

Volume 16

William Huntington

Light Shining in Darkness - Part 2

William Huntington

(1747-1813)

Table of Contents

- Chapter 21. The envied man's retinue, and the honourable man's beggary"
- Chapter 22. The Heavenly intercourse opened, and the goers and comers described.
- Chapter 23. The Lord's book of wars, and the wars of the Lord.
- Chapter 24. The inheritance of the wise, and the promotion of fools.
- Chapter 25. Gods greatest treasure in man's worst part.

- Chapter 26. The wonderful climax, or, the chain of Heaven and Earth.
- Chapter 27. The wise pupil, and his domestic tutor.
- Chapter 28. The erring heart, and God's unerring ways.
- Chapter 29. The best of fathers, and his command; the mystic mother, and her law.
- Chapter 30. The violent storm, and heavenly calm.
- Chapter 31. The Saint's right, and his lies against it.
- Chapter 32. Charity described in its fountain, in its channel, and its streams.
- Chapter 33. The Son of God in triumph, and Satan's work in ruins.

William Huntington

XXI. The Envied Man's Retinue, and the Honourable Man's Beggary.

"He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread." Pro. xii. 9

IT is not a form of godliness without the power, nor an empty profession void of possession; nor is it a dry barren ministry, whether heterodox or orthodox; that will incur the displeasure of these despisers.

A profession made under the influence of the spirit of this world, and a system of gospel truths preached by the children of the flesh, will make but little stir among these enemies. Hypocrites and impostors are the best friends the devil has; for by these he counterfeits the kingdom of God to support his own empire. Men may preach about creation and providence, about election and redemption, about justification and

sanctification: Satan cares nought about that; for all these may be in the head while the strong man reigns in the palace. Satan knows that the kingdom of God stands not in word, but in power; and nothing but divine power can dethrone and dispossess him. The above things have been and still are enforced by many who are enemies to God, in alliance with Satan, and in union with those whose guests are in the depths of hell. By such instruments he communicates hardness of heart, impenitency, daring boldness, arrogance, blind zeal, false faith, and perilous presumption; all which are profitable to the devil. And this may be called spiritual wickedness; for it is the influence of Satan counterfeiting the full assurance of faith in the unsanctified souls of hypocrites. That which makes a man despised, and which, by Satan's help, fills the despiser with all his rage, is the faith of Gods elect; which faith is both Gods gift and Gods work: it flows from Gods eternal love, through Christ the mediator, and is wrought in the soul by the powerful arm of God revealed. This faith deals with the Lords atonement, and purifies the heart by it; it puts on an imputed righteousness, gives the sinner an existence in the heart of Christ, and Christ a dwelling place in the sinners heart. This faith overcomes the world, and explodes the spirit of it, and purifies the heart from the root of all evil, and lays hold of the love of God, and works by it, which is the root of all real godliness: it applies the promises, it attend our petitions, mixes itself with the word preached, assures us of our sonship, and is always attended with the witness of the Holy Spirit. Take faith in a twofold point of light: first as a grace from Christ acting, and take Christ as the object of faith acted upon, and faith is the substance of things hoped for; for what can a sensible sinner hope for but the enjoyment of Christ? Faith is the evidence of things not seen, which things are the glories of heaven; and the firstfruits of the Spirit are the earnest of that glorious harvest; and faith is one of those firstfruits, and is our assurance of it, and is wrought in our souls to persuade us that the promised inheritance is sure to

all the seed. Now all this being Gods own work in us, it must be despised. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a, work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." And this may be seen in Paul at Jerusalem. While Paul declared his extraction, his education, manner of life, and his persecution of the Christians, they heard him with. all attention; but, when he delivered his conversion, and call to preach to the Gentiles, then they lifted up their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." "Make haste," said the Lord, "and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." That which these men despise is not us, but God's work, God's dear Son, and God himself for revealing him in us; and so says the Lord himself: "He that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." But each of these despised ones hath got a servant; therefore he is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

I must now describe the servant, Our Jacob, the everlasting father of Israel, served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep. Nor is he ashamed to be called our husband; for he made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant, and in that form he served for his wife, and obtained her as the reward of his work, Hence she is called the travail of his soul. To purchase her, discharge her debts, and to rescue her from the hands of thieves, robbers, and usurpers, was all his labour and travail. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He washes her from all her sins in his own blood and, if he wash us not, we have no part in him: yea, he disdained not to wash his disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded, John xiii. 5. And this is repeated again and again, for he makes us feel the need of it often; and we are as sensible of it when it is done. And, after his resurrection, his disciples found a fire on the sea coast, and fish laid thereon, and bread; himself made

the fire, and dressed the dinner, and he called his disciples to it, saying unto them, "Come and dine," John xxi. 12. "Whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth." This is the angel that redeemed Jacob, and the God that fed him all his life long. And surely washing us, washing our feet, making a fire, dressing our meat, and calling us to the entertainment, is the menial work of a servant. But what is that which divine and invariable love will not do? Nor does he stop here, but he puts on our clothes, and all our trinkets; for we have neither eyes to see them, nor hands to apply them, ourselves. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, 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," The crown upon her head, the chain upon her neck, the bobs in her ears, the bracelets on her hands, and the shoes on her feet, are of his preparing and putting on, Ezek. vi. 9:12. All her inward glory and outward ornaments, the provision of Zion's table, and the furniture of her toilette, the powder of her hair, and the perfumes of her robe, are all prepared and provided for her. Wisdom prepares her bread, kills her beasts, mingles her wine, furnishes her table, and bids her guests, saying, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled." This is the provision of her table. And, as for her apparel, he says, Thou art comely through my comeliness that I have put upon thee. He is her watchman by night, and her guardian by day, and never slumbers nor sleeps; he refreshes her every moment, and keeps her by his power: she is indebted to him for both her food and her physic; and he makes all her bed in her sickness; he supports her on the bed of languishing, and he attends her both in the furnace and in the bath, to keep the flame from kindling, and the waters from overflowing; nor will he relinquish his endearing attention till the solemnization of the eternal nuptials takes place. "Let your loins be girded, and

ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them," Luke xii. 37. Oh, unparalleled condescension! He will gird himself with all the power, glory, and majesty, of infinite deity, raise his church from the dead, form it and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, present her to himself without spot, wipe all tears from her eyes, lead her to living fountains, feed her with his own fullness, and set her down amidst all the realities and dainties of paradise. A despised one, that hath such a servant, is better than.

"He that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread." Are we blind also? say the Pharisees. O no; burning and shining lights. They shine in the counterfeited rays of Satan, and burn in rage against Christ as he did. They do the works of their father.

"Stand by thyself, come not near unto me, for I am holier than thou," said another. "These many years do I serve thee," said the elder son in the parable, "and never at any time transgressed I thy commandments." "All these have I kept from thy youth up," said the young man; "What lack I yet?" All these honoured themselves, and received honour one from another. And we have plenty of such in our days. The papist, whose obedience exceeds the demands of the law; the perfectionist, who is complete in the flesh; the self-righteous, with all his stock of natural power and inherent grace; and those who boast of all their light within, but have none without: these all honour themselves, and are therefore in unbelief; for, "How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?" These must want bread, because they cannot believe. "I am the bread of life," says Christ; and "He that believeth on me

hath everlasting life." But how can you believe? And, if they have no faith, they have no bread.

Their pride will attend them out of the world, for they will honour themselves at the great day. "When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, and did not minister unto thee?" And again, "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

The grand contest between God and all graceless professors is, who shall have the glory of a sinners salvation. This glory God claims, and will never give to another; nor will the self-righteous ever give it to him. Hence the Saviour, who stood in the gap and made up the breach, is rejected, and any thing substituted in his room. Free agency is opposed to his sovereignty; the workings of a natural conscience are called inherent grace, and are set up in opposition to the Lords fullness; dead works stand as a rival to his spotless obedience; and sinless perfection in competition with his sanctification: while, on the other hand, the Lord seeks the lost, shines upon the blind, quickens the dead, gives power to the faint, saves the vilest, heals the sick, and justifies the ungodly. And this is the glory of Gods elect, while all others labour in vain. It is going about to establish their own righteousness, being too blind to see, and too proud to submit to the righteousness of God. Such shall stumble, and fall, and be snared, and be broken, and be taken. They stumble and take offence at the Son of God; they are broken off from both covenants, and taken in their own craftiness; for what can men hang upon who reject Christ? And this is now the case with the Jews; they are driven to such shifts as to pray on their death-bed that their own death may atone for their sins. These are the men who honour themselves and yet lack the bread of life, and will perish to all eternity in their wants. It is intolerable to them to have their honour laid in the dust, and therefore it

must he in the flames; for, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased." At the great day it will be seen, and shall be acknowledged by all, that "He that is despised and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread."

He that is despised is better than he that honoureth himself, &c. Blessed are they that are reviled and persecuted for Christs sake, for great is their reward in heaven. But the Lord pronounces his wo upon professors when all men speak well of them.

But a member of the Laodicean church, who is rich, increased with goods, and in need of nothing, thinks it strange to be invited to buy wine and milk without money and without price; and, even if at any time conscience pinch him, he turns a deaf ear to the voice of divine bounty. "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." All such kind invitations are lost upon a free-willer. "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb." And therefore wo unto them that are full, for they shall hunger. All that come to the feast must be brought; a bare invitation brings no guest. "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper;" therefore bring in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, that my house may be filled with guests. These, these shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, when many shall beg in harvest, and have nothing. Better is he that is despised and hath a servant, than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

William Huntington

XXII. The Heavenly Intercourse Opened, and the Goers and Comers Described

"And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." JOHN 1:51.

THERE are few texts in the Bible that have appeared more dark and obscure to me than this, and that for various reasons.

1. There is nothing, that I know of, following this passage in the New Testament, which appears to me to explain, or that leads to the sense of it, as is frequently the case in other matters; as, for instance, when the Lord said, "There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Again: "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended as a cloven tongue of fire, and abode upon the apostles, and filled them, they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. And as the kingdom of God stands in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost, the kingdom came at this time with power, and those that were enlightened saw it and felt it. But were have we any account in the New Testament of the angels of God being seen ascending and descending, as here described, except in the foregoing passage?

2. Whatever be the meaning of the passage, it contains a promise of something to be seen by Nathanael, though perhaps not to the exclusion of others. The matter in the text is expressive of something exceeding great; for upon

Nathanael's confession of faith this promise was given. "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel." In answer to which Jesus replies, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these." Nathanael had seen the Son of God and king of Israel with the eye of faith, and with the eyes of his body he saw him in the flesh; he believed in him, and confessed his faith in him as his own saviour, king, and lord, and was accepted and approved; and he obtained a good report, through faith, that he was "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

And what sight under heaven can be greater than this? What are angels? the work of the Saviour's hands, the creatures of his care, and his most noble and honourable servants. But sure I am that a sight of all the angels together, both ascending and descending, can never equal, much less excel, a believing view of Christ, as Christ declares this sight shall: "Because I said, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these; for verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

3. Whatever may be the sense of this text, it is plain that it is something to excite Nathanael's admiration, and to encourage his faith and hope; whereas a view of angels has often awakened the fears and terrors even of the best of saints, and has rather frightened than encouraged them. Daniel's comeliness turns into corruption, and he faints away, at the sight of one. Zacharias, at the sight of an angel, was troubled, and fear fell upon him, Luke i. 12; and Manoah concluded that he should surely die, when an angel had appeared to him. And even Jacob himself, who really saw the angels of God ascending and descending upon a ladder, and from which vision the words of my text are taken, even "he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place!

4. I have at times doubted whether the appearance of angels has been so frequent under the gospel dispensation as under the law. The law was given by the disposition of angels; "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." But not so the gospel, for that "at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Hence the gospel of the Messiah, which the Jews always called the world to come, dividing the world into three periods: the first before the law; the second under the law; the third the world to come, or the days of the Messiah. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak," Heb. ii.5.

5. The next difficulty that appears to me in this text is, the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man. The elect angels never sinned. God and they were never at a distance; nor were they ever at enmity, so as to stand in need of a mediator; nor are they included in his mediation; and it is certain that Christ took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 16. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." He, by his blood, is the new and living way, which he hath new made for us, and the redeemed shall walk there, Isaiah xxxv. 9. The office of Christ as mediator, and his whole work of mediation, being appointed for men, and confined to men, it appears strange to me to find the angels ascending and descending on the Mediator, or in that way which is consecrated for us.

It is true, every spiritual blessing from God the Father comes to us through Christ, and every acceptable sacrifice goes up from us to God the same way, and no other; but then the angels do not go and come on the Son of man in this work; for it is not angels, but the Holy Ghost, that brings every promise and blessing through Christ to us. Some say the sense is, that there would be immediately made such clear discoveries of

his person and grace by his ministry, and such miracles would be wrought in confirmation of it, that it would look as if heaven was open, and the angels of God were continually going to and fro, and bringing fresh messages, and performing miraculous operations; as if the whole host of them were constantly employed in such service. But their bringing messages, and performing operations, is what I do not understand. And their saying that it would look as if heaven was open, &c. that If, and that Look, or mere appearance does not seem to require the double asseveration of Verily, verily, I say unto you. Besides, the Lord does not say that it shall look as if it were so and so, but Verily, verily, you shall see heaven open, &c.

The heavens opening at certain times is what we often read of, as in Ezekiel. He tells us first that the heavens were opened to him, and that he saw visions of God. In which vision he saw a whirlwind, the emblem of the Holy Spirit of God, and a fire enfolding or catching itself in after every breaking forth; which fire represented the word and grace of God, which are to inflame the souls of Gods saints as the Holy Spirit is pleased to communicate them; and upon the back of every breaking forth there succeeds a catching in; and this every child of God knows and laments. Out of the flames came four living creatures, quickened and inflamed by the Holy Ghost; which were hieroglyphical representations of gospel ministers, burning and shining lights. Read Rev. v. 11, 12. On the sides of the living creatures were wheels, prefiguring the churches of Christ, called Gilgal, or rolling, and because they were spiritually circumcised, and their guilt and the reproach of it were rolled away from them, Josh. v. 9; and so, being disburdened of their sins, and fired with love, they were like the chariots of Amminadib, the chariots of my willing people, Song vi. 12. These living creatures being inspired by the Spirit of life and love, the spirit of these living creatures was in the wheels; hence they move in concert; if one went,

the other went; if one rose, the other rose; they rise and fall together; as all ministers and churches do, if they are of Gods spiritual family; for, if the eye of the body mystical be single, the whole body will be full of light; and, if the preacher be a hypocrite, so will his followers; for "there shall be, like people, like priest." Above all these there is a throne exhibited, and upon the throne a man in a fiery appearance, which was the Son of God on a throne of glory, attending the church with his presence. And all this was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the heavens were opened by Christs sacrifice and satisfaction, and by his mediation and intercession; when the Holy Ghost descended like a rushing wind and a cloven tongue, and abode upon all the apostles. Then was the Lord seen over them; the arrows of his quiver went forth like lightning, and pierced the hearts of rebels. The great trumpet was then blown to call perishing sinners to the sacrifice; and he went forth with whirlwinds of the south, which heavenly gale is for the regeneration of his own elect, read Zech. ix. 14. Thus are the heavens opened, and a new and living way consecrated through the vail into the holiest of all; which way was not made manifest while the first tabernacle was standing, Heb. ix. 8.

2. By the heavens being opened is signified a glorious breaking forth of gospel light and power, after a long eclipse of darkness, deadness, errors, and heresies, which often obscure the church, and almost bring her into the smoke and smother of ignorance and confusion, and make her look like the chaff and stubble of carnal and outer-court worshippers. But when it pleases God to pour down his Holy Spirit, and to revive his cause, and raise up his poor oppressed family, he shines into their hearts, opens the heavens to them, and shows them afresh the mysteries of his covenant. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings," &c.

3. The heavens are said to be opened to Peter, when in vision he saw a large vessel knit at the four corners, and filled with beasts, fowls, and reptiles, representing Gods elect among thee, Gentiles; and he was bid to Arise, kill, and eat, Acts x. 11.

4. The same opening of the heavens appeared to Stephen, when the sentence of death and the execution of it was coming upon him: "And he said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." This was to inform the martyr that the heavens, the holiest of all, were opened to him, and that his Lord was ready to receive him, and that he should commit his departing soul to him, as to a faithful Creator, his covenant God, and his Saviour. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Something of this sort appears to every convicted sinner upon his conversion; for, while he is labouring under the legal bondage of the law, the heavens over him appear to be brass, and the earth that is under him iron; so that he can neither ascend to God in prayer, nor hide himself from his terrible majesty. And it is as sensibly felt and enjoyed by the poor sinner, when God rends the heavens, and comes down and makes the mountains to flow down at his gracious presence, Isaiah lxiv. 1. "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together: I the Lord have created it."

But this opening the heavens, in my text, signifies the new and living way, which was opened by our forerunner, when reconciliation was made, and he, from the tomb, trod the path to immortal life; when mercy and truth met together, when righteousness and peace kissed each other. Truth sprung out of the earth at the resurrection of Christ, and righteousness

looked down from heaven propitious. Then the Lord gave that which was good, by sending his Holy Spirit, and the barren land yielded a spiritual increase; righteousness went before the Mediator, to procure his acceptance, and, when imputed, or placed to our account, it sets us in the way of his steps, Psalm lxxxv, 10-13.

