period of his christian life, that no other subject was equally important to man, that no other was more frequently or variously illustrated by the scriptural writers, and yet, that on no other had professing Christians been less agreed; his attention, as he himself informs us, had been particularly directed to it, from his first commencement of the study of theology; and he was led to examine it with all the diligence, and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, of which his mind was capable. In addition to this, he had not only witnessed, in two successive instances, a solemn and universal attention to religion, among the young as well as among grown persons in his own congregation, and in both, almost all of the latter, as well as very many of the former, gathered into the church; but he had been the spiritual counsellor and guide of multitudes in other congregations, where he had occasionally laboured, as well as of great numbers who visited him for this purpose at Northampton. These advantages of observation, it may easily be believed, were not lost on a mind like his. This subject, at the time of which we are speaking, had become, also, a subject of warm and extended controversy. The advocates of revivals of religion, had too generally been accustomed to attach to the mere circumstances of conversion--to the time, place, manner, and means, in and by which it was supposed to be effected--an importance, no where given them in

the Scriptures; as well as to conclude, that all affections which were high in degree, and accompanied with great apparent zeal and ardour, were of course gracious in their nature; while their opposers insisted, that true religion did not consist at all in the affections, but wholly in the external conduct. The latter class attributed the uncommon attention to religion, which they could not deny had existed for four years in New England, to artificial excitement merely; while the former saw nothing in it, or in the measures taken to promote it, to condemn, but everything to approve. Mr. Edwards, in his views of the subject, differed materially from both classes. As he knew from his own experience, that sin and the saving grace of God might dwell in the same heart; so he had learned, both from observation and testimony, that much false religion might prevail during a powerful revival of true religion, and that at such a time, multitudes of hypocrites might spring up among real Christians. Thus it was in the revival of religion in the time of Josiah, in that which attended the preaching of John the Baptist, in those which occurred under the preaching of Christ, in the remarkable outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles, and in that which existed in the time of the Reformation. He clearly saw, that it was this mixture of counterfeit religion with true, which in all ages had given the devil his chief advantage against the kingdom of Christ. "By this," observes Mr. Edwards, "he hurt the cause of Christianity, in and after the apostolic age, much more, than by all the persecutions of both Jews and heathens. By this he prevailed against the Reformation, to put a stop to its progress, more than by all the bloody persecutions of the church of Rome. By this he prevailed against the revivals of religion, that have occurred since the Reformation. By this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love of her espousals, about a hundred years ago. And I think I have had opportunity enough to see plainly, that by this the devil has prevailed against the late great revival of religion in New England, so happy and promising in its beginning. I have seen the devil prevail in this way, against two great revivings of religion in this country. By perverting us from the simplicity that is in Christ, he hath suddenly prevailed to deprive us of that fair prospect we had a little while ago, of a kind of paradisaic state of the church of God in New England."

These evils, it was obvious, must exist in the church, until their cause was removed, and men had learned to distinguish accurately between true and false religion. To contribute his own best endeavours for the accomplishment of this end, Mr. Edwards prepared and published his "Treatise on Religious Affections." The great design of this treatise is, to show, in what true religion consists, and what are its distinguishing marks and evidences; and thus to enable every man, who will be honest and faithful with himself, to decide whether he is, or is not, a real Christian. Similar attempts had been made, by many earlier writers; but it may, I believe, safely be asserted, that no one of their efforts, taken as a whole, and viewed as an investigation of the entire subject would now be regarded as in any high degree important or valuable. The subject itself is one of the most difficult which theology presents; and demands for its full investigation, not only ardent piety, and a most intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, but an exact and metaphysical inspection of the faculties and operations of the human mind; which unfortunately few, very few, writers on experimental religion have hitherto discovered. The work of Mr. Edwards is at once a scriptural and a philosophical view of the subject;--as truly scientific in its arrangement, and logical in its deductions, as any work on the exact sciences. That it is also a thorough and complete view of it, we have this decisive evidence--that no work of the kind, of any value, has appeared since, for which the author has not been indebted, substantially, to the "Treatise on the Affections;" or which has not been that very treatise, in part, or in whole, diluted to the capacity of weaker

understandings. The trial, to which the mind of the honest, attentive, and prayerful reader of its pages is subjected, is the very trial of the final day. He who can endure the trial of the "Treatise on the Affections," will stand unhurt amidst a dissolving universe; and he who cannot will assuredly perish in its ruins. It ought to be the vade mecum, not only of every minister, and every Christian, but of every man, who has sobriety of thought enough to realize, that he has any interest in a coming eternity. Every minister should take effectual care that it is well dispersed among the people of his own charge, and that none of them is admitted to a profession of religion, until, after a thorough study of this treatise, he can satisfy both himself and his spiritual guide, not only that he does not rely upon the mere negative signs of holiness, but that he finds within himself those distinguishing marks and evidences of its positive existence, which the Divine Author of holiness has pronounced sure and unerring. It is indeed said, that anxious inquirers will often be discouraged by this course--particularly by a perusal of the Second Part of the treatise--from making a profession of religion, and led to renounce the hope of their own conversion; and the answer is, that he, who, on finding himself discouraged from a profession of religion by the Second Part, is not encouraged to make it by a perusal of the Third Part, should of course, unless his views are perverted by disease or melancholy, consider the call to repent and believe the gospel, as still addressed immediately to himself; and that he, who on the perusal of this Treatise, is led to renounce the hope which he had cherished of his own piety, while he has the best reason to regard it as a false hope, will find almost of course that that hope is soon succeeded by one which will endure the strictest scrutiny. It is also said that many persons cannot understand this treatise; and the answer is, that he who is too young to understand it in its substance, is too young to make a profession of religion; and that he whose mind is too feeble to receive it substantially, when communicated by a kind and faithful pastor, cannot understandingly make such a profession. Pre-eminently is this treatise necessary to every congregation during a revival of religion. It was especially designed by its author to be used on every such occasion; and the minister who then uses it as he ought, will find it like a fan in his hand, winnowing the chaff from the wheat. And until ministers, laying aside the miserable vanity which leads them, in the mere number of those whom they denominate their `spiritual children,' to find an occasion of boasting, and of course to swell that number as much as they can, shall be willing thus faithfully and honestly to make a separation among their inquirers; every revival of religion will open a great and effectual door, through which the enemies as well as the friends of religion, will gain an admission into the house of God. And when they are thus admitted, and the ardour of animal feeling has once subsided, the minister will generally find not only that he has wounded Christ in the house of his friends, but that he has destroyed his own peace, and that of his church, and prepared the way for his own speedy separation from his people. To prevent this miserable system of deception on the part of ministers and churches, as well as of candidates for a profession of religion, Mr. Edwards wrote the treatise in question. As at first prepared, it was a series of sermons, which he preached from his own pulpit, from the text still prefixed to it, 1 Peter 1:8. "Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." It was thus written and preached, probably in the years 1742 and 1743. Being afterwards thrown into the form of a treatise by the author, it was published early in 1746. In its style it is the least correct of any of the works of Mr. Edwards, published in his life-time; but, as a work exhibiting genuine Christianity in distinction from all its counterfeits, it possesses such singular excellence, that were the books on earth destined to a destruction so nearly universal, that only one beside the Bible

could be saved; the church of Christ, if aiming to preserve the volume of the greatest value to man, that which would best unfold to a bereaved posterity the real nature of true religion, would unquestionably select for preservation, the "Treatise on the Affections." This treatise was immediately republished in England and Scotland, and was cordially welcomed by all the friends of evangelical religion in those countries, as well as in America. Its appearance in Scotland gave rise to an interesting correspondence, between Mr. Edwards and the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, of Carnock, near Edinburgh; which was commenced by the latter gentleman with the following letter.

Letter from Mr. Gillespie.

"Carnock, Nov. 24, 1746 very dear sir,

I have ever honoured you for your work's sake, and what the great Shepherd made you the instrument of, from the time you published the then very extraordinary account of the revival of religion at Northampton, I think in the year 1735. The two performances you published on the subject of the late glorious work in New England, well adapted to that in Scotland, gave me great satisfaction, especially the last of them, for peculiar reasons. This much I think myself bound to say. I have many a time, for some years, designed to claim humbly the privilege of correspondence with you. What has made me defer doing it so long, when some of my brethren and good acquaintances have been favoured with it for a considerable time, it is needless now to mention. I shall only say, I have blamed myself for neglect in that matter. I do now earnestly desire a room in your prayers and friendship, and a letter from you sometimes, when you have occasion to write to Scotland; and I shall wish to be as regular as I can in making a return. With your permission, I propose to trouble you now and then with the proposal of doubts and difficulties that I meet with, and am exercised by; as for other reasons, so because some solutions in the two mentioned performances were peculiarly agreeable to me, and I find from these discourses, that wherein I have differed in some things from many others, my sentiments have harmonized with Mr. Edwards. This especially was the case in some things contained in your `Thoughts concerning the Revival of Religion in New England.' All the apology I make for using such freedom, though altogether unacquainted, is that you will find from my short attestation in Mr. Robe's Narrative, I am no enemy to you or to the work you have been engaged in, and which you have defended in a way I could not but much approve of. Also my friend and countryman, the Rev. Mr. Robert Abercrombie, will inform you about me, if you have occasion to see him or hear from him.

I longed to see somewhat about impressions respecting facts and future events, &c. whether by scripture texts or otherwise, made on the minds of good people, and supposed to be from the Lord; for I have had too good occasion to know the hurtful, yea, pernicious tendency of this principle, as commonly managed, upon many persons in manifold instances and various respects. It has indeed surprised me much, that wise, holy, and learned divines, as well as others, have supposed this a spiritual experience, an answer of prayers, an evidence of being highly favoured by the Lord, &c. and I was exceeding glad, that the Lord had directed you to give so seasonable a caveat against what I am assured you had the best reason to term, `A handle in the hand of the devil,' &c. I was only sorry your then design had not permitted you to say more on that point. It merits a volume; and the proper full discussion of it would be one of the most seasonable and effectual services done the church of Christ, and interest of vital religion through the world, that I know of. I rejoice to find there is a good deal more on that subject interspersed in your `Treatise of

Religious Affections,' which I have got, but could not as yet regularly peruse. I humbly think the Lord calls you, dear Sir, to consider every part of that point in the most critical manner, and to represent fully the consequences resulting from the several principles in that matter, which good people, as well as others, have been so fond of. And as (if I do not mistake) Providence has already put that in your hand as a part of your generation-work, so it will give me, as well as others, vast satisfaction to find more said on the subject by you, if you do not find what is in the mentioned treatises sufficient, as to which I can form no judgment, because, for myself, I have not as yet considered it. If any other author has treated that subject, I do not remember to have met with it, and I believe hell has been no less delighted than surprised, that a regular attack has not been made on them on that side before now. I doubt not they dread the consequences of such assault with exquisite horror. The neglect or oversight, if not the mistakes, of so many learned authors, who have insisted on doctrines that bear similitude or relation to this matter, while it was passed over, I humbly think should teach us humility, and some other useful lessons I need not name to Mr. Edwards.

I hope, dear Sir, it will not offend you, that I humbly offer some remarks, with all due deference, upon what I have observed in looking into your `Treatise on Religious Affections:' and, upon further perusal, shall frankly represent what I may find difficulty about, if any such passage should cast up; expecting you will be so good as to set me right, if I shall mistake or not perceive your meaning.

Pages 78, 79, [26] there are several passages I do not well understand. Page 78, line 6, ad finem, you say, `That they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without spiritual light or sight, is an antiscriptural and absurd doctrine you are refuting.' But this doctrine, as it is understood by many, is, that Christians ought firmly to believe and trust in Christ without light or sight, and though they are in a dark, dead frame, and for the present having no spiritual experiences and discoveries. Had you said they could not or would not believe or trust without spiritual light or sight, this is what could not be doubted: but I humbly apprehend, the position will not hold as you have laid it, whether it is applied to a sinner or a saint, as I suppose you understand it; for though the sinner never will believe on the Lord Jesus, till he has received a saving manifestation of his glory by the work of the Spirit, yet every sinner, we know, is indispensably bound, at all seasons, by the divine authority, to believe instantly on the Lord Jesus. The command of the Lord, 1 John 3:23 that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, no less binds the sinner to immediate performance, than the command not to kill, to keep the sabbath day, or any other duty, as to the present performance of which, in way of duty, all agree, the sinner is bound. I suppose none of us think we are authorized, or will adventure to preach, that the sinner should delay to attempt to believe in the Saviour, till he finds light from heaven shining into his mind, or has got a saving sight or discovery of the Lord Jesus, though it is certain he cannot believe, nor will do it eventually, till favoured with such light or sight; because we should, in that event, put in a qualification where the apostle Paul and Silas did put none; such is their exhortation to the jailor, Acts 26:31. Also, as it may be the last call the sinner is to receive, in the dispensation of the word, we are bound to require him instantly to believe, whatever he does or does not feel in himself. If you did intend not the sinner, but the saint, in the before-mentioned positions, as I am apt to think your scope plainly intimates, still I apprehend these your assertions are not tenable; for I humbly suppose the Christian is bound to trust the divine faithfulness plighted

in the promise for needful blessings, be his case with respect to light or darkness, sight, &c. what it will; and that no situation the saint can be in, looses him from obligation to glorify the Lord on all occasions, by trusting in him and expecting the fulfilment of his word suiting his case. Also, I would imagine, in Isaiah 50:10 the saint is required to believe, in the precise circumstances mentioned in your assertion above mentioned. Pardon my freedom. You do indeed say, `It is truly the duty of those who are thus in darkness to come out of darkness into light and believe,' page 78, line 5; but how to reconcile that with the mentioned assertion that immediately follows, or with Isaiah 50:10 or other scriptures, or said assertions, and the other, of which before, I am indeed at a loss. Sometimes I think it is not believing the promise, or trusting the Lord, and trusting in him, you mean in the positions I have cited; but the belief of the goodness of one's state that he is a saint. If that was what you intended, I heartily wish you had said so much in the book; but as this is not ordinarily what is meant by believing in Scripture, I must suppose it was not the idea affixed to your words; and an expression of yours seems to make it evident. Had you plainly stated the distinction, betwixt the impossibility of one's actually believing, and its yet being his duty to believe, in the circumstances you mentioned, danger of mistake and a handle for cavil had been cut off.