I now proceed to shew what these angels are; which I take to be not angels by nature, but angels by office, or spiritual messengers; for, if the four generals of the Turkish armies were called angels, as they are in Rev. ix. 14; and if the name of angel is given to such a messenger as Abraham's steward, when he went to espouse Rebekah to Isaac, 1 Cor. xi. 10; surely the name must be much more applicable to the saints of God, who are called spiritual men. The ministers of the churches of Asia are called the angels of the seven churches. And the apostles and evangelists which Christ sent truth to preach his gospel, being spiritual messengers, bear the same name. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," This trumpet is our jubilee trump; it proclaims a release to sensible debtors, and invites us to the feast of our passover, and is a fulfilment of that prophesy, "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 in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." And, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; 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." All Gods elect are compared to angels: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven," Matt. xxii. 30. These are the messengers that make use of the Mediator in all their approaches to God; and these are the angels for whom, and for whose sake, the

heavens are opened; the way through the veil of Christs flesh is consecrated for us; and these ascend and descend upon the Son of man; nor can they ascend any other way. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." If it should be asked what this going in and out means, Paul tells us, that "through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father," Eph. ii. 18. Our Lord informs us, in his prayer, that Gods residence is in heaven; "Our Father, which art in heaven." This is the holy habitation of God; and Paul says; that through the Mediator we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father; and, when indulged with this sweet access, we enter in and find pasture; but, when this sweet access is denied us, then we go out again, crying; "My leanness, my leanness; wo unto me!" until we are permitted to go in again. And the weakest soul in the household of faith is up to this going in and out; it is so conspicuous, that even his countenance proclaims it; for, when it is denied, like Joseph's fellow prisoner, he looks sadly; and when granted his face shines; the Lord being the health of his countenance and his God, Psalm xlii. 11. And this ascending and descending on the Son of man is expressive of the glorious raptures of the mind, when furnished with the law of faith, and influenced with the quickening spirit of God; under which sweet operation the mind is rapt in heaven, meditating on heavenly things; and while the mind is stayed on these it is sweetly enriched and entertained. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." And it is said that God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ, Eph. ii. 6.

2. This ascending and descending is expressive of the exercise of grace upon God the Father, through the Mediator; for faith and hope both centre in God, through Christ, as saith the apostle Peter; "Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." Now, if faith and hope through Christ

are both in God, and if our affections are to be set above on the right hand of God, where Christ sitteth, this ascending and descending respects the heavenly mindedness of the saints when, in their most rapturous frames, and in their most devout and lively acts of devotion, and in the exercises of faith, hope, love, and joy, they approach God. And, when any minister of the spirit in his work is thus ascending, it is perceptible to spiritual worshippers, for such ascend and descend with him; so that many in the prescript day, as well as Nathanael of old, see this. Yea, there are enemies that behold this, as well as spiritual worshippers; for the ascension of saints to heaven, after dreadful conflicts and persecutions, mentioned in the Revelation, is nothing else but souls ascending to God upon the out-pouring of the Spirit which quickens the poor lifeless witnesses, after their long lifeless state of absolute silence. "And, after three days and an half, the spirit of life from God entered into them: and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them;" if so, much more their friends.

William Huntington

XXIII. The Lord's Book of Wars, and the Wars of the Lord

"Wherefore it is said, in the book of the wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon." Numbers
21:14

IT has been a matter of wonder with some where Jude got the prophecy of Enoch from, which is mentioned in the 14th verse of his epistle; and I have heard of some who formerly offered

a large sum of money for that book, if it was extant, and could be procured; and that a gentleman was imposed upon by a spurious composition, which passed for Enochs prophecy. I have read also, in Mr. Bruce, that he brought a book, called Enochs Prophecy, from the city of Gondar, in Abyssinia. The account that he gives of it is as follows: There are other books of less size and consequence, particularly the Organon Denghel, or, The Virgin Mary's Musical Instrument, composed by Abba George about the year 1440, much valued for the purity of its language, though he himself was Arminian. The last of this Ethiopic library is the book of Enoch. Upon hearing this book first mentioned, many literati in Europe had a wonderful desire to see it, thinking that, no doubt, many secrets and unknown histories might be drawn from it. Upon this, some impostor, getting an Ethiopic book into his hands, wrote for the title, The Prophecies of Enoch, upon the front page or it. M. Pierise no sooner heard of it than he purchased it of the impostor for a considerable sum of money. Being placed afterwards in Cardinal Mazarine's library, where Mr. Ludolf had access to it, he found it was but a Gnostic book upon mysteries of heaven and earth, but which mentioned not a word of Enoch or his prophecy, from beginning to end; and from this disappointment he takes upon him to deny the existence of any such book any where else. This, however, is a mistake; for, as a public return for the many obligations I had received from every rank of that most humane, polite, scientific nation, and more especially from the sovereign, Louis XV, I gave to his cabinet a part of every thing curious I had collected abroad, which was received with that degree of consideration and attention that cannot, fail to determine every traveller of a liberal mind to follow my example.

Amongst the articles I consigned to the library at Paris, was a very beautiful and magnificent copy of the Prophecies of Enoch, in large quarto; another is amongst the books of scripture which I brought home, standing immediately before

the book of job, which is its proper place in the Abyssinian canon; and a third copy I have presented to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, by the hand of Dr. Douglas, the Bishop of Carlisle. And concerning the passage in Jude, he says as follows: And, indeed, the quotation is, word for word, the same in the second chapter of the book? Bruce's Travels, folio, Vol. I. p. 497-499. I will not tell my reader how much my ears have itched to hear the contents of that book.

But, as for the book in my text, I believe it to be no other than the writings of Moses, which contain several wars of the Lord, and especially these two that are mentioned:

1. What he did in the Red Sea.
2. What he did in the brooks of Arnon:

both of which are recorded in the writings of Moses. If it be objected, that Moses wrote five books, and the book in the text is but one; it may be answered, that Moses himself called all his writings a book: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." The mind of Moses seems to me to be this: What I have written has been by thy command, and under the influence of thy Spirit; and thou hast proclaimed thy name before me, and I have written thine own proclamation, "The Lord God, gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin." And now, if thou wilt not forgive the sin of this people, blot my name out, and let it not stand in that book, nor let it ever be known that I am the writer of it. Which shews great wisdom in Moses, and wonderful condescension in the Almighty, to suffer a poor frail worm to make so free. But Moses represented the great Mediator; and a mediator must draw near to both parties. And, whosoever declares or wages war, the Captain of our salvation is the God

of armies; he mustereth the forces, numbers the slain to the sword, and gives the victory. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." And we read, in the book of Genesis, of the wars of the confederate kings, who fought in the plains of Sodom, where the five kings were overthrown, and all the cities of the plain plundered, and the people led into captivity, whom Abraham and his confederates rescued. But the wars in my text seem chiefly to intend the wars of Egypt. God had sent Joseph into that country, who had made known to the king of Egypt Gods intention of sending seven years plenty, and of the seven years famine that was to succeed. In the seven years famine Joseph had bought up all the land of Egypt, except the land of the priests, for the king. The king, being in possession of the whole country, sends for Jacob and all his family, bidding them not regard their stuff, for the good of all the land of Egypt was theirs. But some of the succeeding kings and heirs of the land of Egypt knew not Joseph, though they enjoyed the land which Joseph had bought up for the crown. One of these heirs of the crown and country pays no regard to the promise of his predecessors, but turns his guests into slaves. This people being the people of God, God, like the king and sovereign of his people, sends his ambassador to demand his subjects from thralldom. This his just request being denied, he wages war with the king of Egypt. Hence it is said that God took him a nation from the midst of another nation by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, Deut. iv. 34. And he proceeded as great generals often do, who frequently distress the invaded by cutting off or poisoning their waters; so God turns all the waters of the river, ponds, and brooks, into blood, so that they could not drink thereof, Exod. vii.

He distressed them in their cattle also, by sending a grievous murrain among them. And he brought such instruments of

death forth from his armoury as are not in the power of an earthly prince to furnish out.

Nor was the beginning of this war army against army, but rather single combat. The Lord of hosts fought the field; his troops were making brick in Goshen. He sent frogs, lice, pestilence, hail, and fire, into the land, which destroyed their corn, trees, and vines; then he sent darkness; and, last of all, smites the heir apparent, and all the firstborn of the land; and having humbled them, and spoiled them of their treasure, he enriched his own subjects with the spoil. He led his armies out with an high hand, and with the full consent of the truly mortified king of Egypt.

But he, repenting of his submission, and of the compulsive terms he had agreed to, pursues them with all his strength. Moses, as their leader at the head, seeing they were likely to be surrounded, calls to his Sovereign for aid. He is ordered to divide the sea, and lead the armies of the Lord into it; and, they being hid as in an ambuscade, their enemies pursue; but, lest the pursuers should travel too fast for the pursued, the wheels of the war chariots drop from their axles, and this troubles the host, and impedes their march. The armies of God gain the shore, when the returning waves, like soldiers in ambush, fall upon their enemies in the rear and overwhelm them. This raises the Lords honour, and spreads his fame: "And, in very deed, for this cause," says God, "have I raised thee up, to shew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." And, indeed, it is upon this stroke that Jethro so much admires him: "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them," Exod. xviii. 11. And upon this also the Almighty got a new title; "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name."

And upon this victory was that famous song composed, which will be sung once more upon the destruction of another Egypt, and upon the completion of a better salvation: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy right hand, O Lord, hath flashed in pieces the enemy. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters," Exodus xv, The manner of Israel's obtaining this victory is worthy of our observation. Israel wins the day by fearing, crying, and running away; while Pharaoh loses the battle, his own life, and that of all his army, by triumphing, boasting, and pursuing. And what army, except the Israel of God, ever made such a slaughter without blood, without a sword, and got such a victory without a blow? And we are under the same captain, commander, and leader, now. Our Lord, single-handed, without any to help, overcame Satan, and all his devils with him. He overcame the world, and all the serpents seed that is in it. He overcame death and the grave, and then ascended to heaven with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet; and led captivity captive; and then sends his Spirit upon rebels, telling them that his victories are placed to our account: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And our victory in every skirmish depends upon fearing the Lord, crying for help, and running to him for support, succour, and safety. And he that confides in his Lords love not only wins the field, but never diminishes aught of his strength; for "We are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." So much for the war at the Red Sea.

Now for the brooks of Arnon; where we have an account of another war of the Lord, and of another victory obtained. "Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon. Behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle. This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and

be in anguish because of thee," Deut. ii. 24, 25. The wonder that appears in this account is, that the Captain of our salvation had given into their hand Sihon before they had seen him. He had given them also his land before they entered into it, and the victory before the sword was drawn. The next wonder is the quick dispatch of the messengers of dread and of fear; which were to reach the nations that were under the whole heavens. All these were to hear the report of Israel, and should tremble and be in anguish because of them. And I do not think this war is quite ended yet; for, although it be true that "the earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the judges thereof: if not, where, and who is he?" yet I think that God's Israel are still fighting to gain the possession that God has given them. There is a new earth that we look for, according to his promise, Wherein dwelleth righteousness, or righteous persons, possessing righteousness. The heirs of promise look for this. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." This promise is by no means fulfilled in the present state of things; for, if there be any of the meek and quiet who have any worldly possessions, none fall a prey to the litigious so much as these. But there is another earth: "Behold," says God, "I create new heavens, and a new earth. 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." Hence we read, in Johns visions, of the new Jerusalem being let down from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband, and of a great shout on the occasion, saying, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell among them."

This Jerusalem is the covenant of grace, and all the elect are called the children of the covenant, being secured within the bonds of it, These are the bride, the Lambs wife; for there can be no lawful wife without a marriage covenant. "And, as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall

remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain," Isaiah lxvi.

Jerusalem is created to be a rejoicing, and her people a joy; and indeed there can be nothing else; corruption being put off, and incorruption put on; vile bodies changed, and glorious bodies fashioned; death swallowed up, and immortal life brought to light. A fullness of love within furnishes out an everlasting joy to the daughters of this Jerusalem; and Jerusalem herself is to be a rejoicing, because endless love, joy, and gladness, are promised in this covenant, and treasured up in the covenant head and husband of the church; and it will be the husbands delight to fill the soul of his wife with it.

The monster that reigned in this country, by the river Arnon, was Sihon; and neither he, nor any of his subjects, would suffer Israel to pass through their land, though on foot; no bread would they sell them for money, nor one drop of water, though Moses offered to pay for them. And Satan and his seed serve Israel the same way now.

Arise, says God, and pass over the river Arnon, and contend with him in battle. And this is war. And surge I am that this long and lasting campaign is not finished yet. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are still engaged. And there is a kingdom for which we also suffer; and one branch of that kingdom is the thousand years reign in the new earth; and we must pass through this present world to it, and fight our way, in order to gain and possess it.

Sihon, and all his princes, and all his people, were delivered into the hand of Israel to be slain. Satan and all his principalities are to be bruised under our feet shortly; and power is given us to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and in this conflict there will not be the loss of one single soldier; "For nothing," says

Christ, "shall by any means hurt you." Yea, "we shall judge angels," says Paul; and destruction shall succeed the judgment passed. But the gospel of Christ, and the preachers of it, and the real professors of it, and the very profession that they make, all, all, are a savour of death unto death, both to Sihon and to the Amorites. But it shall be preached and professed in all the world for a witness; a witness in behalf of some, and a witness against others. And Moses and his forces utterly destroyed the whole country, king and people, women and children; they left none alive.

But, for the present, we must do under our Mediator as Israel did under Moses. "And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth, unto Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying, Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the highway, Thou shall sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for, money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet. But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day." Ambassadors of peace, and sons of peace, must still send and sound out messages of peace; and it is still seen that words of peace are rejected. God hardens the spirit, and makes the hearts of thousands obstinate, even when words of peace are sounding in their ears. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work that you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it." To such we are a savour of death unto death. The Lord slays these with the word of his mouth. And, when all these despisers are slain, and the sword of the Spirit returns to its scabbard, a universal dread and fear will go through the world; for even the most daring despisers of the witnesses will dread the witnesses they have despised; for they will see these enter the marriage-chamber, and themselves shut out. And I believe this wedding-chamber, in which our Lord will present his church to himself as a glorious

church, having neither spot nor wrinkle, will be this new earth promised to us, in which the Bridegroom and his bride will enjoy each other a thousand years. Then, then shall be brought to pass these sayings, that are written: "Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more," Joel iii. 17. "And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts," Zech. xiv. 21.

But before all this takes place the wonders wrought in the Red Sea will be re-acted in a future period. The 14th chapter of the Revelation describes the destruction of Mystery Babylon, and the victory of the Lamb over her is expressed by a wine-press of blood, and her dreadful end by the smoke of her torments ascending for ever and ever, Rev. xiv. 11, 20. Upon the destruction of Pharaoh at the Red Sea the song of Moses was sung. The subject matter of the song was Gods power and glory, their own deliverance, and the destruction of their enemies. All this is yet to be sung again in truth, as the former was in type. "And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire; 817 and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." These are some of the contents of the book of the wars of the Lord, and of what he did in the Red Sea.

And, if I am not much mistaken, there will be a repetition of the wonders performed at the brooks of Arnon; for the next country which Israel took in the same war was all the regions of Argob, Deut. iii. 4. And these two kingdoms bear the names of Gilead and Bashan: "And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites the land that was on this side Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon; all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan." There is

a singular prophesy to the inhabitants of Gilead and Bashan: "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitary in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old," Micah vii. 14. For, as the new earth is to be given to the saints, who can tell but that part conquered by Israel will be the chief paradise, and Christ receive the highest praises where he suffered the greatest shame? The prophets request is, that the chief Shepherd, with his crook and sceptre, would feed the flock of his heritage in Gilead and Bashan as in the days of old, when he gave Israel all that country, and the treasures of it. And true it is, that the Lamb in the midst of the throne will feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water; and when we are thus fed we shall be perfect in knowledge, and able to comprehend the contents of this book of the wars of the Lord; and what he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon. Until then, the good Lord the Spirit direct our hearts into the love of God, and into a patient waiting for Christ!

William Huntington

XXIV. The Inheritance of the Wise, and the Promotion of Fools

"The wise shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of fools." PROVERBS 3:35.

THERE is no greater folly than to put away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near. The beginning of wisdom with us is when God brings our sins and his law, death and judgment, home to our mind and conscience, and sets them all before our eyes. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" These things brought home and deeply impressed on

the soul, are attended with great consternation and fear; and although this fear is coupled with much bondage and slavery, yet it is attended with a desperate war against sin, and with a departing from it, and from all our companions in it. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." And to this agrees the wise man; "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth, and is confident."

The next step that the wise man takes is to search the scriptures, to see if there be any ground of relief, instruction, encouragement, or hope; which he most earnestly desires, because he is deeply sensible of his need of these. "Through desire a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom." And as sure as the word of God becomes his study, so sure will the saints of God become his chosen and most favourite company. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but the companion of fools shall be destroyed." All convictions that come from God by the Spirit will be complied with and yielded to by the convicted sinner; he will and must come to the light of truth, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in Gods power, and under Gods influence. The word is a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path; and the scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus, Tim. iii. 15. All soul trouble which does not drive us to the light, to the word of God, to the ministry of it, to the servants and saints of God, is sure to leave us where it finds us - both fools and blind. "Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?" Jer. viii. 9. By the word of God preached, read, or meditated on, is wisdom conveyed to the soul; hence the word is called the word of wisdom, 1 Cor. xii. 8; and that part of it which is called the gospel, is the wisdom of God in a mystery, 1 Cor. ii. 7. When the Spirit of God opens up, and applies the promises with power, the hungry soul relishes them, feeds and feasts

sweetly upon them; no honey to the mouth so sweet as the words of life to the soul. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off." The entrance of the word of wisdom gives hope, it respects the future and great reward; and the expectation founded on hope is not to be cut off from the reward promised. And it is an experience of comfort by the word that brings hope: experience worketh hope, but not the experience of bondage, fear, and wrath; these work despair. It is the entrance of comfort that brings hope." "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The next most noble branch of spiritual wisdom lies in taking the gospel lamp in the hand of faith, and oil in the vessel to feed the flame. The foolish virgins which took their lamps took no oil with them. The best account of the saint's lamp is as follows: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," Isaiah lxii. 1. Zion and Jerusalem here are the elect of God, and the covenant of grace which God has made with Christ in their behalf. Read Heb. xii. 22, 23.