Page 78, line 20, &c., you say, `To press and urge them to believe, without any spiritual light or sight, tends greatly to help forward the delusions of the prince of darkness.' Had you said, to press them to believe that the Lord was their God, when going on in a course of sin, or when sinning presumptuously, was of such tendency, which probably was in part what you designed, it would, in my humble apprehension, have been much more safe, for the reasons given. Also, as it is ordinarily and justly observed, that they who are most humbled think they are least so, when under a saving work of the Spirit, perhaps in like manner, spiritual light and sight may, in some instances, be mistaken or not duly apprehended; in which case, the person, upon admitting and proceeding upon your suppositions, may perhaps be apt to give way to unbelief, and to say, If I am not to be urged by the Lord's servants to believe in my present circumstances, it would surely be presumptuous in me to entertain thoughts of attempting it. Or, it may be, he shall think he has not that degree of spiritual light or sight, that is absolutely necessary in order to his believing; and thus the evil heart of unbelief shall make him depart from the living God, and neglect to set to his seal that he is true, perhaps from the apprehension that it is his duty to remain as he is, or at least in the persuasion it would be in vain to essay to believe, till matters be otherwise with him. If I have deduced consequences from your words and manner of reasoning, which you think they do not justly bear, I will be glad to be rectified by you, dear Sir, and would be satisfied to know from you, how the practice you remark upon in the fore-mentioned passage tends to help forward the delusions of Satan. I am apt to believe the grounds upon which you proceed, in the whole paragraph I have mentioned, is, that you have with you real Antinomians, who teach things about faith and believing, subversive of new obedience and gospel holiness, and inconsistent with the scripture doctrines concerning them. But as we have few, if any such at all, (I believe I might say more,) in this country, and at the same time have numbers who would have the most accurate and judicious evangelical preachers to insist a great deal more upon doing, and less upon believing, Mark 10:17-23 for what reasons you will perceive, I am afraid your words will be misrepresented by them, and a sense put upon your expressions, which you were far from intending. I expect a mighty clamour by the Seceders, if the book shall fall into their hands. All I shall say about what is expressed by you, page 78, line 32, &c. is, that I have frequently heard it taught by those accounted the most orthodox, that the believer was bound to trust in the Lord, in the very worst

frame he could be in, and that the exercise of faith was the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, &c. It is impossible one should err, who follows the course prescribed by the Lord in his word. I suppose no person is bound or allowed to defer believing one single moment, because he finds himself in a bad situation, because the Spirit breathes not on him, or he finds not actual influence from heaven communicated to him at that season, rendering him capable or meet for it; for this reason, that not our ability or fitness, but the Lord's command, is the rule of duty, &c. It merits consideration, whether the believer should ever doubt of his state, on any account whatever; because doubting, as opposed to believing, is absolutely sinful. I know the opposite has been prescribed, when the saint is plunged in prevailing iniquity; but does not doubting strengthen corruption? is not unbelief the leading sin, as faith is the leading grace?

Page 258, (Note,) you cite as an authority Mr. Stoddard, affirming, `One way of sin is exception enough against men's salvation, though their temptations be great.' I well remember the singularly judicious Dr. Owen somewhere says to this effect, `Prevalence of a particular sin over a person for a considerable time, shows him to be no saint, except when under the power of a strong temptation.' I would suppose such texts as Isaiah 66:6 page 65, 3, &c. warranted the Doctor to assert as he did. It is, I own, no small difficulty to steer the middle course, betwixt affording hypocrites ground unwarrantably to presume on the one hand, and wounding the Lord's dear children on the other; and all the little knowledge of the Scriptures I would hope the Lord has given me, makes me think Mr. Shepherd, good and great man as he was, verged not a little to the last extreme, with whom, if I mistake not, Mr. Stoddard symbolizes in the above assertion; for such as I have mentioned, I apprehend is the drift and tendency of Mr. Shepherd's principles. In some instances, daily experience and observation confirm me still more, that we should be very cautious and modest when asserting on that head, and should take care to go no further in the matter, than we have plain Scripture to bear us out. The consideration, that indwelling sin sometimes certainly gets such ascendant, that the new creature is, for the time the Lord seems meet, as fire buried under ashes, undiscerned and inactive, lays foundation, in my humble apprehension, for saying somewhat stronger on that point, than I would choose to utter in public teaching; and how long a saint may have been in the case now hinted, I suppose it belongs not to us precisely to determine.

Page 259, you say, `Nor can a true saint ever fall away, so that it shall come to this, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference in his walk and behaviour since his conversion, from what was before.' I do not remember that the Scripture any where mentions, that David or Solomon were sanctified from the womb. I think the contrary may be presumed; and it is evident for a considerable time, with the first ordinarily, and for a long time, in the case of the latter ordinarily, there was a remarkable difference for the worse, in the walk and behaviour of both of them, when we are sure they were saints, from what it appears it had been in their younger years. Besides, let us suppose a person of a good natural disposition, bred up in aversion to all vicious practices, by a religious education and example, and virtuous inclination thus cultivated in him, 2 Peter 2:20 and he is converted when come to maturity, and afterwards corruption in him meets with peculiar temptations; I doubt much if there would be a remarkable difference betwixt his then conversation and walk, and that in unregeneracy. The contrary I think is found in experience, and the principles laid down leave room to suppose it.

I own in what I have above said I have perhaps gone further than becomes a man of my standing in writing to one of Mr. Edwards's experience, and am heartily sorry my first letter to you is in such

a strain, and on such a subject. But love to you, dear Sir, and concern lest you should be thought to patronize what I am sure you do not, and to oppose what are your real sentiments, made me write with such freedom, and break over restraints, which modesty, decency, &c. should otherwise have laid me under, that you might have an opportunity to know in what light these things I mention to you appear to some who are your real friends in this country. A valuable minister, in looking into what is noticed in pages 78 and 79, said to me; it would be right some should write you about it; and I take this first opportunity, that you may have access to judge of the matter, and what it may be proper for you to do or not to do in it.

I will expect an answer with your convenience. I hope you will deal freely with me; for I can say, I would sit down and learn at your feet, dear Sir, accounting myself as a child in knowledge of the Scriptures, when compared with others I will not name, and the longer I live I see the greater advantage in improvements of that kind. Conceal nothing that you think will tend to put me right if you find my views are not just. I proposed in the beginning of this letter to trouble you with some questions or doubts, and shall mention one or two at present. What should one do who is incessantly harassed by Satan; can by no means keep him out of his mind; has used all means prescribed in Scripture and suggested by divines for resistance known to him, in vain; it may be for a long time has cried to Christ, but he hears not, seems not to regard him; all his efforts are swallowed up in the deluge of the foe; do what he will, seems to gain no ground against the powers of darkness; is apt to dread he shall sink under the load, and never shall be delivered in this world? What would you advise such a person to do? What construction, think you, should be put on the sovereign conduct and dispensation of Heaven toward him? I have occasion to be conversant about this case practically demonstrated, of many years continuance, without interruption; and will therefore be glad to have your mind about it in a particular manner, and as much at large as you conveniently can. It is said, all things work for good, &c. As degrees of glory will be in proportion to those of grace, how can it be made appear it is for one’s good what sometimes happens to saints, their being permitted to fall under backslidings and spiritual decays, and to die in that state, perhaps after continuing in it a considerable while, and when their situation has been attended with the melancholy circumstances and consequences that sometimes have place in that state of matters? The solution of this I would gladly receive from you. Are the works of the great Mr. Boston known in your country, viz. the Fourfold State of Man, View of the Covenant of Grace, and a Discourse on Afflictions, and Church Communion, &c. If not, inform me by your letter. I have now need to own my fault in troubling you with so long a letter, and so I shall end," &c.