There are two things in this text that go forth hand in hand; and they always come to the heart of poor sinners together: the one is righteousness; the other is salvation. A divine radiance attends the one, and a flaming fire attends the other. Righteousness goes forth as brightness, and salvation as a lamp that burneth. This, this is the wise virgins lamp. But, then, what is salvation?

It is the forgiveness of sins, and the knowledge of it; as it is written, "To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from; on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." The fire that attends this salvation is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost; for the fullest discovery and sweetest enjoyment of divine love are made known to the soul at the time of pardon and forgiveness; and this overflowing of divine love in us inflames the whole soul with love to God again: or, to speak more evangelically, the Holy Spirit filling us with Gods love through Christ, his love is reflected back again, attended with the renewed affections of the pardoned sinner. Hence it is said, Where much is forgiven, the same loveth much; and where little is forgiven, the same loveth little, Luke vii. 47. Sin is removed by faith in a Saviours blood. This heals the conscience, and brings health and cure; while love binds up the broken heart, and fills it with joy and peace. This is salvation, and the burning flame that attends it; and justification always goes with it; for the same faith that purifies the heart puts on the wedding-garment; the fatted calf and the best robe are brought forth together, Luke xv. 22,23. The prophet ascribes fire to salvation, and brightness to righteousness; and no wonder; for when God accepts us in his Son as clean, and in his righteousness as just, he reveals his dear Son in us, with all his saving benefits, and with all his fullness: and this is called the Sun of righteousness rising upon us with healing in his beams, attended with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Pardon removes sin, and righteousness removes the curse, and all condemnation. In this work we are baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with the fire; with God the Fathers love, through Christ; for this is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost. Hence the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of burning, Isaiah iv. 4. The word of life, in the love of it, is a live coat from

the altar, Isaiah vi. 6. And joy in the heart is the flame that blazes forth from this lamp, and is expressly called light: "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out." This lamp of salvation will afford a blaze of joy, when all joy raised by moving the passions will be put out: a consciousness of sin, and the expectation of wrath, are sure to extinguish it. The ground and foundation of this joy in my text is, first, the forgiveness of sins. And such worshippers, once purged, shall have no more conscience of sins, Heb. x. 2. Thus "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." The believer puts on an everlasting righteousness. This, says the prophet, goes forth as brightness, as being the righteousness of God, and in which the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Matt. xiii. 43. And both the atonement and the best robe are brought nigh, and applied by the Holy Spirit of God; for we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1 Cor. vi. 11. Which most holy and blessed Spirit is a comforter that abides with us for ever. Thus salvation is attended with the fire of love, and righteousness with the brightest flames of heavenly joy; as it is written, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels," Here is the wise virgin, made wise to salvation, going forth to meet her great Redeemer, who hath washed her from her sins in his own blood. She is going to meet her dearly beloved with his love shed abroad in her heart. She sets out in her wedding robe to meet her bridegroom; she goes to meet her head of influence, under the influence of his Spirit; and she rejoices in hope of an endless enjoyment of her own husband. Nor is she in any danger of her lamp going out; for she has the promise of returning to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon her head, Isaiah li. 11. And so far is she from being shut out of the marriage-chamber, that it is with gladness and rejoicing she

shall be brought, and shall enter into the kings palace, Psalm xlv. 15. So much for the wisdom of the wise.

Now for the glory; "The wise shall inherit glory." There is a glory already put upon the wise, and it begins with the first entrance of the Spirit of God into the heart. Under his first operations the poor sinner begins to separate himself from the world. This brings the odium of the world upon him: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you?"

2. The light of Gods countenance, in which our secret sins appear; the light which makes manifest all things that are reprov'd, and which shines upon the sure word of prophecy till the day-dawn, and day-star arise in the heart; even this is no less than glory; yea, and the glory of God too. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

3. There is a wonderful display of divine glory in the creation and formation of the new man. God shining upon the soul, and giving us a discovery of his own glory in the face of Christ, reflects the image of God upon us; and under this glorious rising and shining is the new man formed, and the divine image imprinted on the soul. "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." The love that fills the soul at this time, and the unutterable joy that springs from love, has, according to Peter, a fullness of glory in it. "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," 1 Peter i. 8. Glory, as mentioned in the scriptures in the general, means light; "I could not see," says Paul, "for the glory of that light;"

and again, "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory;" and again, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee."

The word, light, in scripture signifies various things.

1. It signifies the light of faith. By faith Moses saw him that is invisible. The patriarchs saw the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them. And again, "He that believeth on me shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

2. Sometimes it means love. "He that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness; but he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."

3. It signifies enlightening the understanding to discern spiritual things. "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Again, "The eyes of your 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."

4. It signifies joy and gladness of heart. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." Again, "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out."

5. Wonderful deliverances, and prosperity upon it, are called light. When Haman was caught in his own trap, and God turned his violent dealings upon his own pate, it is said that the Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour, Esther viii. 16. So much for the wise man's begun glory, even in this life. We read also of a glory that is to be put upon the bodies of the saints at the resurrection of the dead; that Christ shall

change our vile bodies, and shall fashion them like unto his own glorious body. We read also of a crown of glory that fadeth not away. And I believe I may, in a few words, set forth both the glory of Christ, and the glory of the saints. The glory of Christ is his church: "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," Isaiah lxii. 3. The crown of the saints follows: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people," Isaiah xxviii. 5. This is the glory of the wise, and the wise mans crown of glory; and he that can find out God unto perfection, he may describe it; as for me, I cannot. But thus much I may say, that whatever in the word of God is called a crown, may, in the highest sense, be referred to Christ Jesus. For instance: "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." Christ is the ancient of days, and the hair of his head like pure wool, Daniel vii. 9. "The prudent are crowned with knowledge." Christ is made of God unto us wisdom; and to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is life eternal. We read of a crown of righteousness laid up for all that love his appearing, 2 Tim. iv. 8. Jehovah-tsidkenu, Christ is the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii, 6. "The crown of the wise is their riches." The Lord is the portion of our souls. We read of being crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Psalm ciii. 4. Christ is love, he is kindness, and all the sure mercies of David are in him. There is such a thing as the crown of life, James i. 12. Christ is our life; and, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Again: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." But this text that follows includes and contains the substance of all the above: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people." This is our cap of state, our joy, the crown of our rejoicing, the glory of our head, and our eternal honour, dignity, and majesty.

I come now to describe the worst creatures in all this world, except the devils; and these are, that sort of fools which are mentioned and meant in my text: for there are several sorts of fools described in the word of God; but that sort in my text is not an understrapper; he is not one of the lowest, nor one of the second class, but of the highest rank, being exalted above every other denomination or species of fools; for so says my text, "Shame shall be the promotion of fools."

1. There is a sort of fools that are mere muck-worms, who are so blinded and buried in the earth as never to spend one thought either upon God or conscience. "And he spake a parable unto them saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God."

2. There is another sort of fools which are by nature so; that is, persons of weak intellects and of shallow capacities, and, as we commonly say, soft and simple; and there are not a few of this sort among the elect of God. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are," 1

Cor. i. 26-28. Now this sort of fools are so naturally, and are called the foolish things of the world.

3. There is another sort of fools, that are not so in reality, but are nicknamed so; and their godfathers that gave them this name are not men truly wise, nor wise in the judgment of God, nor in the opinion of wise men; but they are wise in their own conceits like the Jewish scribes and pharisees of old, who became vain in their imagination and their foolish hearts were darkened. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," Ro m. i. 21, 22. Now, though these men were fools in grain, fools in the abstract, and the very quintessence of folly, yet these became the Godfathers of men that were truly wise, and, out of their great hatred to God, call souls, that God has inspired, fools. "The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred," Hosea ix. 7. And those in the New Testament which, Christ says, saw and hated both him and his Father, gave the same title to the apostles, as Paul relates, "We are fools for Christs sake," 1 Cor. iv. 10. And these fools God undertakes to lead, protect, and guide, in his way; and takes such pains to make the road plain, that these wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, Isaiah xxxv. 8.

A fourth rank of fools are such as make a profession without possession, Neither driven to Christ by a sense of guilt and wrath, nor drawn to him by a sense of mercy and love, they seem to me to be volunteers in religion. They think it an honour to have the name of being devout Christians; or else, what could induce the foolish virgins to set out, and to set off, to meet the bridegroom, seeing they had no knowledge of him, no love to him, no sense of their need of him, nor any one promise of life from him. They had not his Spirit in them, nor one grace from his fullness, to influence them. They had no unction, no oil, no anointing from him; for they took no oil with them. These are called foolish virgins.

5. The next class of fools are such as are blinded, influenced, pushed on, and puffed up by Satan, to assume and invest themselves with the office of the ministers of Christ. And there are many of them so duped, blinded, and inflamed, with a false zeal. by the devil, as to think that God really sent them; and they often challenge the Almighty for their sovereign and their patron, as Balaam did when he said, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." This class of fools so effectually mimicked the servants of Christ as to make many hearts glad who were the simple followers of the Lamb. Of such simple believers Paul sarcastically says, "Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise." Wise you must be, because you gladly suffer false apostles to lead you. But the fool in my text is a more exalted character than any of these; he is ranked in the highest class, and is, in his own conceit, the wisest creature in all the celestial or terrestrial globes; for he attributes folly to both worlds, as will appear in the following account of him. We are to know this fool from all others by the appellation that is joined to his name, "Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath," Prov. xxi. 24. Proud and haughty scorner is his name; pride and wrath he at the bottom of all his hard speeches. And scorning eases the burden of his heart, and affords him some desperate, infernal, and momentary delight. These scorners are said to delight in their scorning; and, though fools, yet they hate knowledge, Prov. i. 22.

This sort of fools make a mock at sin. And, in doing this, they mock at all the anger, wrath and just indignation of God. They mock at all the dreadful threatenings, sentences, and curses of a broken law; yea, they mock at all the weeds, briars, and thorns, on the earth, and at all the toil of man in rooting them up, and keeping them under. They mock at all the chains and torments of devils; at all the labour, toil, and misery, of men; at all the sufferings and agonies of the Son of God; at all the

sorrows and afflictions of the saints; at the day of judgment; at the awful sentence of God; and at all the groans of the damned; for not one of these had ever been either revealed, threatened, feared, felt, borne, or endured, if sin had not entered into the world.

A scorning fool is one that scoffs at all real religion, and makes a jest of the worship and worshippers of God. The very preaching of Christ, Paul says, is the power of God, and the wisdom of God; and even this the scorning fool calls the weakness of God, and the foolishness of God. Be it so, says Paul; "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men," 1 Cor. i. 25. Thus this fool sets his mouth against the heavens, and his tongue walks through the earth. He sets his mouth against the heavens by insulting his Maker, and ridiculing his gospel, which is from above, and by despising those that are born from above; and his tongue walks through the earth by his pupils and admirers, who zealously circulate his bold and arrogant speeches.

We are forbidden to offer any advice or counsel to this character: "Speak not in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of thy words." No reproof nor rebuke, no judgments nor afflictions, can have any humbling or softening effects upon him, he is so completely in league with Satan, and so hardened under his influence. "Though thou shouldst bray this fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him," it is so interwoven in his soul.

I come now to shew his promotion. In every class of rational creatures there are some promoted above the rest. We read of angels and archangels in heaven; and of thrones and dominions, of principalities and powers; and, even among fallen angels, we read of a king, which is Satan, and his inferiors, who are in subjection to him. And we read of

Beelzebub, the prince of devils; yea, Paul says that Christ, by his death, spoiled principalities and powers upon the cross, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. And so in bodies politic, and in all senates and civil societies, there are promotions. Hence we hear of emperors and empires; of kings and kingdoms; of princes and principalities. The house of lords hath a speaker, the house of commons the same; and all assemblies and clubs of inferior rank, even these have a chairman.

Now, the fool in my text, which Solomon describes to be a fool that delights in scorning, and hates knowledge, this dignity that he is in, this promotion, is refused by all but the scorning fool, according to Jotham's parable; for, when all the corrupt trees went to anoint a king over them, every plant in the wood begged to be excused but one. "They said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?" All these trees seem to show some regard either to God or man, and therefore refuse promotion. But the next offer is made to the scorning fool. "Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow," Judges ix. 8-15. None in all this parable would accept of promotion but the bramble, and that is a badge of Gods curse upon the earth, and a lively type of that sort of sinners called briars and thorns, which are rejected, and are nigh unto cursing, and whose end is to be burned, Heb. vi. 8. The same choice has been put to this sort of trees

since, and the choice was the same: "Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber."

Among all the classes of sinners, heretics, hypocrites, impostors, mammonists, and worldlings, there are none promoted so high as the scorning fool. He is the chairman; he stands first and highest, and is at the front of all that enter the gates of death. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

I read of no exalted chair, or seat of promotion, among sinners, but the above, which is called the seat of the scornful. And, as this chairman is sure to have many pupils, followers, and admirers, so he is sure to gain many proselytes; many of which look up to him, and wish they could imitate him in art and craft, in eloquence and fluency, in parts and abilities, in wisdom and knowledge. This person being a ringleader, and gaining much applause by mocking of God, it is but right that he should be supreme in misery, as well as supreme in wickedness. And God declares, in the very verse preceding my text, that he will deal with this sinner as he has dealt with God. "Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly. The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools." And as, in this world, those that despise Christ shall be lightly esteemed, so these scorers, at the day of judgment, will be despised, destroyed, and abhorred, even by their own proselytes and admirers; and they will hate him, and curse him, and torment him, to all eternity, as their worst enemy, and soul-destroyer. And God declares that he will pay him in his own coin; that is, he will laugh at his calamity, and mock when his fear cometh. His own atrocious crimes, and the heinous guilt of them; his fears, anguish, and torments; shall be his promotion in the great day, as soon as the last trumpet shall be blown. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to

everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Shame and everlasting contempt will be the promotion of this fool. His chiefest glory has been in his own shame, and shame shall be his future promotion.

William Huntington

XXV. Gods Greatest Treasure in Mans Worst Part

"For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." I CORINTHIANS 12:24-25.

The apostle, in this chapter, is comparing the church of Christ to a human body, and the different members of the body as representing so many particular members of the church. And as there is an union, both in flesh and spirit, between Christ and his people, first, by his incarnation, and, secondly, by our regeneration, (for by the former he took our flesh, and by the latter we are made one spirit with him, and the Saviour and his church being husband and wife;) so they are for ever one, as man and his wife are one. Hence she bears his name, and is expressly called Christ: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body; so also is Christ." Now, as Christ signifies anointed, the unctuous Spirit of God being upon all believers, the church bears this name, for we are anointed with the same Spirit; as it is written: "Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God." "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all

made to drink into one Spirit." This spiritual baptism that Christ came to administer, to which John himself gave testimony, when he said, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," is what the Saviour promised just before his being apprehended; "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." And, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit was most plentifully poured forth upon the apostles, which made them ministers of the Spirit, not of the letter. They all drank into one Spirit, according to the Lords promise. Their poor, dry, barren, lifeless, and thirsty souls came to him, and drank freely of the well-spring of life; and, in their ministry, out of their bellies flowed rivers of living water. "This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive." To be baptized with the Holy Ghost is to be regenerated and renewed by the Spirit of God; and to be baptized with fire is to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us, Rom. v.5. And this most holy Spirit being one in them all, made them all one in themselves, and members one of another. "For the body is not one member, but many." The human body consists of various parts, and each member is assigned to its own proper use and office in the body; and though their offices may differ, yet they are intended for the mutual use, aid, and assistance, of every member. Now, as the different members of the body are of different uses, so are the different members of Christ's mystical body. "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" The foot most certainly is the greatest slave in the human body, because it bears the greatest weight, and is the lowest member in the whole frame; and perhaps may mean one in the lowest stage of grace, with some life, faith, hope, and expectation, and yet not a little burdened with corruption, temptation, doubts, and fears, as some are all their life time in bondage through the fear of death, and misgivings of heart; and so, like the foot, are the lowest and meanest. And such are often least and last of all in their own eyes, and, like the

feet, much pressed down to the earth, and seldom joyful, or heavenly-minded; and yet, like the foot, diligent in the means of Gods appointment; though often staggering, halting, limping, and meeting with so much opposition, they are often discouraged because of the way. However, the feet belong to the body; and if these be out order; all the members are in a concern about them, for the whole is confined from travelling. And so the foot, in the body mystical, serves to excite the pity, compassion, yea, and the patience too, of those members that are more strong; for they are often lain with a weight upon the minds of others; hence we read of some who are borne upon the sides, and dandled upon the knees, of Zion; which would not be the case, if they had but good use of their own feet. "I was feet to the lame," says Job. "Confirm the feeble knees," says Paul. The feet seem to want the most attention of any; for they are the same in the body as the ewe great with young is in the flock. And the devil often bruises this heel of Christ, as Amalek did in the wilderness, who could not reach the front, but fell upon the rear, and cut off all that were faint, and feeble; and God swore that he would have war with him for ever for so doing, Exod. xvii. 16.

"Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body." The hand, to me, appears to be one whose faith is come to some degree of maturity, who hath laid hold on eternal life, and who holds fast and abides close by the covenant head. He holds fast the form of sound words, and continues steadfast in the apostles doctrine, and is able at times to hold forth in private the word of life, a word of reproof, instruction, counsel, admonition, exhortation, comfort, or encouragement, to others. And he may be called a hand, because of his ability to assist, and willingness to communicate, to the necessitous; as wisdom describes the church as reaching out her hand to the poor and needy. The foot at times may be provoked to jealousy, and be led by Satan to envy the happiness of such who seem to excel, and to draw conclusions from thence that, because I

am not the hand, I am not of the body; "But is it therefore not of the body?"