Letter from Mr. Edwards to Mr. M’Culloch, of Cambuslang.

"To the Rev. Mr. M’Culloch.

Northampton, Jan. 21, 1747. rev. and dear brother, The time seems long to me since I have received a letter from you; I have had two letters from each of my other correspondents in Scotland since I have had any from you. Our correspondence has been to me very pleasant, and I am very loth it should fail.

Great changes have been, dear Sir, since I have had a letter from you, and God has done great things, both in Scotland and America; though not of the same nature, with those that were wrought some years ago, by the outpourings of his Spirit, yet those wherein his providence is on many

accounts exceedingly remarkable: in Scotland, in the suppression of the late rebellion; and in America, in our preservation from the great French armada, from Brest, and their utter disappointment and confusion, by the immediate and wonderful hand of Heaven against them, without any interposition of any arm of flesh. The nearest akin to God's wonderful works of old, in the defence of his people in Moses's, Joshua's, and Hezekiah's time, perhaps of any that have been in these latter ages of the world. I have been writing some account of it to Mr. M'Laurin; but since then I have seen a thanksgiving sermon of Mr. Prince's, preached on that occasion; in which is a much more distinct, particular, and (I suppose) exact account of the matter (which sermon you will doubtless see). Though there is something that I observed in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin, of the coming of that fleet, its being overruled for our preservation, in this part of the land where I dwell, when eminently exposed, and when we have all reason to think our enemies in Canada had formed designs against us, that Mr. Prince does not mention. In my last letter to you, I wrote you some thoughts and notions I had entertained, concerning the pouring out of the sixth vial on the river Euphrates, and the approach of the happy day of the church's prosperity and glory, and the utter destruction of antichrist, and other enemies of the church, so often spoken of in the Holy Scriptures: I signified it as what appeared to me probable, that one main thing intended by the drying up the river Euphrates, was the drying up the temporal supplies and income of the antichristian church and kingdom; and suggested it to consideration whether God, appearing so wonderfully for the taking Cape Breton, and the American fishery, thereon depending, out of the hands of the French, and thereby drying up so great a fountain of the wealth of the kingdom of France, might not be looked upon as one effect of the sixth vial. I would now also propose it to be considered, whether God's so extraordinarily appearing to baffle the great attempt of the French nation, to repossess themselves of this place, be not some confirmation of it; and whether or no the almost ruining the French East India trade, by the dreadful hand of Heaven, in burying their stores at Port L'Orient, and the taking so many of their ships by Commodore Barnet, and also the taking so many of their South Sea ships, vastly rich, and several other things of like nature, that might be mentioned, may not probably be further effects of this vial. But whatever be thought of these particular events, and the application of the prophecies to them; yet it appears to me, that God's late dealings, both with Great Britain and the American plantations, if they be duly considered, as they are in themselves and circumstances, afford just reason to hope that a day is approaching for the peculiar triumphs of divine mercy and sovereign grace, over all the unworthiness, and most aggravated provocations of men. If it be considered what God's past dealings have been with England and Scotland for two centuries past, what obligations he has laid those nations under, and particularly the mercies bestowed more lately; and we then well consider the kind, manner, and degree, of the provocations and wickedness of those nations, and yet that God so spares them, and has of late so remarkably delivered them, when so exposed to deserved destruction: and if it be also considered what God's dealings have been with this land, on its first settlement, and from its beginning hitherto, and how long we have been revolting and growing worse, and what great mercy he has lately granted us, on the late remarkable striving of his Spirit with us, and how his Spirit has been treated, his mercy and grace despised, and bitterly opposed, how greatly we have backslidden, what a degree of stupidity we are sunk into, and how full the land has been of such kinds of wickedness, as have approached so near to the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, and how obstinate we are still in our wickedness, without the least appearances of repentance or reformation; and it be then considered how God has of late made

his arm bare, in almost miraculous dispensations of his providence, in our behalf, to succeed us against our enemies, and defend us from them:--I say, if these things be considered, it appears evident to me, not only that God's mercies are infinitely above the mercies of men; but also that he has, in these things, gone quite out of the usual course of his providence and manner of dealings with his professing people, and I confess, it gives me great hope that God's appointed time is approaching, for the triumphs and displays of his infinite, sovereign grace, beyond all that ever has been before, from the beginning of the world; at least I think there is much in these things, considered together with other remarkable things God has lately done, to encourage and animate God's people unitedly to cry to God, that he would appear for the bringing on those glorious effects of his mercy, so often foretold to be in the latter days; and particularly to continue that concert for prayer, set on foot in Scotland, and which it is now proposed to continue seven years longer. My wife and children join with me in respectful, cordial salutations to you and yours. That we may be remembered in your prayers, is the request, dear Sir, of your affectionate brother, jonathan edwards." To the letter from Mr. Gillespie, Mr. Edwards returned the following answer.

"Northampton, Sept. 4, 1747. rev. and dear sir,

I received your letter of Nov. 24, 1746, though very long after it was written. I thank you for it, and for your proposing a correspondence. Such an offer I shall gladly embrace, and esteem it a great privilege, more especially from the character I have received of you from Mr. Abercrombie, who I perceive was intimately acquainted with you. As to the objections you make against some things contained in my work on Religious Affections, I am sorry you did not read the book through before you made them; if you had, perhaps the difficulties would not have appeared quite so great. As to what is contained in the 78th and 79th pages, I suppose there is not the least difference of opinion between you and me, unless it be concerning the signification and propriety of expressions. I am fully of your mind, and always was without the least doubt of it; `That every one, both saint and sinner, is indispensably bound, at all seasons, by the Divine authority, to believe instantly on the Lord Jesus; and that the command of the Lord, 1 John 3:23 that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, as it is a prescription of the moral law, no less binds the sinner to immediate performance, than the commandment not to kill, to keep the sabbath day, or any other duty, as to the present performance of which, in way of duty, all agree the sinner is bound; and that men are bound to trust the divine faithfulness, be their case with respect to light and darkness, sight, &c. what it will; and that no situation they can be in, looses them from obligation to glorify the Lord at all seasons, and to expect the fulfilment of his words; and that the sinner who is without spiritual light or sight is bound to believe, and that it is a duty at that very time incumbent on him to believe.' But I conceive that there is a great deal of difference between these two things, viz. its being the duty of a man, who is without spiritual light or sight, to believe, and its being his duty to believe without spiritual light or sight, or to believe while he yet remains without spiritual light or sight. Just the same difference, which there is between these two things, viz. its being his duty who has no faith to believe, and its being his duty to believe without faith, or to believe without believing. I trust none will assert the latter, because of the contradiction which it implies. As it is not proper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without faith, because it implies a contradiction; so I think it equally improper to say, it is a man's duty to believe without those things which are essentially implied in faith, because that also implies a contradiction. But a spiritual sight of Christ, or knowledge of Christ, is essentially implied in the very nature and notion of faith; and therefore it is absurd to talk