"And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" 1 Cor. xii. 16. The ear appears to be an attentive hearer. And how delightful is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear; an ear that is circumcised to hear and understand the Shepherds voice; an ear that can try the word as the mouth tasteth its meat; which can discover and disrelish perverse things, such as the allurements of designing men, who he in wait to deceive; and who, knowing the joyful sound, is able to detect the Lo here, and Lo there, of the minister of Satan. The ear is not to say,

"Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body." The eye appears to me to be a real minister of the gospel, or a cherubim, one of Johns living creatures, full of eyes before and behind, who have the first views and discoveries made to them of the mysteries of the kingdom, and whose work is to call others to come and see. Hence John is called a burning and a shining light, because he let his light shine before men. And if thine eye be single, saith the Lord, liberal and bountiful, seeking Christs honour, and the good of his chosen (for it is a bountiful eye that will pity the poor, Prov. xxii. 9,)and deal out truly, freely, and bountifully, the truths, promises, and blessings, of the everlasting gospel, to the enriching and enlarging the poor in spirit; such an eye being single the whole body shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give the light. But, if the eye be evil, the whole body is full of darkness; as are many congregations of poor formalist Arminians, heretics, and hypocrites, like the kingdom of the beast of Rome, full of darkness. The ancient name of a minister sent of God is that of a seer, because the light of God shined into him. And another name is that of a watchman, who requires eyesight to see into the dark designs of thieves and robbers, and took after the safety of the citizens. The

name of shepherd also, which takes the oversight of the flock. Another of their names is that of seraphim, which signifies inflaming, because the Lord makes his ministers a flame of fire, to warm, enlarge, and inflame, the souls of the saints. And much fire such want, in order to set forth the ever-blessed Spirit of God, the eternal love of God, the joy of God, and the comforts of God. And this fire gives a true light to them; and much light they want in order to look into the mysteries of God, into arch impostors and deceivers, who are ministers of Satan transformed. And they want eyes to discern spirits, false from true; and to read hypocrites and saints, to distinguish the vile from the precious, and a work of grace from devilism; which is Satan's craft, intended to imitate the work of God upon the soul, that he may sow tares among the wheat, in order to deceive. A near sighted seer, a blind watchman, and a shepherd that cannot understand, are Zion's worst enemies. And this was Israel's case, as God complains: "His watchmen are blind; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand," Isaiah lvi. 10, 11.

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?" If the whole church were ministers, where would be the hearers? God gives the discerning eye to his church, that his people may be fed with knowledge and understanding; and he gives the obedient ear also: "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me." And the Lord hath blessed both: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

"If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling?" The mystical body of Christ is not without a nose. This is twice commended by the Lord in the seventh chapter of the Song of Solomon. All Christ's garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; and the whole of his sacrifice is a sweet-smelling savour, a savour of life unto life to all that believe; and a

quick-scented believer is of great use in the body, in smelling out wolves and foxes, who, like the flies in the apothecary's ointment, send forth a stinking savour.

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you." The head of the church is Christ; and though it is true we have all need enough of him, yet I do not know that it can be said of him that he stands in need of us. However, the mediatorial King will have his subjects; the great Shepherd will have his flock; the Captain of salvation will have his good soldiers; the Husband will have his wife; the everlasting Father will have his children about him; and the Head will have his body. These characters, which he is pleased to assume, make the other necessary. And sure I am, that the covenant Head never will say to his little ones, no not to the least, "I have no need of thee;" though perhaps the most ancient and most honourable members in a church who are sometimes called elders, may be meant here by the head, because the ancient and the honourable he is the head of a society; and the prophet that teacheth lies he is the tail; but Christ's body has no such tails to it. However, the most ancient and honourable member cannot say to the least and lowest I have no need of thee; for without such there would be no increase, no succession, and of course the church must discontinue.

"Nay much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary." I know of nothing belonging to the human body that are more feeble than the hairs of our head; and yet even these are all numbered, and not one of them shall perish, Matt. x. 30. Luke xxi. 18. And, as weak believers are sometimes compared to these, a third part of the hairs cut off from the prophets head were to be bound up in his skirt; Ezek. v. 3. Hairs are given for ornament, and so weak believers, who are in the simplicity of the gospel, are the ornamental hair of the church: "Thy hair is as a flock of goats

from Gilead." And these often appear in the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Hairs, though feeble, stick close to the head; and I know of none who stick closer to the Head of the church than the weak and feeble ones. "He gathereth the lambs with his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leadeth those that are with young." And who stick closer to the heart of Christ than those who ride in the bosom of love?

"And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour." The back parts of the human body are deemed less honourable than the face, neck, hands, and arms; but upon these we bestow, or put on, more abundant honour than we do upon the face or hands, by covering them; as Aaron's garments were made for glory and beauty, to ornament and adorn him. And so we read of the raiment of Solomon, which astonished the Ethiopian queen; and even the Lord calls this his glory: Even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like the lily; because Solomon's glory was artificial; but that of the lily is natural to itself. The poor, weak, ignorant, and foolish, of this world are represented by these: But God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the strong, and the base, and those lightly esteemed; yea, the off-scouring of the earth; and has sent his gospel to them, and chosen them rich in faith, and hath made them heirs of his everlasting kingdom, having adopted them into his family. And it is often seen that the poorest and weakest saints are much more favoured with life, power, presence, comfort, and countenance, of God, than those who are brighter in parts, and better in circumstances.

"And our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." When sin entered into the world, and guilt and shame followed upon it, and conscience began to reproach our first parents, they, being stripped of all righteousness and innocency,

immediately invented a covering for these. But the Lord condescended to make them a better one himself; prefiguring thereby an imputed righteousness, which justifies from all things, and effectually covers from all sin and filth, from guilt and shame. These parts, some have thought, represent backsliding and fallen believers, who bring a reproach and scandal upon the church~ and who require a deal of love to cover and hide their sin and shame from the world, that the good ways of the Lord be not evil spoken of. Though, for my part, I rather think that those parts of the human body which distinguish the sexes have a much higher and a more noble meaning. We read of the church's pregnancy, and of her pain and travail to be delivered; and we read of gospel ministers begetting many to Christ; as it is written, "Though ye have ten thousand instructors, yet have ye not many fathers," says Paul: "I have begotten you." Zion, in the mystery, is not without her fruitful womb: "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring, forth? shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God." Nor are the ministers of the Spirit, which the Lord sends, destitute of divine power; nor yet destitute of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Hence it appears to me, that the usefulness of a minister in converting, and the increase of a lively, fruitful church, are signified by these parts; though it may be objected, that such preachers and churches cannot be called the uncomely parts. To which it may be replied, that such are the most despicable in the eyes of the world, or else they would not call such fruitful souls as the apostles the filth and off-scouring of the earth. A dead preacher, and a barren, lifeless congregation, do not incur the worlds displeasure; they generally get the name of pious, honourable, moderate, candid, quiet, and inoffensive people. Under such preachers the devil keeps his, captives, and the world keeps its companions; and as these sustain no loss, so the others have no persecution. But let the Spirit of God be poured out upon such a preacher, and upon such audiences; let the work of

begetting, conceiving, breeding, travailing, and bringing forth, go on among them: and away goes the world's good word for evermore; and they would appear to be the uncomely parts at once. Hence I conclude, that powerful preachers, who are owned, honoured, and much blessed in this work, and churches which are the most fruitful to God, are intended.

These have more abundant comeliness. All that are called by them, love and honour them for their works sake. What is more delightful, to the real lovers and friends of Christ, than to see a successful preacher, and a fruitful church? And when such friends of the Bridegroom bring poor, blind, ignorant souls, or persons prejudiced against the word, under the means, and it pleases God to send the word home to them, how pleased such are to find the poor sinner is caught in the net; and upon such young fruit, just sprung from the womb, they also waiting upon them, watching over them; and when the work appears genuine, they esteem them, in their simplicity and humility, better than themselves. And for these the best robe, ring, fatted calf, and shoes, are brought forth, which is the comeliness of Christ, and is put upon them, which such souls need, and which gives them more abundant comeliness.

"For our comely parts have no need." The face, cheeks, eyes, mouth, and nose, of the human body, have no need of a covering to preserve them; for these comely parts are intended to be seen, and to set off and recommend the whole body. And by such the apostle means real and conscientious saints, who are sincere in heart, and circumspect in life; like one who wears the name of God in his forehead. The cheeks mean the modest and virtuous saint, who will take shame and blush at the thoughts of bringing any reproach upon the cause of Christ; of whom the Lord says, "Let me hear thy voice, let me see thy face; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

The eye, the nose, &c. have been before described as the discerning preacher and quick-scented believer. But these comely parts have no need, in the sense the others have; for their iniquity is forgiven, and their sin is covered, and the grace of God is abundant upon them; these are all fair, and there is no spot in them.

"But God hath tempered the body together," by joining high and low, strong and feeble members, in one covenant, in one mystical body; and hath joined them together in judgment, touching their ruin in Adam, and restoration by Christ; and respecting their condemnation by the law, and justification by the gospel; and hath bound and braced them together in the unity of one faith in Christ, in the bond of peace, and in the more perfect bond of love; and hath tried them, humbled them, melted them, meekened them, and softened them, by humbling dispensations, which makes the heart contrite; and by which means he hath cemented them together, that they may need each others assistance, feel for each others infirmities, hear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; and, by administering comforts by the Spirit, which supplieth every part, the whole edifying itself in love, and increaseth with the increase of God. The worst part of this mystical body is the natural head of it, I mean Adam. The first Adam in his fallen state, corrupted it all; and the body must be infected with the leprosy while the plague is in the head, Levit. xiii. 44. For Adam, having lost the image of God, he begat sons in his own likeness. Not in light, but in darkness; not in righteousness, but in condemnation; not in love, but in enmity; not in holiness, but in sin; not in wisdom, but in ignorance. And this earthly image God despises. We are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; for, through the disobedience of Adam, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation. Hence the elect are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. "Now the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted

for the seed." And over this seed God has appointed a new head, a second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven, He takes part of the children's flesh and blood, and is born under the law. He obeys the law that Adam broke; he bears our sins that Adam communicated, and endures the curse that Adam incurred; satisfies the justice of God that Adam had offended, and suffers the wrath brought on us by Adams fall, and dies the death denounced on Adams sin. In this business the devil will be busy, and makes better haste than good speed; and of the wisest of all serpents he becomes the greatest fool. He gains both Jew and Gentile to assist him against the Son of God, and works in them all to conspire his death, the death of the cross. And here the devil falls in his own pit; the most artful fowler is taken in his own snare, and all his violent dealings return on his own pate. To the cross the Saviour nails the law of death; upon the cross he takes away the sting of death; and, by redeeming man, he through death destroys, as a usurper, him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. On the third day he rises from the dead; righteousness looks down from heaven well pleased, and truth springs out of the earth in eternal triumph; to heaven he reascends, lord both of the dead and of the living, and bears the keys both of hell and of death; and, upon taking his throne as king mediator, he receives and sends truth his most holy Spirit of promise to blot out the image of the earthly Adam, and to reinstamp his own, consisting of glorious light, righteousness, love, holiness, and spiritual knowledge; and to setup an empire of grace, supported, ordained, and established, by the Holy Ghost, which preserves this image, and supports this empire for ever more. Thus are all the elect restored and reinstated in God's love, and in the image of the second Adam; while the devil and his angels, together with all the seed of the serpent, who hate the church and her seed, are left in the chains of sin, and under the wrath of God, and the dominion of endless death.

Nothing of Satan's usurped dominion remains in the elect of God but the body of death, the old man. This remains to magnify the grace of God, to keep the saints watchful, humble, and diligent, and to make the glories of another world appear an eternal weight. At death the old man is removed; at the resurrection mortality, corruption, and death, are swallowed up, the devil and his adherents judged and damned, a new heaven and a new earth appear, in which righteous persons shall dwell; and this will be the destruction of the devil and all his works. Thus have I shewed the new head of the church Christ Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering death, now crowned with glory and honour, God having put more abundant honour upon that part that lacked. But this glorious Head must be loved, honoured, adored, and always uppermost in the heart and affections of his saints.

Another part which much lacked is the heart, which is the strong mans palace, a den of dragons, a cage of unclean birds; from whence evil thoughts, thefts, blasphemies, adultery, fornication, covetousness, enmity, malice; rebellion, infidelity, and every other evil, proceed. But abundant honour is put upon this: Christ dwells in the heart by faith. With the heart man believes unto righteousness. The heart is circumcised to love God. Here the laws of God are written; and here the fear of God, the word of God, and the grace of God, are put; yea, God dwells with the broken and contrite heart. All which is abundant honour; and it is put upon that part which lacked. Nothing can be a greater honour to a poor sinner than that of adoption. To be a son of God, what can come up to it! "And because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." there is the Spirit of God in the heart, claiming in us the honour of adoption, and bearing his witness to the truth of it. Now this abundant honour is given to that part which lacked.

"That there should be no schism in the body;" that is, no division or separation. And those who are united in heart to Christ, and made one spirit with him, and who know the plague of their own heart, and whose hearts have been made broken and contrite; in whose heart Christ the hope of glory is formed; and who are of one judgment in the truth; who are of one heart and one soul; who are cemented together with meekness, tenderness, and humility, and bound up together in the bundle of life with the Lord their God: these, in heart, will cleave close to Christ and to one another, even when the chaff is blown away, the vile separated from the precious, the heretic discovered, and the hypocrite banished from the presence of God; as we see by the apostles when Judas was gone; by the friends of David when Ahithophel was made manifest; and by the fear that fell upon the churches when Ananias and Sapphira were sent out of the world. For at such times God gives more grace to his own dear children, that the weak may say I am strong, when the towers fall, and even after fanning times, which are suffered in order to purge the floor; at which times the Lord often visits his own people with more of his presence, which makes the union of the saints the stronger, and their affections to each other wax the warmer, and abound.

"That the members should have the same care one for another;" a concern for each others welfare, bearing a part of their burdens when in trouble, and sharing their joys when in prosperity. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Souls bound together in the threefold cord of everlasting love, live in concord and move in concert; and if one is in affliction the Spirit will touch the hearts of the rest to put up their prayers for it, and mingle their sympathy with him; and when God comforts Ephraim, he comforts his mourners also. Daniel is in danger of being slain with the wise men of Babylon, and he requests his three friends to assist him in

desiring mercy of the God of heaven concerning the secret of the kings dream. The three friends of Daniel get into the furnace; Daniel is out, that he may pray for them. Daniel goes into the lions den; the three friends are out to pray for him. Peter gets into prison; prayer by the church is made to God without ceasing for him. Peter is let out; and they open not the door for joy at the sight of him. "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 beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; it is like the dew of Hermon, on the mountain of Zion; where God commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

William Huntington

XXVI. The Wonderful Climax, or, the Chain of Heaven and Earth

"And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord; I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine: and the oil and they shall hear Jezreel." HOSEA 2:21-22

THE day here spoken of does not appear to me to be the time of Christ's appearing, when the dayspring from on high visited us, to guide our feet into the way of peace. The ten tribes were then in captivity; and where they now are, seems to be a mystery.

Nor is the day here spoken of the day in which the gospel was published to the Gentiles, when the apostles became "a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race;"

when their line went out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world, Psalm xix. 4, 5; Rom. x. 18. The day spoken of in my text is yet to come. For although some few of the ten tribes might be gathered in when the gospel was preached in and about the countries where the ten tribes were scattered, and a church elected together was founded, even in Babylon, 1 Peter. v. 13; yet, as a body, they have not been restored to the favour of God by the gospel; nor will they be until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. "Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." Here we have the rejection of Israel with a Lo-ammi put upon them, which still continues; next we have the adoption of the Gentiles, formerly not a people, but now the sons of the living God; and, when the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, then the Deliverer goes forth out of Zion, and turns ungodliness from Jacob; and so Israel is saved at last. And to this agrees Isaiah: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." At this time, says Hosea, the children of Judah and of Israel shall be gathered together, and appoint

themselves one head; that is, they shall both unite, and embrace Christ Jesus and his gospel. "I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it." Under this head they shall return to their own country; they shall come up out of the land; "for great shall be the day of Jezreel." This great day is the day spoken of in my text, in the which "I will hear, saith the Lord."

"I will hear the heavens." The heavens are to intercede for Jezreel whenever this great day comes. And by the heavens being heard we are to understand the intercession of Christ; the Holy of holies, eternal in the heavens, is his sanctuary; into the most holy place he entered with his own blood; and there to this day his sacrifice and satisfaction abide a sweet-smelling savour to God. And it is with the abundance of his grace, and with the sweet savour of his grand oblations, that all our prayers are perfumed to this day, if they ever ascend with acceptance to God.

Moreover, as Christ, in the days of his flesh, prayed for all his elect, so his prayers must be answered for them all. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." The many promises that are made to Christ and his seed are all yea and amen in him; and therefore must be fulfilled. The petitions put up by our High Priest in behalf of all his elect must be heard and answered. The sacrifice offered, the satisfaction made on their account, and the ransom price paid down for them, the whole of which being now in the presence of God for us, demands and calls for the eternal salvation of all the sheep, whether Jews or Gentiles, and that on the footing of truth and holiness, law and justice. And to this God promises the strictest attention, and enforces it with a repetition, "I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens."