of believing on Christ, without spiritual light or sight. It is the duty of a man, who is without those things which essentially belong to faith, to believe; and it is the duty of a man, who is without those things which essentially belong to love, to love God; because it is an indispensable obligation that lies on men at all times, and in all circumstances, to love God: but yet it is not a duty to love God without loving him, or continuing without those things which essentially belong to his love. It is the duty of those who have no sense of the loveliness of God and have no esteem of him, to love him, and they are not in the least excused, by the want of this sense and esteem in not loving him one moment; but yet it would be properly nonsense to say it is their duty to love him, without any sense of his loveliness, or esteem of him. It is indeed their duty this moment to come out of their disesteem, and stupid wicked insensibility of his loveliness, and to love him. I made the distinction (I thought) very plainly, in the midst of those sentences you quote as exceptionable. I say expressly, p. 74, `It is truly the duty of those who are in darkness, to come out of darkness into light and believe; but, that they should confidently believe and trust, while they yet remain without spiritual light or sight, is an anti-scriptural and absurd doctrine.' The misunderstanding between us, dear Sir, I suppose to be in the different application of the particle without, in my use of it, and your understanding of it, or what we understand as spoken of and supposed in the expression, without spiritual light or sight. As I use it, I apply it to the act of believing, and I suppose it to be very absurd to talk of an act of faith without spiritual light or sight, wherein I suppose you will allow me to be in the right. As you understand it, it is applied to duty or obligation, and you suppose it to be not at all absurd, to talk of an obligation to believe without spiritual light or sight, but that the obligation remains full, where there is no spiritual light or sight, wherein I allow you are in the right. I think, Sir, if you read what I have said in my book on this head again, it will be exceedingly apparent to you, that it is thus that I apply the preposition without, and not as you before understood it. I thought I had very plainly manifested, that what I meant by being in darkness was being in spiritual blindness, and so in a dead, stupid, and unchristian frame, and not what is commonly called being without the light of God's countenance, under the hidings of his face. Great numbers in this country proceed on the supposition, in their opinions and practice, that there really is such a manner of believing, such a kind of faith as this, viz. a confident believing and firm trusting in God in the dark, in the sense just mentioned, which is the subject matter of Divine prescription, and which many actually have. Indeed there are innumerable instances of such as are apparently in a most negligent, apostate, and every way unchristian and wicked frame; who yet, encouraged by this principle, retain a strong confidence of their piety, and imagine that herein they do their duty and glorify God, under the notion of trusting God in the dark, and hoping against hope, and not relying on their own righteousness; and they suppose it would show a legal spirit to do otherwise. I thought it would be manifest to every reader that I was arguing against such persons as these.

You say, `It merits consideration, whether the believer should ever doubt of his state, on any account whatever, because doubting, as opposed to believing, is absolutely sinful.' Here, Sir, you seem to suppose that a person's doubting of his own good estate, is the proper opposite of faith; and these and some other expressions in your letter seem to suppose that doubting of one's good estate, and unbelief, are the same thing; and so, that confidence in one's good estate, and faith, are the same thing. This, I acknowledge, I do not understand; I do not suppose faith, and a person's believing that he has faith, to be the same thing. Nor do I take unbelief, or being without faith, and doubting whether he has it, to be the same thing, but entirely different. I should have been glad either that you had taken a little more notice of what I say on this head, p. 79, 80, or that

you had said something to convince me that I am wrong in this point. The exercise of faith is doubtless the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, &c. or rather is the deliverance; as forsaking sin is the way to deliverance from sin, and is the deliverance itself. The exercise of grace is doubtless the way to deliverance from a graceless frame, which consists in the want of the exercise of grace. But as to what you say, or seem to intimate, that a person's being confident of his own good estate, is the way to be delivered from darkness, deadness, backsliding, and prevailing iniquity; I think, whoever supposes this to be God's method of delivering his saints, when sunk into an evil, careless, carnal, and unchristian frame, first to assure them of their good estate and his favour, while they yet remain in such a frame, and to make that the means of their deliverance, does surely mistake God's method of dealing with such persons. Among all the multitudes I have had opportunity to observe, I never knew one dealt with after this manner. I have known many brought back from great declension, who appeared to me to be real saints; but it was in a way very different from this. In the first place, conscience has been awakened, and they have been brought into distressing fears of the wrath of God. Thus they have become the subjects of a new work of humiliation, and have been led deeply to feel that they deserve his wrath, even while they have feared it, before God has delivered them from their apprehensions, and comforted them with a renewed sense of his favour. As to what I say of the necessity of universal obedience, or of one way of known sin, (i.e. so as properly to be said to be the way and manner of the man,) being exception enough against a man's salvation; I should have known better what to have said further about it, if you had briefly shown how the passages of Scripture which I mention, and the arguments which I deduce from them, are insufficient for the proof of this point. I confess they appear to me to approve it as fully, as any thing concerning the necessary qualifications of a Christian can be proved from Scripture.

You object against my saying, p. 259, `Nor can a true saint ever fall away to such a degree, that ordinarily there shall be no remarkable difference between his behaviour, after his conversion, and before.' This, I think, implies no more than that his behaviour, in similar circumstances, and under similar trials, will have a remarkable difference. As to the instances of David and Solomon, I am not aware that the Scriptures give us any where so full a history of their behaviour before their conversion, as to enable us to compare it with their subsequent life. These examples are uncertain. But I think those doctrines of the Scriptures are not uncertain, which I mention in the passage you cite, to prove that converts are new men, new creatures, that they are renewed not only within but without, that old things are passed away and all things become new, that they walk in newness of life, that the members of their bodies are new, that whereas they before were the servants of sin, and yielded their members servants of iniquity, now they yield them servants of righteousness unto holiness. As to the doubts and cases of difficulty you mention, I think it needless for a divine of your character, to apply for the solution of them to one, who ought rather to take the attitude of a learner. However, since you are pleased to insist on my giving my mind upon them, I would observe, with regard to the first case you mention, that of a person incessantly harassed by Satan, &c. you do not point out the nature of the temptations with which he is harassed; and without this, I think it impossible to give proper advice and directions concerning it. Satan is to be resisted in a very different manner, in different kinds of onsets. When persons are harassed with those strange, horrid impressions, to which persons afflicted with hypochondria are often subject, he is to be resisted in a very different manner, from what is proper in cases of violent temptation to gratify some worldly lust. In the former case, I should by no means advise men to

resist the devil by entering the lists with him, and engaging in a violent struggle with the grand adversary; but rather by diverting the mind from his frightful suggestions, by going on stedfastly and diligently in the ordinary course of duty, without allowing themselves time and leisure to attend to his sophistry, and by committing themselves to God in prayer. That is the best way of resisting the devil, which crosses his design most; and he more effectually disappoints him in such cases, who treats him with neglect, than he who engages in a direct conflict, and tries his strength and skill with him, in a violent dispute or combat. The latter course rather gives him an advantage; and if he can get persons thus engaged in a violent struggle, he gains a great point. He knows that hypochondriacal persons are not qualified to maintain it. By this he diverts him from the ordinary course of duty; and having gained his attention to what he says, he has opportunity to use all his craft and subtilty. By such a struggle he raises a deeper melancholy, weakens the mind still more, gets the unhappy man faster and faster in his snares, and increases his anxiety of mind; which is the very thing by which he mainly accomplishes all his purposes with such persons. As to the difficulty of verifying Romans 8:28. `All things shall work together for good to them that love God,' in the case of a Christian who falls under backsliding and spiritual decays; it is not perfectly obvious how this is to be interpreted, and how far it may hence be inferred, that the temptations of Christians from Satan and an evil world, and their declensions and sins, shall surely work for their good. However, since you desire my thoughts, I will endeavour to express them.