1. The heavens are in the plural. And by these, in the next place, we are to understand the church, which is often so called, our high birth, doctrine, and worship, being all from above. Hence the gospel church is called a wonder in heaven, Rev. xii. 1. The ministry of the gospel is set forth by an angel flying in the midst of heaven, and preaching as he flies; and yet he preaches it to them that dwell on the earth, Rev. xiv. 6. The great red dragon, with its seven heads and ten horns, is called a wonder in heaven, Rev. xii. 13. In all which places the gospel church is meant. Now this is one of the heavens that is to pray for Jezreel whenever her day comes on. And this will be the bounden duty of the Gentile church; for the Jewish church prayed publicly for the Gentiles from age to age. Even Noah brought in Japheth in his predictions; Moses tells the Gentiles to rejoice with Gods people; Solomon puts up his prayer for us, I Kings, viii. 41-43; and the Jewish church prays for her little sister that had no breasts, and promises to preach to her, and to build her up, as soon as the Messiah should send out orders to call her, Song viii. 8, 9, which the Lord did, Matt. xxviii. 19; and which promise the Jews fulfilled when they sent their ministers to the Gentiles, and bore their charges themselves; "For his names sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." Now the Jews are to be prayed for, when this great day comes on, by the Gentiles; for out of Gentile Zion deliverance is to go to Jacob; and the mercy of Christ is to go to them through the mercy of the Gentiles. "For 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." And when this great day of Jezreel comes, and the Gentile church has her bowels of mercy stirred up in behalf of the Jews, then shall the Jews, who first carried the gospel to the Gentiles, come to the Gentiles to receive the gospel back again. "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie, behold I will make them to come and worship

before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee." But we must descend three times more before this great day of Jezreel and her cry comes on; for so says my text, "I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens."

"And they shall hear the earth," &c. By the earth is meant Gods elect uncalled, unconverted, in their dead, carnal, earthly-minded state, being by sin earthly, sensual, devilish. Now this heap of earth is to cry, and the heavens are to hear the cry of the earth. But will such a dead lump of earth and sin ever cry to the heavens for help? No; they will not till they are compelled, and unless God smite them, and quicken them to feel the stroke; and this he promises shall be done by the King of kings, and Lords of lords; and, if mount Sinai trembled at the voice of God, it is no wonder if this animated clay should cry under his alarming stroke; for, "he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." The person that is to smite the earth is the King of saints; the rod is his sceptre, the gospel, which is the ministration of the Spirit; his word is spirit, and it is life. With this rod of his mouth the earth is to be smitten, reprov'd, rebuked, scourged, and chastened; and to these it is the savour of life unto life; but to the unbelieving and wicked it is the savour of death unto death; "With the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked." The earth being smitten is to cry. This may be seen in Peter's audience; they being smitten, and the force of truth reaching the heart, they cried out, saying unto Peter, and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37. The poor jailer, when he was smitten, cries also, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" You see what is meant by smiting the earth; and you have heard the cry of the earth when it is smitten. And here I must drop a few thoughts which have just come flying into my head. A little before this cry was made Christ was praying to the Father, and he was answering him by a voice from heaven. Soon after that the apostles were praying that signs and wonders

might be done by the name of the holy child Jesus. And here is the earth crying out to the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?". Now my text says that the heavens shall hear the earth; and so they do. As soon as the earth cried out the heavens heard and answered. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the Holy Ghost as well as we; for the promise is to you, &c. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," says Paul, "and thou shalt be saved, and all thy house; and he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Thus God hears the apostles, and the apostles hear the poor sinners crying out of the dust. There is one observation in my text which I would by no means overlook. There is no sort or class of men under heaven that feel their need so deeply as poor blind sinners, when first smitten and wounded by the word; and there is no sort of men that cry, in all my text, that have so many attending to the voice of supplication as that of the earth. All and every thing of God that has a voice, must attend when the earth begins to cry. God makes the most provision for them that are ready to perish. God hears the heavens; that cry comes from two quarters; but the cry of the earth has no less than five different voices answering to it; for so says my text. "The heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, the wine, and the oil." The high priest, the church, the corn, wine, and oil, are all to hear the earths cry. But then what voices can come from corn, wine, and oil?

The corn most certainly has a voice. The death and resurrection of Christ is compared to corn sown, and springing up with much fruit. "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."

2. By corn is meant the word of God, especially the promises, which are the words of life. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox

when he treadeth out the corn." That, says Paul, is spoken for our sakes no doubt. Treading out the corn is explaining the word of God, Deut. xxv. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 9. "Corn shall make the young men cheerful and new wine the maids."

3. The children of God are compared to wheat, and the children of the wicked one to tares, in our Lords parable. And again: "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." The death of Christ has an attracting voice to poor sinners. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The promises are God's alluring voice to sensible souls, who feel their need of mercy. Nor is there any state that the elect of God can be in, unto whom the promises of God are so innumerable, and to whom they speak so sweetly endearing and encouraging, as to awakened sinners, who tremble at the law, and are both poor and needy. The promise is to you, says Peter; and Paul brings forth the promises made to the Gentiles in his ministry: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord." Every true believer in Christ, whether weak or strong, has an ear to attend to the voice of awakened sinners. "And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee," Mark x. 49. And thus the crucifixion of Christ, the promises of life, and every living saint, have a voice of good news to the poor awakened sinner. There-fore let the earth hear the voice of the corn.

II. the earth is to hear the wine. To wine the cleansing blood of Christ is compared; and it is set forth by this emblem in the Lords supper, and was by the Lord himself, who says, "My blood is drink indeed." And there is a voice in this; and it is called the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 24. It speaks pardon and cleansing, reconciliation and friendship with the Lord, the abundance of peace and communion with God through Christ. And no voice

so suitable as this to convinced and convicted sinner, when first awakened; and with this voice the apostles went forth. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," Let the earth hear the voice of the wine.

Again: by wine we are to understand the love of God in Christ Jesus. This is wine on the lees well refined. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine." Now my text says, that he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and it is most certain that there is a voice that attends the rod. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." The wine hath her first voice to us in the rod. "As many as I love [there is the wine], I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent," Rev. iii. 12.

III. The oil also has a voice to the earth. And by oil we are to understand the Holy Ghost; for with this oil of gladness was Christ anointed above all his fellows; and the Spirit speaks an invitation to all that feel their need. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Yea, the Spirit is held forth to all that Christ smites. "Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you." Again: by oil we are to understand joy, for Christ gives us the oil of joy for mourning. Now the oil of joy has a voice; it has a voice to all mourners; for they that mourn shall be comforted. In the day of prosperity be joyful, in the day of adversity consider; God also has set the one over against the other." the voice of joy and comfort always speaks to the afflicted; he shall comfort all that mourn. "As ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." And, last of all,

These, all these, are to hear the voice of Jezreel, whenever Jezreel's great day shall come on. God himself will hear her in time to come. For, "as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers sake," Rom. xi. 28. Christ will hear Jezreel

when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in. For, Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" but no longer. Then the Jews shall serve the Lord, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them, Jer. xxx. 9. The Gentile church shall hear Jezreel cry, and she shall obtain mercy through their mercy. Yea, the corn, the wine, and the oil, shall hear the cry of Jezreel. What a day must that be with the Jews when the Messiah, whom their fathers rejected and murdered, and whom their posterity ever since have despised and blasphemed; when these come to unite together, and to appoint by choice this covenant Head over them; when they join with the Gentiles in serving the Lord, and David their king, whom God will reveal to them; and that same Saviour, that has been loaded with so many blasphemies by them, shall with one heart receive him as the most blessed and only Saviour of them. And sure I am they shall never see the Lord Jesus as he is, nor shall they embrace him as their Messiah, until this time comes, and they are prepared to heap ten thousand blessings on him. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Hence I conclude, that the voice of God in his covenant, the voice of Christ in the promises, the voice of saints in their prayers, the voice of the atonement, and the voice of the Holy Spirit, will all attend to the cry; and speak to the comfort of Jezreel.

William Huntington

XXVII. The Wise Pupil, and His Domestic Tutor

"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." PROVERBS 6:23.

For method's sake, and to inform my reader's judgment, and to assist his memory, I will lay down my intended plan of operation in the following manner, and execute it under the following heads.

I. Treat of this mans wisdom, "The heart of the wise."

II. What we are to understand by the heart; for it is his heart that teacheth his mouth.

III. Who it is that furnishes this mans heart. with all this~ wisdom, and these mighty works. and,

IV. The progress that he makes in learning; his heart not only teacheth his mouth, but adds learning to his lips.

First, I have treated largely of the wisdom of the wise in this little work before; but, as that subject is copious, much more may be said upon it.

It lies principally in these four things:

I. In the divine instruction which is given to the souer by the Holy Spirit of all grace when he condescends to regenerate and renew the soul, and to lead it into the truth as it is in Christ. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

1. That the Holy Spirit and his grace are meant in the above passage, appears plain , by its being first pure. God sprinkles clean water upon us, which is his Spirit, in order to purify us, and to cleanse us from all our filthiness, and from all our idols.

2. The Spirit testifies of Christ as our peacemaker; and one fruit of the Spirit himself is peace, for he fills us with joy and peace in believing.

3. Gentle. It is under the Spirits humiliating and meekening operations that the turbulent soul is tamed and made tractable. "The wolf also 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," Isaiah xi. 6.

4. This wisdom that is from above is easy to be entreated, but cannot be driven; as may be seen in the prophet Elijah, who had much of the spirit of power upon him. For, when king Ahaziah sent a captain of fifty with his fifty to the prophet with this message, "Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down, and Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty; and there came down fire from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty; and he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty: and the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him; be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king," 2 Kings, chap. i. By all

which it appears, that the Holy Spirit is easy to be entreated, but he is not to be commanded, much less driven.

5. This wisdom is said to be full of mercy; for the sure mercies of David, which are made sure to Christ, who is of the seed of David, and sure to us in him, are revealed to us by the Holy Spirit; hence it is said, that "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

6. This wisdom is full of good fruits. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c." Gal. v. 22,23.

7. This wisdom is without partiality. It will never justify the wicked, nor condemn the just. It influences a man to love God, and to love those that love him. "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." It is this spirit of wisdom that makes man a freeborn citizen of Zion; and the character of such a citizen is, that in his eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord, Psalm xv.

8. This wisdom is without hypocrisy. It makes the heart honest and sincere; it deals not deceitfully with God, nor with man; nor will it suffer a man to appeal to be something when he is nothing; nor yet to be against his right when the Spirit hears witness to his sonship.

II. The second general head of this discourse is, the wisdom of divine revelation, especially the covenant of grace, or what is called the gospel. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." The folds of this wisdom are many. They begin with Gods appointing the second Adam before the first Adam was formed; by his fixing

his eternal love upon us in Christ before we incurred the wrath of God by the dreadful fall of our first head. By giving us eternal life in a new covenant head before the entrance of death by sin into the world. In his appointing us to obtain mercy through Jesus before the curse and condemnation of the law took place, and declaring his mercy to be from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. In predestinating us to the adoption of children before we became servants of sin, and appointing us to be conformed to the image of Christ before the image of God was lost in Adam. In setting forth the mystical union between Christ and the church by the marriage of Adam and Eve. "We are of his flesh, and of his bones. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In making known the appointed incarnation of Christ as soon as man fell, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpents head." In appointing salvation to be of grace, not of works; that it might be sure to all the seed. In choosing the poor, the foolish, the weak, and the base things of the world, for the sake of magnifying his own free, sovereign grace and mercy. In sending forth his own Son, made of a woman; which glorious incarnation of Christ made God and man more closely united than ever they were before, God and man being but one person. In the work of redemption, in which the glorious grace and mercy of God appear, and yet the justice and holiness of God are highly honoured. In the death of Christ, in which Satan is outshot in his own bow, sin is condemned in the flesh of Christ; Satan, sin, and death, are destroyed; and sinful man saved. In the forgiveness of sins, which is according to the riches of his grace; and yet, by its coming to us through the atonement of Christ, we receive it on the footing of strict, justice. "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In the aboundings of sin being supplanted by the superaboundings of grace, the vilest of sinners are cleansed from sin; yet vengeance is taken of their inventions. In the imputation of an everlasting righteousness,

in which God appears strictly just, and yet he justifies the sinner from all his ungodliness upon his believing in Jesus, The saint is a vessel of free mercy, and yet he is bought with a price. God, of his own good pleasure, works in us both to will and to do; and yet "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which we have showed toward his name." The Lord will give grace, and he will give a crown of glory, even to the chief of sinners; and yet it is the Lord, the righteous judge, that gives that crown, 2 Tim. iv. 7.

III. The third branch of wisdom is Christ himself. "He is made of God unto us wisdom. Christ, in his highest nature, is the essential wisdom of God; hence he is called the power of God and the wisdom of God. All his children are called fools, and the foolish things of the world; and it required great wisdom to deliver them; and this was done by wisdom. The poor wise man by his wisdom delivered the city. "Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength." To this the New Testament agrees: Christ was crucified through weakness, 2 Cor. xiii. 4. And yet there was such wisdom displayed in this weakness as destroyed all the powers of this world, and all the power of Satan, of sin, death, and the grave; and all this by weakness and wisdom.

2. Christ crucified is the wisdom of God in a mystery. And this wisdom God ordained before the world to our glory, 1 Cor. ii. 7. "And God forbid," says Paul, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

IV. The fourth branch of this wisdom of the wise lies in the experience of these things. The wise man is a partaker of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit testifies of Christ to him, and forms Christ the hope of glory within him, and leads him into all truth, and especially into all the truth of the promises, which are all yea and amen in Christ, to the glory of God by us. And with

the promises come all the spiritual blessings with which God blessed us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I come now,

Secondly, to my next general head, which is to treat of the wise mans heart; for it is the heart of the wise that teacheth his mouth. By the heart, in scripture, various things are meant.

1. Sometimes it signifies the will. "And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought forth bracelets and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the Lord."

2. Sometimes by heart is meant the memory. "And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but, when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts."

3. Sometimes by the heart is meant the understanding. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."

4. Sometimes the heart is put for conscience. "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."

5. By the heart the affections are often intended. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." And again: "For where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

6. Sometimes knowledge is ascribed to the heart. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not

with his joy." And again: "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord; for they shall be my people, and I will be their God;" and they shall return unto me with their whole heart. Now, according to all these scriptures, it seems as if the heart meant the whole soul of man, and every faculty of it; so that the mouth and the lips of a wise man proclaim nothing else but the inward sensations and springs of the soul. And, indeed, that wisdom is but of little use that floats in the head; God requires it in the heart. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." So that the proper seat of wisdom is the hidden part; and true wisdom properly seated and established there, is no less than the hidden man of the heart, even that which is not corruptible, 1 Peter ii 4. There is a divine treasure in every wise mans heart, which is the Holy Spirit and his grace, and the pure word of God, and the promises of life. "Every scribe, which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Again: "A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things," Matt; xii. 35. The Holy Spirit furnishes and inlays the soul with his grace, and establishes it there, and confirms his own work, by giving us an understanding in the word of God, which always agrees with the Spirits work. And by the various operations which he makes us experience, the heart moves in concert with the mouth. The Spirit is deeply concerned in all the teaching that the heart of the wise conveys to his mouth.

1. He forms the word in the heart before it be conveyed to the mouth. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

2. It is the Spirit which teacheth the mouth, and even pronounceth the word. "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the

Lord; and I will heal him." "I will give you," saith the Lord, "a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

3. The Holy Spirit, under his influence, gives the soul a feeling sense of the matter which is spoken. Words from the head are always dry, light, and barren; but what the Holy Spirit sends forth from the heart are sent with energy, being attended with power; hence they are said to be seasoned with salt, and to minister grace to the hearers. Light instructs the understanding; and knowledge, clearly uttered, informs the judgment; but it is the power of the Spirit, the savour of grace, and the dew of divine life, that refreshes the bowels of the saints. This enlarges their heart, revives their faith and hope, encourages the soul, and conveys comfort to them which warms their affections. All gifts, and even spiritual gifts, will wither and die without this inward furniture. It is the Spirit, and his continual communications of grace, which feed the wise man's gift. The Spirit of grace is a springing well, and the words of wisdom a flowing brook; nor can that brook dry up; for God, in Christ, is a fountain of living water; and it hath pleased him that all fullness should dwell in our Mediator; and from the Saviour's fullness there is a continual emanation to the believing soul. I will water the vineyard every moment; I will keep it night and day, Isaiah xxvii. 3. And this never-failing river of pleasure flows for evermore, and furnishes the heaven-born soul with endless supplies. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." When all these supplies can fail, when this fountain and river cease to flow, then may the believer's springs become dry; but not till then. His gifts shall not die, his leaf shall never wither, nor shall he ever cease from yielding fruit; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth." And

much teaching doth the wise man need; for he hath many persons, and various cases, to speak to, and not two exactly alike.

"For though I be free from all men," says Paul, "yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." To the Jew Paul discoursed of the law, and of Christ the end of that; of the prophecies, and of Christ the substance of all the predictions; of the promises made to their fathers, and of the accomplishment of them all by Christ, and of their being all yea and amen in him, to the glory of God, by the salvation of us. Paul showed that the seed of Abraham was to be found among the Gentiles; that every heir of promise is an Isaac, and every spiritual worshipper of God is an Israelite; that he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; namely, a regenerated soul, formed by the Holy Spirit for Gods use, and sanctified to set forth his praise; that circumcision stands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, or the old man, by the circumcision of Christ, who took our sins on him; and in removing the ignorance and enmity of the heart, and by enlightening of us, to see the suitableness of Christ, and inflaming our hearts to love and adore him. Thus the apostle of the Gentiles becomes a Jew to the Jews, but still makes Christ the substance and subject matter of his whole ministry.

"To them that are under the law, as under the law." To these poor prisoners, though not prisoners of hope, Paul went back to his former state of bondage, when he warned sinners for three years together, night and day, with tears; he brought

forth the matter of his conversation with these, from the bondage of his soul in former days; he brought forth his former exercises when labouring under wrath, terrors, and horrors of soul; his doubts, despondings, and misgivings of heart; the workings of unbelief, carnal enmity, and all manner of concupiscence; his legal striving, and bad success at it, till he was informed that Gods grace was sufficient for him, and that his strength was displayed in human weakness, which made the cause of his former grief to be the joy of his soul. "Most gladly therefore will I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me; for when I am weak then am I strong."