Two things may be laid down, as certain and indubitable, concerning this doctrine of the apostle.

First. The meaning cannot be that God's actual dispensations towards each Christian are the best for him of all that are possible; or that all things which are ordered for him, or done with respect to him, are in all respects better for him than any thing which God could have ordered or done, issuing in the highest good and happiness to which he can possibly be brought; for that implies that God will confer on every one of his elect as much happiness as he can confer, in the utmost exercise of his omnipotence; and this sets aside all those different degrees of grace and holiness here, and glory hereafter, which he bestows according to his sovereign pleasure.

All things work together for good to the saints; all may have a concurring tendency to their happiness, and may finally issue in it, and yet not tend to, or issue in, the highest possible degree of happiness. There is a certain measure of holiness and happiness, to which each one of the elect is eternally appointed, and all things that relate to him work together to bring to pass this appointed measure of good. The text and context speak of God's eternal purpose of good to the elect, predestinating them to a conformity to his Son in holiness and happiness; and the implicit reasoning of the apostle leads us to suppose that all things will purely concur to bring to effect God's eternal purpose. Hence from his reasoning it may be inferred, that all things will tend to, and work together to accomplish, that degree of good which God has purposed to bestow upon them, and not any more. Indeed it would be in itself unreasonable to suppose any thing else; for as God is the supreme orderer of all things, doubtless all things shall be so ordered, that with one consent they shall help to bring to pass his ends and purposes; but surely not to bring to pass what he does not aim at, and never intended. God, in his government of the world, is carrying on his own designs in every thing; but he is not carrying on that which is not his design, and therefore there is no need of supposing, that all the circumstances, means, and advantages of every saint, are the best in every respect that God could have ordered for him, or that there could have been no circumstances or means of which he could have been the subject, which would with God's usual

blessing have issued in his greater good. Every Christian is a living stone, that, in this present state of preparation, is fitting for the place appointed for him in the heavenly temple. In this sense all things undoubtedly work together for good to every one who is called according to God's promise. He is, all the while he lives in this world, by all the dispensations of Providence towards him, fitting for the particular mansion in glory which is appointed and prepared for him.

06.14b. CHAPTER XIV.

Secondly. When it is said, that `all things work together for good to them that love God,' it cannot be intended that all things, both positive and negative, are best for them; in other words, that not only every positive thing, of which Christians are the subjects, or in which they are concerned, will work for their good, but also, that when any thing is absent or withheld from them by God in his providence, that absence or withholding is also for their good, in such a sense, as to be better for them than the presence or bestowment would have been; for this would have the same absurd consequence which was mentioned before, viz. That God makes every Christian as happy as he possibly can make him. And if so, it would follow that God's withholding from his people greater degrees of the sanctifying influences of his Spirit, is for their good, and that it is best for them to live and die with so small a measure of piety as they actually possess, which is the same as to say, that it is for their good to have no more good, or that it is for their happiness to have no more happiness here and hereafter. If we carefully examine the apostle's discourse in Romans 8:1-39 it will be apparent that his words imply no such thing. All God's creatures, and all that he does in disposing of them, is for the good of the Christian; but it will not thence follow, that all God's forbearing to do is also for his good, or that it is best for him that God does no more for him.

Hence, with regard to the position, that the sins and temptations of Christians are for their good; I suppose the following things to be true:

1. That all things, whatsoever, are for their good, things negative as well as positive, in this sense, that God intends that some benefit to them shall arise from every thing, so that somewhat of the grace and love of God will hereafter be seen to have been exercised towards them in every thing. At the same time, the sovereignty of God will also be seen, with regard to the measure of the good or benefit aimed at, in that some other things, if God had seen cause to order them, would have produced a higher benefit. And with regard to negative disposals--consisting, not in God's doing but forbearing to do, not in giving, but withholding--some benefit, in some respect or other, will ever accrue to them, even from these; though sometimes the benefit will not be equal to the benefit withheld, if it had been bestowed. As for instance, when a Christian lives and dies comparatively low in grace; some good improvement shall be made even of this, in his eternal state, whereby he shall receive a real benefit, though the benefit shall not be equal to the benefit of a higher degree of holiness, if God had bestowed it.

2. God carries on a design of love to his people, and to each individual Christian, not only in all things of which they are the subjects while they live, but also in all his works and dispensations, and in all his acts from eternity to eternity.

3. That the sin, in general, of Christians, is for their good, in this respect, viz. that through the sovereign grace and infinite wisdom of God, the fact that they have been sinful fallen creatures, and not from the beginning perfectly innocent and holy as the elect angels, will issue in a high advancement of their eternal happiness; and that they shall obtain some additional good, on occasion of all the sin of which they have been the subjects, or have committed, beyond what they

would have had if they never had been fallen creatures.

4. The sin of Christians cannot in this sense be for their good, that it should finally be best for them, that while they lived in this world, their restoration and recovery from the corruption to which they became subject by the fall, was no greater, that the mortification of sin, and spiritual vivification of the soul, was carried on to no higher degree, that they were so deficient in love to God, love to men, humility, and heavenly-mindedness, that they did so few good works, and consequently, that in general, they had so much sin, and so little holiness; for in proportion as one of these is more, the other will be less, as infallibly, as darkness is more or less, in proportion to the diminution or increase of light. It cannot finally be better for Christians, that in general, while they live, they had so much sin of heart and life, rather than more holiness of heart and life; because the reward of all at last will be according to their works. He that sowed sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that sowed bountifully shall reap also bountifully; and he that builds wood, hay, and stubble, shall finally suffer loss, and have a less reward, than if he had built gold, silver, and precious stones, though he himself shall be saved. But notwithstanding this,

5. The sins and falls of Christians may be for their good, and for the better, in this respect, that the issue may be better than if the temptation had not happened, and so the occasion not given, either for the sin of yielding to the temptation, or the virtue of overcoming it: and yet not in this respect, (with regard to their sins or falls in general,) that it should be better for them in the issue, that they have yielded to the temptation offered, than if they had overcome. For the fewer victories they obtain over temptation, the fewer are their good works, and particularly of that kind of good works to which a distinguished reward is promised in Revelation 2:1-29 and Revelation 3:1-22 and in many other parts of Scripture. The word of God represents the work of a Christian in this world as a warfare, and it is evident in the Scriptures, that he who acquits himself as the best soldier, shall win the greatest prize. Therefore, when Christians are brought into backslidings and decays, by being overcome by temptations, the issue of their backslidings may be some good to them, beyond what they would have received if the temptations had never existed; and yet their backslidings in general may be a great loss to them in this respect, that they shall have much less reward, than if the temptations had been overcome, and they had persevered in spiritual vigour and diligence. But yet this don’t hinder, but that,

6. It may be so ordered by a sovereign and all-wise God, that the falls and backslidings of Christians, through their being overcome by temptations in some particular instances, may prove best for them, not only because the issue may be greater good to them, than they would have received if the temptation had not happened, but even greater in that instance, than if the temptation had been overcome. It may be so ordered, that their being overcome by that temptation, shall be the occasion of their having greater strength, and on the whole, obtaining more and greater victories, than if they had not fallen in that instance. But this is no where promised, nor can it be so, that, in the general, it should prove better for them that they were foiled so much, and did overcome so little, in the course of their lives, and that finally their decay is so great, or their progress so small. From these things it appears,

7. That the saying of the apostle, all thing work together for good to them that love God, though it be fulfilled in some respects to all Christians, at all times and in all circumstances, yet it is fulfilled more especially and eminently to Christians continuing in the exercise of love to God, not falling

from the exercises, or failing in the fruits of divine love in times of trial. Then it is, that temptations, enemies, and suffering, will be best for them, working that which is most for their good every way; and they shall be more than conquerors over tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, Romans 8:35-37.