"To them that are without law, as without law." Paul argued with these with sound reasoning, and with the workings of their own thoughts and consciences, and how these accused or excused each other; and, as every poor heathen is summoned to the bar of equity by his own thoughts, that he may listen to the sentence of conscience, and, when brought in guilty, the restlessness and disquietude of the soul, when his own judgment takes place. All of which shows that conscience is an umpire, has an office assigned, and is empowered to act under one who is higher than conscience; and that this tribunal is daily held under God, and will at last end in a final and universal judgment; and that by God himself. Paul showed to these heathens their native weakness, and the power of sin, and their propensity to evil, even when their resolutions and determinations were against it. Paul showed the rise of this evil, and from whence it came, and the remedy that God had provided against it, and the sinners need of that remedy, which is the blood of Christ to purge it, and the grace of God to subdue it.

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak." To these Paul spoke of his former staggerings through unbelief, of the instability of his hope and love, of his dim

sight, and shallow comprehensions; of his living on the breasts of consolation, the sincere milk of the word, and of his rising and falling, believing and disbelieving according to his transient and momentary comforts; that he was at that time unskilful in the word of righteousness, being, as all others at first are, a babe; that he thought as a child, and spake as a child, and understood as a child, till he became established in the faith, and grew up to be a man in understanding. And sure I am that we need truth and wisdom in the hidden parts of the heart to discourse to the edification of all these.

It is the heart of the wise that teacheth his mouth. The heart, when furnished with the choice experience of Gods Holy Spirit and his grace, is a strange thing; especially when it is brought savingly to know God; for it moves in concert with the light of Gods glory shining in the face of Christ; just as the moon does in the face of the sun. The heart rises with joy, and sinks with grief; it enlarges with love, and contracts with fear; it is courageous in Christ's presence, and fails at his absence; goes forth at the approaches of Christ, and draws back at his departure. It is swoln with grief at the Lords frowns, but overflows with glee at his smiles; it is smitten and withers like grass when God appears angry, but teems at his approbation, good-will, and pleasure. It trembles at his judgments, but waxes bold at the outgoings of his mercy and lovingkindness; it admires his clemency, but stands in awe of his terrible majesty. It is deeply concerned, for Gods honour; and it highly resents every affront and insult offered to him; it embraces, upon the first sight, every sincere friend of his, and is closely barred against every enemy of God; and even moves alternately with love and hatred while a doubtful, dubious, and suspected character appears before it, until judgment and conscience bring in their verdict; then the heart opens or shuts, embraces or rejects, according to the imperfect but honest decision of these feeble judges.

There is an unction and an anointing from the Holy One; and, as he is pleased to instruct us, so we know all things essential to be known. And in his anointing two things are manifest: the one is the motion of the Spirit upon the heart; the other, his illuminating rays upon the understanding. Hence it is said that holy men in old time spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and such are called seers, because they were enlightened to see into futurity. Love and joy in the heart, and the rays of it shining into the understanding, are what is meant by the unctuous teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Many are the lessons which the heart of the elect receives from God the Father, from God the Son, and from God the Holy Ghost. Blessed, says David, is the man whom God chasteneth, and teacheth him out of his law. It is by the powerful application, and under the influence of the law, that the human heart is laid open. Its terrors bring the soul into bondage; its rigorous demands set the soul to its legal strivings to balance the enormous account; the fear that it works brings amazement into the soul and the terrors of endless death; and the unlimited demands of the law set the poor sinner to working for life; but all in vain. It is under this application and divine teaching that the plague of the heart is felt; the enmity, the desperation, the inflexibility, the unrelentingness of the heart, its stubbornness, and its wild distraction, are stirred up, manifested, and made to boil up and overflow, and discover itself, to the unutterable astonishment of the awakened sinner. But God has made his most gracious promises to them that know the plague of their own heart, acknowledge their disobedience, and call upon his holy name.

There is also the bitterness of the heart, as well as the plague of it. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joy," says the wise man. The bitterness of the heart rises up when guilt and wrath, law and

conscience, the enmity of the mind, and the displeasure of God, meet together. These make sad work with the poor sinner, and are always attended with the bitterness of death. And the Lord appearing to cross the sinner in all his intentions, to resist him in all his approaches to him, and in providence to walk contrary to him; these things increase the bitterness of the heart. However, these things teach the sinner this wholesome lesson, that he which trusteth in his own heart is a fool. And sure I am that none are more evangelical, none more pure from confidence in the flesh, none cleave more closely to Christ, nor savour more of him, nor loath themselves more in their own sight, than those who have been disciplined with such sharp exercises.

"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth." His heart and his mouth must go together. He dare not advance what he doth not believe, nor pretend to those joys which he never felt, as some do, who, as Paul says, glory in appearance, but not in heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If the heart be purified by faith, the precious atonement of the Son of God, the cleansing efficacy of the blood of the covenant, the certainty of forgiveness, and the happy enjoyment of it, will be the leading topic in a wise mans conversation, which is called a good conversation in Christ. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Here the heart and the mouth are in harmony; what the heart embraces, the mouth acknowledges and proclaims. The heart leads the van, and the mouth brings up the rear. With the heart man believes unto righteousness to the justification of his soul freely and fully from all things, and the mouth confesses that the soul is eternally saved.

Again: it is faith in the heart that furnisheth the mouth. "I believed, therefore have I spoken," says David. "We believe, and therefore speak," says Paul. And faith regulates the

mouth; so that the believer prophesies according to the proportion of faith; for, if he be weak in faith, he will speak doubtfully about his own personal interest in the things of Christ; yet he will not speak doubtfully about the truth of the things which God has revealed. Divine revelation is yea, yea; but weak faith is yea and nay. To prophesy according to the proportion of faith, is to speak of what we have got, and to speak of that as our own of which we are the most sure. If the heart, like the heart of David, be fixed, trusting in the Lord, we shall speak of the things which concern the Lord Jesus with all confidence. Confidence is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. There is eternal life in true faith; and that is the thing hoped for; while faith, as an evidence of things not seen, assures the conscience of them, and silences all gainsayers; and this brings peace and quietude. "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," says the prophet.

"It is a good thing," says Paul, "that the heart be established with grace." There are seven things which establish the heart. The first is, having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. 2. Having the sentence of justification passed in the court of conscience, upon which the sinner passes from death to life. 3. To have the peace of God ruling in the heart; for peace is the effect of pardon, and the fruit of righteousness. 4. A comfortable degree of assurance, sufficient to claim an interest in God; To as many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. No less than divine power can work this faith in the heart of an infidel; and it requires the power of assurance to enable such a sensible sinner to claim this his sonship. 5. The love of God shed abroad in the heart, which casteth out all fear, and in some measure, keeps it out. 6. A good hope through grace, or a firm expectation of the glory that is to be revealed; "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." The

seventh and last thing is the infallible witness of the Holy Spirit;" "He that believeth hath the witness in himself;" and this witness both testifies to the heart, and speaks by the mouth. He bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God; and, because we are sons, he is sent forth into the heart, crying, Abba, Father. A heart thus established with grace, will furnish the mouth with everlasting themes. Not so the impostor, not so the hypocrite; for such often travel contrary ways, even at once. He promises and proclaims liberty, but he communicates nothing but bondage; the mouth glories, but the countenance fails. Such glory in appearance, but not in heart. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness," Prov. xiv. 15. Here is laughter in the mouth, sorrow in the heart, mirth in the way, and heaviness in the end. But God makes the heart of the wise honest; and an honest heart is a faithful conscience; a conscience that will magnify its office, by dealing justly, and bearing a true testimony. According to the true state of the heart, and according to the good treasure of it, and according to the frame of it, so the mouth speaks. The sorrow of the heart fills the mouth with complaints. An enlarged heart opens the mouth, and fills it with joyful acclamations. "O ye Corinthians," says Paul, "our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels." Different frames send forth different voices. "Thus saith the Lord, There shall be heard in this place the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness; the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; the voice of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land," Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11.

The real door of the heart is the mouth, if the heart be overcharged with grief, the lips are closed. "Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak." But when the heart is enlarged, then the mouth is open. "Our mouth is

open unto you, our heart is enlarged." The treasure of the heart is brought forth by the mouth; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. And this shows us what our Lord means when he says, "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 will sup with him, and he with me." The Lord doth not knock as we do; we knock with the hand, but the Lord knocks with his voice. "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh," says the spouse. The word of Christ is a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces; his reproofs are his knocks. He smites with the rod of his mouth, and tells us that if we hear his voice, and open the door, that he will come in unto us. To open the door is to open our mouth to him by confession, by inquiry, and by prayer, as Samuel did, when he said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth;" and as Paul did when the Lord knocked at his door, who said, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. And he said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." And after this inquiry, and the information that the Lord had given him, Paul fell to praying; and the Lord heard his prayer, and sent Ananias to him, that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And thus Paul opened as soon as Christ knocked; and by the Spirit Christ entered into Paul when Paul sweetly supped upon the sacrifice and satisfaction of his longsuffering Lord; and Christ supped upon the prayers, praises, blessings, and thanksgivings, of Paul, his former enemy, but now affectionate friend. Besides, it is our Lords meat to do the will of him that sent him, in saving the objects of his Fathers choice; for it is not the will of our Father that one of his little ones should perish.

And thus it appears that all the savour, sweetness, life, and power, that attend the word, comes from the heart. "Let your words," says Paul, "be seasoned with salt, that they may

minister grace to the hearers," "Have salt in yourselves," says Christ, "and be at peace one with another." "With all thine offerings," says God, "thou shalt offer salt; nor shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy burnt offerings." "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the king shall be his friend." Without the new cruse and salt in the spring-head, all is death. The letter killeth, whether it be taken out of the Old Testament or out of the New; but the Spirit giveth life. All gifts, without grace, have their seat in the mind, will, and understanding; hence we read of a fleshly mind puffed up; and of voluntary humility and will-worship; and of understanding all mysteries, and yet being nothing. The seat of God in Zion, and the throne of the King of kings, and the eternal residence of the Holy Spirit, are in the conscience, and in the affections, of the saints. God dwells in the contrite heart, or in the tender conscience; and he circumcises the heart to love him; and "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." Hence we see that all ministerial gifts, without charity, and without the springing-well of grace to feed them, wither and die; and carnal men gather such branches into their company and they are burnt. Propheying, light in the understanding, working miracles, gifts of tongues, gifts of speech, like the tongues of men and of angels; reformation, fiery zeal, and sound notions without grace; together with all temporary faith, the joy of natural affections, and dissembled love; are nothing but bodily exercise, a fair show in the flesh, and having a name to live while dead: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." It is by an eager embracing of these things that many fail, of the grace of God, and come short of the promised rest; as may be seen by the knocks and calls of the foolish virgins, and by the plea of those who plead, "Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works?" and who, notwithstanding all these gifts and performance, are sent away with, "Depart from me, I know

you not." But to be plain, honest, and faithful, in these things, incurs the hottest displeasure of empty professors, and exposes one to all the reproach and scandal that Satan can invent, or malice propagate.

Thirdly. But I come now to show where the wise mans heart gets all this wisdom; why God tells us that he will make the seed of his dear Son to endure for ever, and that he will build up his throne to all generations. Now we know that it is Gods work to root up, and to throw down to build and to plant. There is none under heaven that builds us up in a spiritual sense but God. Ye are Gods husbandry, ye are Gods building." And the principal graces that are employed in carrying up the building of mercy are, first, faith. "But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," Jude 20. And it is charity that edifieth. Charity, or love, raises the edifice, or builds the soul up in God, for love draws the whole soul out of itself, and draws it into God, till the whole grows up into an holy temple in the Lord. And this growing up is explained by Christ of having our treasure where our heart is; and Paul calls it setting our affections above, at the right hand of God, where Christ sitteth. And sure I am, that when God builds up Zion he shall appear in his glory. The heart, in short, is the seat of the most holy and ever-adorable Trinity. God dwells in the heart by love; for "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him? Christ dwells in the heart by faith. This Paul witnesseth when he says, "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, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And the Holy Ghost dwells in us by the witness that he bears to our adoption, and by the steadfast and constant cry of Abba, Father. From the indwelling of these adorable divine persons hath the wise man's heart all this wisdom, and all these mighty works; which makes the wise man a wonder to many, and a wonder to himself. And thus "Our sufficiency is of God." And it is wholly owing to the body's being the temple

of God, and the heart being the seat and throne of God, that this wisdom of the wise man is displayed in the world. "Zion," says God, "is my rest; here will I dwell for ever; for I have desired it." Out of Zion the Lord roars, and utters his voice from Jerusalem; which Jerusalem is nothing else but his covenant, and the elect of God in it. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath and will for ever shine; but this shining is into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Fourthly. But the wise mans heart not only teacheth his mouth, but it addeth learning to his lips. Alexander Pope says, that there is difference between learning and languages; and perhaps there is. There is a deal of difference between the wisdom of God in a mystery, and the wisdom of this world, that comes to nothing. We read of all the words of this life, in the Acts; and we read of great swelling words of vanity, in Peter. Homer's Iliad, which is so much esteemed, is full of such. They are empty sounds, like bladders full of wind; prick them, and, like ether, they evapourate into air. And the whole account is nothing else but the potsherds of the earth striving with the potsherds for mastery. He tells us of the mountains of the dead, the ample shield, and reeking gore; and of the earth trembling at the fall of his warriors. The word of God calls all these the drop of a bucket, worms of the earth, the dust of a balance, grasshoppers, and the crushing of a moth, Isaiah xl. 15; Job iv. 19. These words debase fallen men to a level with the meanest creatures, when Homer exalts them to be almost as gods. But as the wisdom of this world is opposed to the wisdom of God, so the words which God teacheth are opposed to the words of human wisdom. "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." The glorious things which the ancient prophets saw in the visions of God, and have left upon record, are as puzzling to the learned as to the illiterate. "And the vision of all

is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." The scholar that could not read this book of visions was a man of human learning, and he complains that the book is sealed; so that he owned that spiritual things cannot be discerned but by the Spirit of God. Hence it appears that divine teaching is necessary in order to understand divine things. And God has made provision for this also. He tells us that the law is our schoolmaster; and he will chasten us and teach us out of his law. And Christ says, "Every man therefore that hath heard; and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me;" that we may sit down at his feet, and receive of his word; for the words of eternal life are in his mouth; as Job saith, "Who teacheth like him?"

The things which we are to learn are in the scriptures of truth. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." The scriptures are our books of learning; and God promises to teach us out of these books; and this sort of learning is to be held fast, and to be highly esteemed. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." The chief branch of this divine learning is Christ Jesus. He is the wisdom of God in a mystery, and the great mystery of godliness. Hence we read of some who gave themselves over to all uncleanness; and of others who had not so learned Christ, Eph; iv. 30. Human learning and divine learning are distinguished the one from the other in the scriptures. The apostles themselves, though taught of God, are called unlearned, because they were not possessed of human learning. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and

ignorant men, they marvelled," Acts iv. 13. These are called unlearned, because they had not human learning; so there are others that are called unlearned, because they have no divine teaching. "But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all." And Peter tells us, that in Paul's epistles there are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scripture, 2 Peter iii. 16.

"The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth," saith my text, "and addeth learning to his lips." God teacheth the heart, and the heart teacheth the mouth. Divine learning doth not he in great swelling words of vanity, but in words weighty and powerful; weighty because they come from God, and lead to the enjoyment of an eternal weight of glory. They are said to be powerful, because they influence the soul, bow the will, and constrain to obedience. That which commonly passes for learning among us, consists in storing the mind and memory with the natural and acquired parts and abilities of the ancient heathens. But divine teaching widely differs from this. It lies in the deep things of God. "The Spirit searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God." And this is done that we might know the things which are freely given us of God. The secret of his decrees is with the righteous. The depths of his ancient councils are made known at our conversion, which is called the purpose of God, and the mystery of his will; he having predestinated us to the adoption of sons, and sending his Spirit into the heart to make it known to us. His exalting his dear Son, from all eternity, to be our future head, king, and mediator, is the depth of divine wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew. Predestination to the adoption of children, and to be conformed to the image of Christ, and to eternal life and glory by him, are such deep things as cannot be learned but by the Spirit of God, God making us accepted in Christ,

and admitting us into his grace and favour by the faith of him, and under the influence of his Spirit, is a most precious branch of divine learning. Communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, an understanding of this, the enjoyment of it, and to be enabled to set it forth to others, is the best wisdom and learning in all this world. But then all divine subjects are unsavoury to men in a state of nature; and every branch of human learning is dry, lifeless, and unsavoury, to a soul quickened of God. In short, there are no depths to be compared to the secret purposes and all-wise councils of God. No heights like those of divine love; no wisdom to be compared to the destruction of Satan, sin, and death, by the mystery of the cross. No learning so satisfactory as that which leads us to a knowledge of God, and of our interest in him. This learning is unctuous, savoury, and satisfying, having the dew of divine favour, the grace of God, and eternal life, in it.

Sometimes the wonderful performances of God are set forth poetically, that they may be adorned with the flights of heavenly poetry, as in the third chapter of Habakkuk. And sometimes all created nature is ransacked for images to set forth the glory of Christ, the beauty of the church in him, their mutual love, and eternal union, as in the Song of Solomon. And it is thought, by some, that the most eloquent orator in the school of nature never could find out such a variety of words to express one and the same thing as are to be found in the 119th psalm. "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." The strength and art of oratory may warm the imagination, and move the natural passions; but words of truth and peace, which convey the power of divine grace, and minister faith, hope, and love, are the only learning that can suit a hungry soul, convinced of his natural blindness and ignorance. Such God promises to feed with knowledge and understanding.

William Huntington

XXIX. The Best of Fathers, and His Command; The Mystic Mother, and Her Law

"My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." PROVERBS 6:20-22.

THE first thing that I have to treat on in this text is the character or title, which is that of a son; My son, &c. In the proverbs, says Paul, God speaks to us as to children; "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord; nor faint when thou art rebuked of him," &c. But, as there are various classes of sonship in scripture, I must distinguish this from others.

Angels are called sons, being so by creation. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

In this sense all mankind are the sons of God. "Have we not all one father; hath not one God created us?"

Israel was a son; but then it was only by national adoption, and not in the best sense. "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn. And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."

Magistrates are called children of God; but then it appears to be in office only, as the words show. "They know not, neither

will they understand; they walk on in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men and fall like one of the princes."

There is another rank of sons, which obtain this character by profession only. "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. And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh."

There are sons who are pre-appointed to bear this character, and that from everlasting. "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved," Eph. i. 5, 6. And it is on this account that the poor Gentiles were called sons, long before they had any real knowledge of their Father. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

But now I will come nearer home, and descend as low as the word of God will bear me out, and keep me company. And it is not in my power, according to my present light, to come any lower than Paul does in the following passage: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty." Here is the same call that God gave to Abraham, Come out from among them. And

here the apostles begun; as soon as a sufficient number were disciplined, they were separated, and formed into congregations or churches by themselves. But then, it may be asked, What is the unclean thing that we are forbidden to touch? I answer, it is either idolatry, which then prevailed in every place, according to God's charges which he brings against Israel, calling idolatry, fornication, whoredom, and polluting themselves with idols; or else what Peter calls escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust, which is prevalent in all by nature, as all flesh hath corrupted its way. Some lust after wealth, others after honours and pleasures, others after empire, and others after the gratification of every unhallowed desire. Come out from among these people, and leave these things, and he promises to receive you.

But the secret of our adoption to sonship is made manifest by our being enabled to believe in Christ; for "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name." And the first appearance of this work, called receiving him, discovers itself by having the heart touched with love to his children. For he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, Matt. x. 40.

Sonship is to be discovered by love; for all God's children are taught of him; and one of the lessons which he teaches, the apostle says, is this, "Ye are taught of God to love one another." And love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and discovers itself by a love to the truth, a love to the brethren, and by love to God and his ways.

There are many appellations which attend this character of sons, which are intended to assist the believer in making his adoption clear. When the Spirit of God has rent the vail of ignorance, darkness, and confusion, from their heart, and illuminated their understandings, they are called the children

of light. "For the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light."

It is discovered by the honesty of their hearts and by their coming to the light, and by loving the truth, and adhering to it, hating flattery, daubing, and being built up in falsehood. They are not like the hypocrites, who, as Peter says, are willingly ignorant, and love to be deceived. But God makes his people revere and embrace his word; "For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour."

Sonship appears in the peace which is found and enjoyed in the ways of God. "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it."

It appears by the reverence, awe, and fear, the believer has of God. "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour?"

"My son, keep thy father's commandment." This commandment is the word, or promise of life; and this I shall endeavour to make plain; and do you observe. "He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations: which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance: when they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it, Psalm cv. 8-12. In this psalm here is,

1. A covenant; and this is called, "The word which he commanded to a thousand generations."

This word is confirmed by an oath to Isaac, and to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant. All which

amounts to this, "Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance."

Now this covenant is called the covenant of promise; and the land of Canaan is called the promised land. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." In this covenant there are two things promised;

1. A blessing to all Abraham's spiritual seed. "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This blessing is eternal life. "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead [for that is the god of this world,] but of the living." Now Paul says that the blessing of Abraham came on the Gentiles through faith. "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham;" and, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

2. In this covenant God promised the holy land to Abraham and to all his natural seed; but Abraham himself never enjoyed any inheritance in it, no not so much as to set a foot on; Abraham sought a better country; that is, an heavenly one. And this God promises to all Abraham's spiritual seed; he gives both grace and glory. Hence this covenant is called the covenant of life and peace.

But then it may be asked why this covenant of promise and this word should be said to be confirmed to Jacob for a law? I answer, because it is the law of faith, which excludes boasting, and it requires the obedience of faith. And this is the word which was preached to Israel; but it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. They entered not in because of unbelief.

Furthermore, this covenant, or word, is said to be commanded to a thousand generations. God gave this word in the days of

old, and great was the company of those that published it. Moses and all the prophets preached this word or promise of life. And it is plain that Christ received the same commandment; for when God set his king on his holy hill of Zion he commanded the blessing to be put there; for upon mount Zion God commanded the blessing, even life for evermore, Psalm cxxxiii. 3. And our Lord tells you that he received this commandment from the Father. "For 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."

And Christ gave the same commandment to the apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." And this may be further seen in Paul's epistle to the Romans. "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

Take the whole thus: the blessing of everlasting life was promised to Abraham and to all his spiritual seed. This promise, or word of life, is the contents of God's covenant with Abraham; and this God commanded to be made known to all nations as a law requiring the obedience of faith.

"My son, keep thy father's commandment;" for God has commanded the promise, or word of life, to be published to every creature, and he applies it to all the sons and heirs of promise. This word must be received and kept; received in the light of it, so as to understand it; in the power of it, so as to be quickened by it; in the faith of it, so as to obey it; and in the love of it, so as to embrace it and hold it fast, profess it, and abide by it. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This will make manifest who they are that receive and keep the

word of life, and who not. Christ will come and dwell in their hearts by faith, and God the Father will come and dwell in their hearts by love; and such will find it to be what Peter did, the word of eternal life; and as it operates, grows, and prevails, freedom of soul will attend it. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Let my reader take notice of this, that the character in my text is that of a son, and he that gave the commandment is a father; and therefore it is not a legal commandment to a bondservant, but an evangelical one to a son. All that are under the law are servants, and not sons; in the flesh and not in the Spirit; and the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

And by this thou wilt know whether thou art a servant or a son: if a servant, thou wilt cleave to the law, and to thine own performances, and to the citizens of this country, to letter preachers, even if thy conscience be half in hell; and thou wilt despise all that are happy in Christ Jesus; for the law worketh wrath, and that will stir up thine enmity. But if a son, and an heir of promise, thou wilt expect no comfort but what the promises afford; these will be thine only breasts; and, indeed, there is no milk in any other.

Now for the mother, and her law. "Forsake not the law of thy mother." This mother doth not mean our natural parent; for all believers have not righteous mothers; many of the saints natural mothers are lawless and disobedient. Nor is Hagar the mother that is meant in my text; she was an Egyptian, and her son was born after the flesh, and persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; and his mother helped him; for which God

turned them both out of doors. Beside, she was bought and sold like a slave, and her son was a wild man.

Nor is the earthly Jerusalem that now is this mother; for she is in widowhood, and desolate, and sitteth on the ground, and is in bondage, and all her children.

Sarah is the mother of this son in my text. "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai, thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her," Gen. xvii. 15, 16. Hence it is that we are commanded to hearken to the Lord about this matter. "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged; look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him: for the Lord shall comfort Zion." Now this mother being Abraham's lawful wife by a marriage covenant, or a covenant of wedlock, and being blessed of God with the promise and blessing of everlasting life, and being a partaker also of the Holy Ghost, for she spake as the Spirit moved her when she said, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And God said, In all that Sarah hath said hearken to her voice: for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." So also her offspring was an heir of promise, and born after the Spirit. And Sarah gave suck to her son even in her old age; and she is called the freewoman, and her son a freeborn heir; and in all these things she was the covenant of grace in a figure. The bondwoman and the free: "These are the two covenants; the one, from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." All which teaches us this lesson, that Sarah's freedom, Sarah's promise, Sarah's spirit, Sarah's life,

Sarah's blessing, Sarah's son, and Sarah's faith, all came to her from the covenant of grace, and she received them as a free gift. "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised."

And we may observe, that the commandment of the father, and the law of this mother, come both from this covenant of grace. Faith is called the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes us free from the law of sin and death. And as the Holy Spirit writes the law of faith in the heart, and is called the Spirit of faith on that count, so the word of life is applied by the same. And it is a truth that the Spirit of faith, and the promise of life, both come from the same covenant; and they always come together. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds' seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." Here is our mother, the covenant of grace, the heavenly Jerusalem; and here is the word of life and of faith which we preach; and here is the Spirit of faith, which is promised to all the seed. "My son, keep thy father's commandment; and forsake not the law of thy mother."

"Bind them continually upon thine heart." We may have a full persuasion in our own mind of the truth we bear; and this Paul allows; "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." And this persuasion comes from God: "God shall persuade Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." But the heart is not fixed till it purge the conscience.

We read also of others who for a while believe; but in time of temptation fall away. This is temporary faith, which abides but for a season, and when most wanted fails.

And we read of miraculous faith, which will remove mountains, but bring no charity with it. Now faith in the mind may stay it, and keep a person in firm hope and expectation, and it may abide there for some time, and yet things are not clear, nor sound, nor is the soul fully satisfied, settled, and firm; far from it. But when faith reaches the heart or conscience, by applying the atonement there, which Paul calls having the heart sprinkled' from an evil conscience, Heb. x. 22; this makes clear work, even at the very bottom. Here is pardoning grace in the heart, removing evil from the conscience. And sure I am that it is a good thing to have the heart established with grace. "Bind them continually upon thine heart."

Faith is a law, and laws are binding; but faith must lay hold of love, for that is the bond that binds. Faith is a uniting power; you read of the unity of the faith. When the grace of faith takes root in the heart, and works by love there, and pleasingly assures the soul of its interest in Christ, it sweetly constrains to obedience, and powerfully engages the whole soul with God. There is such a thing as a growth in faith; and a growing exceedingly in it; which is done by observing the actings and exercises of faith; by using of it, and stirring it up in constant and continual approaches to God, especially in times of trouble; in observing its workings, its successes, and the returns that are granted to the prayer of faith; in observing the liveliness of it at some times, and its deadness at others; its strongest efforts, and its apparent declensions. It grows by cherishing it and, nourishing it, by reading, hearing, conversing, and meditating; by praying for an increase of it, and that it may not fail; and in watching and guarding against those besetting sins which weaken and discourage faith. David's faith, with a good conscience, faced the Goliath of Gath, but, with a bad one, fled from Absalom his own son. To bind faith on the heart is to encourage its powerful constraints; for it bows, bends, influences, and draws the heart to cleave to Christ; it brings in fresh power from Christ, and we are kept

by that mighty power through faith, and made to stand fast in him by faith. To bind the word of promise to the heart is to receive the love of the truth, and truth in the love of it, which is called binding up the testimony. Love is a strong cord; a thing loved is held fast, and cannot be forced away from love as long as love lasts. And what we love is uppermost in our thoughts, always present, much meditated on, and greatly delighted in. And the Holy Spirit leading the mind into the word, and giving us an unctuous experience of the truth, truth becomes familiar to us, and very cheering and entertaining; and it maizes the mind spiritual; and life and peace attend a spiritual mind. Satan is sadly foiled at a spiritual mind; he cannot get our attention. The corruptions of the heart are much put off, and their inclinations and requests much weakened, where truth is held fast in love, and meditated on, and delighted in, which sweetly entertains the soul with knowledge and understanding. "Bind them continually upon thy heart."

"And tie them about thy neck." The believing soul that embraces the gospel, the promises and blessings of the covenant, is espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ. And it is well known that the neck is a beautiful part of the body, and especially if fair. You read of her fair neck, Hosea x. 11; and in the Song, "Thy neck is as a tower of ivory," and ivory is very white. Moreover, the neck, especially of a bride, is commonly adorned with beads, gold chains, pearls, necklaces, and sometimes with a necklace of diamonds. The doctrines, promises, and blessings, of the gospel, which are all promised to faith, together with the graces of the Holy Spirit, are our ornaments and adornings; hence you read, Thy neck is comely with chains of gold, Song i. 10. "Thou hast ravished my heart with one chain of thy neck."

Some, like the Galatians, think that they are not ornamented with the gospel without going over to the law; they begin in the

Spirit, but must be made perfect by the flesh; whereas the chain of harmonious truth, and the golden links of divine graces, are the only things which adorn the Lord's spouse; and with these his heart is ravished and charmed.

Again: bondage, slavery, and captivity, are called the bands of the neck; and so they are to those that are under them. "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion," Isaiah lii. 2. Now these bands were a disgrace; she was bound with these for her idolatry. But to yield the obedience of faith is to take the yoke of her Lord upon her, who is meek and lowly, and to be obedient to her heavenly husband. Again; rebellion is called a stiff neck: "Speak not with a stiff neck." Disobedience is what Christ complains of, and says to such, "Thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass," Now, humble submission and cheerful obedience is the reverse of all this. "Not, be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary," 2 Chron. xxx. 8.

But again: the neck is that part which joins or unites the head to the body. Christ is the head of the church, and the church is the body of Christ. Hence some are sharply rebuked for not holding this head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increased with the increase of God, Col. ii. 19. The neck, therefore, is the emblem of union between Christ the head and his church. Hence a good woman is often represented without a head, having no head of her own. The head of the woman is the man; and as a good woman submits to her husband, who is the head of her, and gives up her own will to his, so an obedient believer does the will of his Father. Solomon's advice to his son is, to aim at union with the covenant Head; "Keep thy father's commandment," says he. God has in these last days spoken to us by his Son. He has commanded his Son to speak the word of life to us; and this word keeps Christ and

his people together. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

"Forsake not the law of thy mother." Faith gives Christ possession of our heart; he dwells in the heart by faith; and by faith we dwell in him. But, as love is the bond of all perfectness, and as real faith works by love, and love being called a cord, Solomon would not that love should be lacking in our faith. "We have," says John, "known and believed the love that God hath to us;" and Paul says, I am persuaded that neither life nor death shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." In the word of life God promises to love us freely, and that this love shall draw us to Christ. Faith receives the promise, and believes in the love of God, and works by it. Tie these about thy neck. These, like a neck, will hold thee and Christ together, And, by virtue of this union, Christ will adorn thee with all grace and truth, which, like the chains of a bride's neck, will charm the bridegroom, and be the ornaments of thy profession. "My son keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck."

"When thou goest, it shall lead thee." All along we have had two things to treat of, the command of the father, and the law of the mother; but now these two are become one; not these or them, but it; when thou goest, it shall lead thee. The apostle tells us to be followers of Christ as dear children; and it is by faith we walk, and not by sight. Fortune, luck, and chance, are banished out of the government of this world by faith. The believer is led by faith to watch the hand of God in all things. He discerns the universal providence of God. And what is providence but the goodness of God displayed in providing for all his creatures? All seek their meat from God. Faith leads him to observe all the goodness of God that passes before him. "He that will observe these things, even he shall

understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." Moses all through the wilderness, Jacob with his staff, and the apostles without purse or scrip, were led by faith to observe this, and found their account in it, and support by it. And as faith leads us to observe these things, so, upon every kind providence that appears, faith leads the believer to acknowledge it by praises and thanksgivings, which faith leads the soul to believe will be acceptable to God through Christ; and by these things faith gives glory to God. Should God. appear to walk contrary to us, as in the three years famine for the blood of the Gibeonites, shed by Saul in the days of David; or should his hand go out against us, as in the case of Naomi; or should providence run counter to the promise, as with Isaac and Rebekah (the promise to Abraham was that his seed by Isaac should be as the stars of heaven, but behold Rebekah is barren); faith, at such seasons, leads us to inquire of the Lord, and to entreat the Lord; and when these are removed, we are led by faith to love, bless, and adore the Almighty for making crooked things straight.

When any arch enemy, who lays in wait to deceive, brings or presents any new and strange things to our ears, or if it comes from a poor simple soul, who is charmed with every word, and we stand in doubt, not knowing whether right or wrong, whether to refuse or choose, we stand still, pray, watch, and wait; but as soon as a ray appears, (for he that believeth on me shall not abide in darkness,) faith leads the mind into this and that truth, which sets the whole matter aside as spurious; and where faith leads the mind follows; and thousands of snares does the saint escape by this leading; for his heart cannot embrace what faith doth not credit; for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

When the mind of a believer is led to alter his station or situation in life, to alter his state and condition, the footsteps of providence are sought after; and if the path seems to be in

deep, waters, and the Lord's footsteps are not known: faith waits for his counsel, knowing that when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them; the sheep hear his voice, and follow him. Nor can he move till these things are discovered; for though things may appear plain and plausible to reason, yet he must have an inward persuasion that it is of the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight; we walk by the confidence of God, and not by the light of nature. So, under any temptation to sin, faith leads the saint to the eye of the Lord; and this calls up fear and conscience against him; and these withstand him, and keep him in awe: and, when the snare is broken, faith leads the soul to exult in God. The snare is broken, and we are delivered. Thus faith lead, the soul to the great deliverer, and to acknowledge the deliverance.