8. As God is carrying on a design of love to each individual Christian, in all his works and dispensations whatsoever, so the particular design of love to them which he is carrying on, is to fit them for and bring them to their appointed place in the heavenly temple, or to that identical degree of happiness and glory in heaven, which his eternal love designed for them, and no other. For God's design of love or of happiness to them, is only just what it is, and is not different from itself; and to fulfil this particular design of love, every thing which God does, or in any respect disposes, whether it be positive, privative, or negative, contributes; because, doubtless, every thing which God does, or in any respect offers, tends to fulfill his aims and designs. Therefore, undoubtedly,

9. All the while the Christian lives in the world, he is preparing for his appointed mansion in glory, and fitting for his place in the heavenly building. All his temptations, though they may occasion, for the present, great spiritual injuries, yet at last shall be an occasion of his being more fitted for his place in glory. Hence we may determine, that however the Christian may die in some respects under the decay of spiritual comfort, and of some religious affections, yet every Christian dies at that time when his habitual fitness for his place in the heavenly temple is most complete, because otherwise, all things which happen to him while he lives, would not work together to fit him for that place.

10. God brings his people, at the end of their lives, to this greatest fitness for their place in heaven, not by diminishing holiness in their hearts, but by increasing it, and carrying on the work of grace in their souls. If it be not so, that cannot be true, that where God has begun a good work he will perform it, or carry it on to the day of Christ; for if they die with a less degree of holiness than they had before, then it ceases to be carried on before the day of Christ comes. If holiness finally decreases, then Satan so far finally obtains the victory. He finally prevails to diminish the fire in the smoking flax; and then how is that promise verified, that God will not quench the smoking flax, till he bring forth judgment unto victory? So that it must needs be, that although Christians may die under decay, in some respects, yet they never die under a real habitual decay of the work of grace in general. If they fall, they shall rise again before they die, and rise higher than before, if not in joy, and some other affections, yet in greater degrees of spiritual knowledge, self-abasement, trust in God, and solidity and ripeness of grace.

If these things which have been observed are true, then we may infer from them these corollaries.

1. That notwithstanding the truth of the apostle's declaration in Romans 8:28 Christians have cause to lament their leanness and unfruitfulness, and the fact that they are guilty of so much sin, not only as it is to the dishonour of God, but also as it is likely to redound to their own eternal loss and damage.

2. That nothing can be inferred from this promise, which is calculated to set aside or make void the influence of motives to earnest endeavours to avoid all sin, to increase in holiness, and abound in good works, from an aim at a high and eminent degree of glory and happiness in a future world.

3. That though it is to the eternal damage of Christians, ordinarily, when they yield to and are overcome by temptations; yet Satan and the other enemies of Christians, from whom these temptations come, are always wholly disappointed in the temptation, and baffled in their design to hurt them, inasmuch as the temptation and the sin which it occasions, are for the saints' good, and they receive a greater benefit in the issue, than if the temptation had not been, and yet less than if the temptation had been overcome. As to Mr. Boston's View of the Covenant of Grace, I have had some opportunity to examine it, and I confess I do not understand the scheme of thought presented in that book. I have read his Fourfold State of Man, and liked it exceedingly well. I think, in that, he shows himself to be a truly great divine.

Hoping that you will accept my letter with candour, and remember me in your prayers, I subscribe myself Your affectionate and obliged brother and servant, jonathan edwards." In October, 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, among whom, I believe, were all the correspondents of Mr. Edwards in that country, thinking that the state of the church and the world called loudly for united extraordinary prayer to God, that he would deliver the nations from their miseries, and fill the earth with his glory; proposed that Christians universally should, for the two years then next ensuing, set apart a portion of time, on Saturday evening and sabbath morning, every week, to be spent in prayer for this purpose; and that they should still more solemnly devote the first Tuesday in the last month of each quarter of the year, to be spent either in private, social, or public prayer to God, for the Your affectionate and obliged bestowment of those blessings on the world. Mr. Edwards not only welcomed the proposal as soon as he received it, but did all in his power to promote its general acceptance by the American churches; and the following letter, alluding to a more particular account of the subject in one to Mr. M'Laurin, which I have not been able to procure, will in some measure apprize the reader of the efforts which he made for this purpose.

"To the Rev. William M'Culloch Northampton, Sept. 23, 1747. rev. and dear sir,

I thank you for your letter of March 12, 1747, which I suppose lay a long while at Mr. Prince's in Boston, before I received it, through Mr. Prince's forgetfulness. It seems he had forgotten that he had any such letter; and when I sent a messenger to his house, on purpose to inquire whether I had any letter lodged there for me from Scotland, he told him no; when I suppose this letter had been long in his house: and I should probably never have had it at last, had not one of my daughters had occasion to go to Boston, who made a visit at the house, and made a more full inquiry.

I am sorry to hear of your affliction, through your indisposition that you speak of, and desire to be thankful to the God of all mercy for his goodness, in restoring you again to health.

I have, in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin, given a particular account of what I know, concerning the propagation of the Concert for United Prayer, in America; which you will doubtless have opportunity to see. The propagation of it is but slow; but yet so many do fall in with it, and there is that prospect of its being further spread, that it is a great encouragement to me. I earnestly hope, that they, that have begun extraordinary prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the coming of Christ's kingdom, will not fail, or grow dull and lifeless, in such an affair, but rather that they will increase more and more in their fervency. I have taken a great deal of pains to promote this concert here in America, and shall not cease to do so, if God spares my life, as I have opportunity, in all ways that I can devise. I have written largely on the subject, insisting on

persuasions, and answering objections; and what I have written is gone to the press. The undertaker for the publication encourages me that it shall speedily be printed. I have sent to Mr. M'Laurin a particular account of it.

You desire to hear how it was with the people of New England, when we were threatened with an invasion by the French fleet, the last summer. As to the particular circumstances of that wonderful deliverance, the fullest and best account I have ever seen of it, is in Mr. Prince's Thanksgiving Sermon on that occasion; which, in all probability, you have seen long before this time. Nor need you be informed by me, of the repeated mercy of God to us, in confounding our enemies in their renewed attempt this year, by delivering up their fleet, in its way hither, into the hands of the English. In all probability, that fleet was intended for the execution of a very extensive design, against the English colonies, in conjunction with the French forces in Canada. For there was an army lay waiting at Nova Scotia, which, on the news of the sailing of their fleet, immediately left the country, and returned to Canada, over the lake Champlain, towards New England and New York; and they, or a part of them, attacked Fort Saratoga, in New York government, and killed or took about fifty men that were drawn out of the fort; but desisted from any further attempts, about the time we may suppose they received the news of the defeat of their fleet. And very soon after they received this news in Canada, the French there released most of our captives, and sent one ship loaded with them, to the number of about one hundred and seventy, to Boston, and another ship with about sixty, if I remember right, to Louisburg. The reasons that induced them so to do, are not known, and can only be guessed at by us; but, by their doing it very soon after they received the news of the loss of their fleet, it looks as though that had great influence in the affair. New England has had many other surprising deliverances from the French and Indians; some of which I have given a particular account of, in my letter to Mr. M'Laurin; which it would be needless for me to repeat, seeing you have such frequent opportunities with him. These deliverances are very wonderful and affecting; our enemies own that the heavens are on our side, and fight for us; but there are no such effects of these mercies upon us that are the subjects of them, as God requires, and most justly expects. The mercies are acknowledged in words, but we are not led to repentance by them; there appears no such thing as any reformation or revival of religion in the land. God's so wonderfully protecting and delivering a people, whose provocations have been so great, and who do so continue in apostasy and provocation, is very marvellous; and I can think of no account that can be given of it, so probable as this, that God has a design of mercy to the rising generation, and that there are a great number of the elect among our children, born and unborn, and that for these elect's sake, God will not suffer us to be destroyed, having a design to bring forth a seed of the posterity of this people, to inherit and dwell in this land, that shall be a holy seed, and a generation of his servants. And so that those words are applicable to us, Isaiah 65:8-9. `Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.' I am full of apprehensions, that God has no design of mercy to those that were left unconverted, of the generation that were on the stage, in the time of the late extraordinary religious commotion, and striving of God's Spirit; unless it be perhaps a small gleaning from among them. But it may be, when their little ones, the generation that was then in their childhood, are brought fully on the stage of action, God will abundantly pour out his Spirit, and revive and carry on his work, here and elsewhere in the christian world. [27]

I thank you for taking the pains of writing to me your thoughts of the forty-two months of the treading down of the holy city, which are new and entertaining. The chief objection against what you propose, that I can think of, is, that the forty-two months of the treading down the holy city, seems to be the same period with the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, mentioned in the very next verse, in immediate connexion with this; and that the same with the one thousand two hundred and sixty days of the woman's being in the wilderness, chap. xii. 6.; and that the same with the time, times, and an half of the woman's being in the wilderness, v. 14.; and that the same with the time, times, and an half of the reign of the little horn, Daniel 7:25; and with the forty-two months of the reign of the beast, Revelation 13:5; and that this evidently signifies the duration of the reign of antichrist; which is a thing entirely diverse from the sum of the times of the city of Jerusalem's being under the dominion of pagans, Saracens, Persians, and Turks, as you represent. However, it is possible that what you mention may be one way wherein that prophecy, Revelation 11:2 may be fulfilled. For God's word is oftentimes fulfilled in various ways: as one way, wherein the prophetical representation of the beast with the seven heads is fulfilled, is in the seven successive forms of government that idolatrous Rome is under; and another way that it was fulfilled, was by Rome's being built on seven hills. One way that the seventy years captivity of the Jews was fulfilled, was in its being seventy years from Jehoiachim's captivity to Cyrus's decree; and another way that it was fulfilled, was in its being seventy years from Zedekiah's captivity to Darius's decree, Ezra 6:1-22; and another way that it was fulfilled, was in its being seventy years from the last carrying away of all, Jeremiah 52:30 to the finishing and dedication of the temple. But I expect no certainty as to these things, or any of the various conjectures concerning the time of the calling of the Jews, and the fall of the kingdom of the beast, till time and fulfilment shall decide the matter. However, I cannot think otherwise, than that we have a great deal of reason to suppose, that the beginning of that glorious work of God's Spirit, which, before it is finished, shall accomplish these things, is not very far off; and there is very much in the word of God, and in the present aspects of Divine Providence, to encourage us greatly in our begun concert for extraordinary united prayer for the coming of Christ's kingdom. Let us therefore go on with what we have begun in that respect, and continue instant in prayer, with all perseverance, and increase more and more in faith and fervency; and not keep silence, nor give God any rest, till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. And remember in your prayers, dear Sir, Yours, in great esteem and affection, Jonathan Edwards." The continuation of this concert for united and extraordinary prayer was proposed in a Memorial from Scotland, dated August 26, 1746, signed by twelve clergymen of that country, and circulated soon after in all the American colonies. To secure the general adoption of the proposed measure, Mr. Edwards first preached to his people a series of sermons in its favour, and then published them in the form of a treatise, with the title, "An Humble Attempt to promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union among God's People, in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion, and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture Promises, and Prophecies concerning the Last Time." This work was immediately republished in England and Scotland, and extensively circulated in both countries, as well as in America, and had great influence in securing the general adoption of the measures proposed--a measure which was pursued for more than half a century by many of the American churches, and only discontinued on the adoption of a more frequent concert--the monthly concert--for united and extraordinary prayer, for the same great bject, proposed at an association of the ministers of the Baptist churches, in the

counties of Northampton, Leicester, &c. held at Nottingham in 1784, and observed the first Monday evening of each month; and now extensively adopted throughout the christian world. In the course of this treatise, Mr. Edwards was led, in answering objections, to examine an interpretation of prophecy, until then most generally if not universally received: viz. That the kingdom of Christ could not come, until there had previously been a time of most extreme calamity to the church of God, and prevalence of her antichristian enemies against her, as represented in Revelation 11:1-19 by the slaying of the witnesses. Some years before this, Mr. Edwards had examined the Apocalypse with great care, in connexion with the prophecy of Daniel; in order to satisfy himself whether the slaying of the witnesses was to be regarded as past or future. This he did with his pen in his hand; and a brief abstract of his views on this point, is found in the answers to the 4th and 5th objections in the Humble Attempt. The views of prophecy, here presented by Mr. Edwards, were, I believe, at the time wholly new to the christian world, and were at first regarded by many as doubtful if not erroneous; but have since produced the general conviction that the downfall of popery and the ultimate extension of the kingdom of Christ, are far less distant than has been supposed--a conviction remarkably supported by the whole series of providential dispensations. And there can be no doubt that this conviction has been a prime cause of the present concentrated movement of the whole church of God, to hasten forward the reign of the Messiah. As long as it was the commonly received opinion of Christians that the church was yet destined to experience far more severe and overwhelming calamities, than any she had hitherto known--calamities amounting to an almost total extinction--before the time of her final prosperity; the efforts and the prayers of Christians for the arrival of that period of prosperity were chiefly prevented: inasmuch as it was, in effect, to labour and pray for the almost total extinction of the church of Christ, during a period of indefinite extent, as well as to labour and pray, if speedy success should crown their efforts, for the destruction, if not of their own lives, yet of those of their children and immediate descendants. In the sections referred to, he endeavours to show, and by arguments which are yet unanswered, that the severest trials announced in prophecy against the church of God were already past, that her warfare was even then almost accomplished, and that the day of her redemption was drawing nigh. By establishing this point; and by presenting the arguments in a manner so clear and convincing, as wholly to supersede the necessity of any subsequent treatise on the subject; the work in question, through the Divine blessing, has exerted an influence, singularly powerful, in rousing the church of Christ to that series of efforts which is to result in her final victory.

_____ [26] See vol. i. pp. 258, 259.

[27] It was postponed to the time of the children of the generation here referred to.

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