Furthermore, there is peculiar to most believers something which crosses their will above every other cross; as sore eyes to Leah; deformity to Paul; a feeble tabernacle to Timothy; a particular sickness to Elisha; barrenness to Hannah; a thigh out of joint to Jacob; a plague all day, and a rod every morning for Asaph. Some have a persecuting wife, another a furious husband; some continual poverty; another is under a cruel oppressor; and some all their days in bondage; they can hold nothing fast but their chains, nor dare they give up their hope. There are times when faith declares to the heart, and leads such to confess with their mouth, that it is good for them to be thus afflicted, and to confess that in very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me; yea, and to plead it in their own behalf in time of trouble: "Thou hast known my soul in adversity. Yea further, such are often led to notice their fellow-professors who are not tried in this way; and they see-they are like a ship without ballast, or a rider on a fiery steed, with reins to his bridle; and, under these considerations, hug the cross, and bless their God; though at other times, when unbelief works strong, and carnal reason catches the reins of government, rebellion, murmurings, and peevishness, work so powerfully

as to fill the soul with confusion. But even in the midst of this storm faith speaks, but speaks softly, coolly, quietly, and undisturbedly, without fear, and without fright; and the soul knows it, and hears it; but enmity springs up, and carries all before it. Nevertheless the soul is obliged to come back, and attend to the voice of faith, which always leads the soul to God; and to God such a soul is obliged to go, and to confess and bewail his adherence to unbelief and to carnal reason, and his wretched rebellion as the evil effects of it: And thus faith leads him to abide by Christ and truth, and to take part with these; for, "He that is not against us," says Christ, "is on our side." Faith can reason and reason well; and she always reasons coolly. "We shall surely die," says unbelief, "because we have seen the Lord;" No, says faith, "If God meant to destroy us, he would not have shewed us such things as these." "I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent," says unbelief; "I know," says faith, "that I shall be justified: Who is he that will plead with me?" And thus also are we led by faith to view the judgments of God abroad in the earth, the providence of God over all creatures, the government of God in the world, the kind dealings of God with his children which lie within the compass of our knowledge; his judgments abroad among the nations; the evident tokens of perdition that fall upon notorious rebels, heretics, and hypocrites; the countenances and awful ends of apostates and presumptuous souls in the ministry and in profession: and the believer improves upon every one of these. And he is led also to God's kind dealings with his own family; yea, with them all, however weak, simple, or dark they may be; and generally according to the private and prejudgment of the believer; and according to his belief so it falls out. Faith leads the saint to notice strictly the dealings of God with himself, both within and without; and however counter to his wish God's dealings with him may be, yet he sees that in the most minute affairs he can discern the hand of God with him, his wisdom and goodness: sometimes in putting the laws of retaliation in force, and at other times

counteracting his designs, to hide pride from his eyes; and sometimes cutting off those supplies which take him off from his dependence upon God; and, in short, every weight laid on is intended to counterpoise some aspiring thought or towering imagination, and to mortify and bring down the loftiness of men, so that God, by his Spirit, may still dwell with the humble and contrite heart; and when he is most emptied of these things, then, then has he most of his God. So it is, believer; deny it if you can. Now God declares that all things do work for good in them that love God; and there is no believer of any time standing who has not got that promise in his faith. Faith credits the word, and brings honour to herself, by leading us to see that her obedience is according to truth, and that all her leadings are in the way of truth. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee."

"When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee." Two things I shall observe upon this head. First, treat of the characters of those whom the Lord promises to keep; or, to be more plain, what he calls them whom he makes his charge. And,

First, it is called a city: "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Here the church is called a city, as it is the city of the great king; and glorious things have been and still are spoken of this city of God. But then, as it is called a royal city, a free city, the faithful city, and the city of the living God, they must be friends and subjects of the king who dwell within it. None but free men are men of this free city. Fellow-citizens of the saints are partakers of God's truth, and of God's spirit, and are in love and friendship with God's children; envious dogs are without, and can get no higher than the walls of it. It is called a faithful city, to show that they are believers who do belong to it; and, as God is the king of it, they must be friendly to him that dwells in it; and this may be

easily known by this simple evidence, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." This is a simple but a sound touchstone. They that are on Christ's side against the world long to draw others, and are glad at every addition to his most righteous cause; but the hypocrite, that is a lover of himself, and a seeker of his own honour, he not only departs from Christ, his truth, his ministry, and his family, himself, but labours to prejudice and draw away all that he can; and this feeds the enmity of his heart; and it is the same food that cherisheth the serpent; for as dust shall be the serpent's meat, so the diet of this scatterer is of the same sort: "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Again: "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." All Israelites are praying souls, souls that put their trust in God, and who call upon him for help in every time of trouble; as may be seen in Jacob when he obtained this name. He was in a great strait from the report of his brother coming to meet him with four hundred men; at which he doth not flee, nor seek any help from an arm of flesh. He sends all his household over the brook, with all that he had, and wisely prepared for the worst, setting them that were least esteemed at the front of the battle and the choicest of the goods in the rear; ordering that when the front rank was cut off that the centre should flee: but if front and centre both fell, that then the rear should escape; but at the same time himself stays behind, and craves that the command of this expedition might devolve upon the Lord God of hosts; and the Captain of salvation appeared to him, and informed him that the battle was won; and that as a prince he had power both with God and man, and had prevailed, Hence,

as God is the keeper of Israel, it appears that Israelites are praying souls, and that they are such as put their trust in him.

Again: "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Now by this it appears that those whom God engages to keep night and day are called a vineyard, But there are none that bear this name now but those who come to Christ for life and salvation, and to him alone. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Now it is easy to tell what our mind and heart is fixed upon for salvation; and whether this salvation hath any weight upon us or not; and which weigheth heaviest on our minds, this world or our soul's salvation; and which is uppermost in our affections, the pleasures of sin, or the glory of Christ. Here I have shown my reader who they are that God promises to protect and keep. And we may well say that they are well kept whom God keepeth. But then, as God promises to keep us by his power, there must be in us a sense of our own weakness; for those who, like the prodigal, can shift for themselves do not feel their need of this keeping. God gives power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. But such as are strong in themselves the power of God is not engaged to support, but rather to pull them down: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." That denunciation is not against youth, but against self-confidence. It is an honour to find young folks in the ways of God, as may be seen in Samuel, Timothy, Josiah, and others; and God says, "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." The glory of old men, says Solomon, is the grey head, the glory of children is their fathers, and the glory of young men is their strength. "Let not

the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong in his strength; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me." Here is the foundation of all real glory; and in this all believers may glory, whether young or old. In all this we may see that God has not engaged his power and faithfulness in behalf of unbelievers who never seek after him, nor call upon him, much less put their trust in him. It is the law of the mother that is to keep us.

"When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee. For although it be God's power that keepeth the soul in safety, yet it is faith that lays hold of that power. "Let him take hold of my strength," says God, "and he shall make peace with me." The inheritance is for them "who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Thus God promises to keep us by his power, and faith receives the promise and confides in this promised strength. You shall now see one who is going to bed in the exercise of faith, and hear what he says: "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety," Psalm iv. 8. It is faith that discriminates those that are God's charge, and those that are not. His family is the household of faith; and, as father and master of this household, he keeps it. "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." Those that believed on the Lord he kept; but he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him; and the Lord will not preserve and keep in safety the sons of perdition. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee."

"And when thou awakest it shall talk with thee." The language of faith is in high or low strains, according to her stature, and according to the believer's attainments, and the difficulties she has to cope with; and this may be seen in David. "And the king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him," 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. There the voice of faith is heard dubiously, and yet with much humiliation and submission. And thus we see faith never works alone, but has her handmaids, her attendant graces with her; so that, if she cannot work by joys, which are the flames of love, she will work by humility; and she is sure to conquer work how she may. Sometimes we hear her voice with such fortitude, and in such resolute and determined strains, as if she would die on the field before she would yield so much as even to fear. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."

The voice of faith is heard sometimes on the hills, and sometimes in the vallies. Upon the hills: "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong." Next she speaks in the vallies: "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me."

Sometimes faith speaks in the fire, and sometimes in the water. In the fire: "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Her voice is also in the waters: "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." Sometimes she speaks in darkness,

and sometimes in the light. In darkness: "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall rise; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." Sometimes she speaks in the light: "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation." Sometimes faith speaks from the frontiers of heaven, and sometimes from the depths of hell: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." Sometimes she speaks from the depths of hell: "Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou hearest my voice," Jonah ii. 1, 2.

Now the voice of faith to the believer's conscience is high or low, strong or feeble, according to the believer's growth or stature. Faith works by love; and if faith has brought love into the heart so as to cast out all fear, then her voice is, He loved me, and gave himself for me. If well established in the faith, and built up in the Lord, she grasps things future as well as things present. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. All that faith can bring in she gives to the soul; all that faith claims, therefore, is ours. "And when he was come into the house the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you." Here we see that according to our faith so it is to be with us. Whatsoever Christ speak? to us by the

Spirit faith reflects it to us. When faith purifies the heart, faith speaks pardon. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." The mouth is no more than faith's echo. Faith's voice is to the heart; and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh: "I believed; therefore have I spoken." "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Here faith speaks justification to the heart, and with the mouth this is confessed. Faith's voice to those who receive and embrace Christ is that of adoption. We are the children of God by faith; and to them which believe on his name he gives power to become the sons of God. And when this power of faith is grown up, the believer will cry, Abba, Father, Purifying faith, therefore, speaks pardon; justifying faith speaks peace; joyful faith, that applies love, and works by it, speaks deliverance from all fear. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." But the voice of triumphant faith is the voice of victory: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Yea, and even feeble faith, when under sensible decays, has a voice: "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me; thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me, The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me; thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." There is the voice of faith under many doubts, fears, and misgivings of heart: "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid," By all which it appears that whatsoever comes out of the mouth in truth, comes from the heart; and that all the confidence which the mouth of a good man utters is the voice of faith to his heart; and this voice is to God's honour and our comfort: and whatsoever faith speaks God will ever own and honour. "My son, keep thy father's

commandment and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck, When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest it shall talk with thee."

A plain contradiction in terms.

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning," I John iii. 8. I will from these words endeavour,

1. To prove that every one that sinneth is not of the devil; and,
2. Insist upon it that every one that sinneth is of the devil. There most certainly are two families of children in this world; and both these, by the word preached, are made manifest. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Now, as some are said to be of the devil, so others are said to be of God; and our Lord distinguisheth them in the following passage: "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God." Now these are said to be of God, not by creation only, for so are all men; "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil;" but they are said to be of God, being of God's choosing, and of God's preserving, of God's reconciling, and of God's redeeming, God hath called them, justified them, sanctified them, regenerated them, and renewed them, or created them anew, and made them new creatures in Christ Jesus; and therefore these be of God. They are his household and family, his children, and his peculiar treasure. And these have all sinned; yea, and do sin; "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not." Noah sinned after he came forth from the ark; and so did Moses at the waters of strife, and suffered for it, So

did David, and so did Solomon by his idolatry; and Peter, among the apostles; and Paul, and all the apostles; for in many things, says James, we offend all, or we all offend in many things. And yet we cannot say that Noah and Moses, David and Solomon, Peter and others, were of the devil. They were God's children, and God's servants; and were washed from all sin in the blood of Christ, and were saved fully and everlastingly by grace through faith in the Son of God. Now with respect to these, in one sense, they sinned not; for,

1. Although they all had an old man, a body of sin, and carried a body or death about them, yet Christ becoming man's surety, taking man's nature, and appearing, in the likeness of sinful flesh, God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. Our old man, the whole body of sins, as well as our actual transgressions, were placed to his account, and laid upon him; and they were taken from us when they were charged on him; and this was done at Christ's circumcision; for by his submission to that ordinance he was made debtor in our room. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." In Christ our old man received his sentence, and was executed, and died in the death of Christ, and was destroyed. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that, henceforth we should not serve sin." At the resurrection Christ our surety, left all nailed to the cross; and God gathers us together again in him, who were scattered when the Shepherd was smitten; and we are in him complete: "Ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power." And in this point of light you must consider the believer when the following passages are applied to him: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee," Song iv. 7; yea, without fault before the throne of God, Rev. xiv. 5. But then this must be understood of our being in Christ, who appears in the presence of God for us.

2. Take the believer in his regenerate state, as washed in Christ's blood, and enrobed in his righteousness, and as all glorious within by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and as having put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt; and having put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 24; as such he sinneth not. Old things by this change passing away, and all things becoming new, he is denominated a new creature; and, as such considered, he is not a sinner, because all sinning in or by such is without the renewed mind and will, which never can be drawn to act in Satan's cause.

3. It should be remarked how the apostle presseth himself. "He that is born of God sinneth not;" and, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning," which is expressive of continual drudgery in sin; of being the servants of sin, and nothing else; and such servants, Paul says, are free from righteousness; destitute of all righteousness, both in heart and life; and, being the servants of sin, they do nothing else but sin; and being in unbelief, and under wrath, all their thoughts and ways, words, and works, are evil, and nothing but evil; and every such servant of sin sinneth continually, and is denominated a servant of sin on that head: and this is the meaning, and the real measuring, of the apostle. But otherwise the best saint under heaven, as considered in the flesh, (for of a saint, in this sense, Paul speaks, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh)," yet the best of saints in this tabernacle do groan being burdened; sin is in them, and works in them, and often captivates them, and brings them into captivity to the law of sin Which is in their members. And here is the difference between the servants of God and the servants of Satan: one is a new creature, the other in his old state; one is in Christ, the other in Satan; one is in the Spirit, the other in the flesh; one is a servant of God, the other a servant of sin; one wars

after the flesh, and the other denies its requests, and wars against it; the one sinneth continually, the other with his renewed mind and will serves God, and none else, and sinneth not at all; and so says God of all such poor, honest, and renewed servants, who love his law after the inner man: "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity:, they walk in his ways." In all other points of light but these the best of men sin. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" and if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar; and he that says he is perfect in the flesh, has made him a liar also; for in man, that is, in man's flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and flesh and blood, being destitute of all good, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore a new birth is essential; hence truth itself asserts, that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." No saint that is in the flesh, no just man, however holy and devout, no soul in this militant state, ever lived without offending thought, word, and deed; no, not even John himself; for he was going, no less than twice, to fall into rank idolatry, by falling down to worship an angel; but the angel, in the utmost haste, forbad him. Yea, and he often himself needed the cleansing fountain that God hath opened, and the advocate too. "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 toward God. God himself declares that every imagination of man's heart is only evil continually. Now this evil we received not in our creation, as from God, for all his works were good; Satan infused this into man at his fall; and Christ came not to repair this, or to change this vile principle into any thing better; he doth not dress nor vamp up the old man which is corrupt; that which is born of the flesh is flesh; he came to destroy it by his death, and to impart a new nature by his Spirit; to dethrone sin by his grace, and to work

it all out of the soul at our death, and out of the body at our resurrection, and to leave it upon the head of the devil and all his seed at the day of judgment, that it may reign in and over them in hell to all eternity. This is the work of Christ. But the work of the Arminians, and of the assertors of universal grace, is nothing else but varnishing, whitewashing, embalming, adorning, perfuming, and decorating the old man, which is the image of the devil in fallen man; which sets them, like the pharisees of old, further from the kingdom of God than either publicans or harlots; for they that sanctify themselves and purify themselves shall be consumed together, as well as those that roll in the mire. Now, as corrupt nature doth nothing but sin, so by grace it sustains no change, but is still evil, and present with every child of God when he would do good. And from this corrupt mass springs all evil; and which, in thought, word, look, or deed, discovers itself daily, and that in the best of men, and in every man; for "the thought of foolishness is sin;" and if the thoughts be sin, what are looks, words, and actions? No call for a high priest to bear the iniquities of our holy things if this corrupt mass was removed. But an advocate with the Father, a mediator in the presence of God for us, and our command to ask the Father in his name, and the prayers of all saints being perfumed by the incense of his oblation, show plain enough the indwelling of sin in every saint of God.

2. I come now to prove that every one that sinneth is of the devil, as are all men that are in an unregenerate state. Sin, which is the seed of the devil, is in them, and reigns in them; hence our Lord says they are of their father the devil, being, as sinners, begotten by him. They bear the likeness of him both in heart and action. They are the subjects of the devil; sin rules in their hearts; and they have their conversation in him, According to the prince Of the power of the air, the spirit that now Worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past." Now such can do nothing but sin any more than an Ethiopian can change his

skin, or a leopard change his spots; for such are taken captive by him at his will, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Now, according to this account, all of us, while in a state of nature, can do nothing but sin; God is not in all our thoughts; in our-flesh dwells no good thing; and every thought of the imagination of the heart is only evil. Such an one sinneth, as the devil does, and that without intermission; and he that thus sinneth is of the devil.

But again: as the saint of God never sins with t the renewed mind and will, as the apostle asserts when he says, "I would do good, and the good that I would that do I not," so he vows, that "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." So that the apostle makes a distinction between self and self. There is a sinful self to be denied daily by all them that follow Christ; and there is a self that is not to be denied, or mortified, or put off: "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God." This self considers the saint a new creature and a servant of God, a new man in 1581 Christ by grace; but there is a fleshly self, that serves the law of sin. Hence it is plain that he that sinneth is of the devil, as all sinful men by nature are. And he that sinneth in every saint is of the devil also; for it is what Paul calls the flesh, or the sins of the flesh in man, communicated to us by natural birth, which he calls corruption and the old man; and it is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. This does nothing else but sin, and is to be denied daily, and to be put off again "and again: and is also to be mortified through the Spirit. This is he that is of the devil. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me," Rom. vii. 15 - 17.

It may be asked why sin should be called the flesh? for certainly sin is often meant by the word flesh; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and again, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Answer:

there was no more evil in the body than there was in the soul when God made us; both were very good. And it is plain that all God's workmanship will be saved. It is the will of God that of all that the Father hath given me, says Christ, I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day; by which the bodies of the saints must be meant. Yea more; "The very hairs of your head," saith he, "are all numbered;" which shows how much God respects the work of his own hands. But the body, the flesh, strictly speaking, is the lowest and meanest part in man. Its origin is mean; it is of the earth: but the soul is by far the noblest part; its origin is God; it is of God; and he is the God of the spirits of all flesh, Num. vi. 22. Now it was this lower part in man that was the chief in our first parents sin. The eyes of the body saw the forbidden fruit, and the appetite craved it. It was the hand of the body that took it, and the mouth of the body that ate it; and the stomach and belly received it. And I have no doubt but the soul was awfully alarmed at all this; and even conscience, being then pure, and furnished with the law of God, which they received by inspiration, did its office; for Eve knew the forbidden tree, and God's command about it, and mentions it; which knowledge is peculiar to the soul; but the flesh gained the ascendancy, and carried all before it; on which account the evil corruption in man is called the flesh. And ever since Adam fell it appears plain that whatsoever is the most strictly forbidden the flesh is the most apt to crave. Hence God complains, "All flesh hath corrupted way." And as that nature that is generated from one to another is flesh, it is said that that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and as sin in the human body works in a lascivious way, so it is called the flesh that lusteth against the Spirit; and we are exhorted to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

Again: as thoughts and conscience often bear their protest against the works of the flesh, and censure them and condemn them, these being on God's side, and against the lust of the flesh, this makes sinful flesh the more culpable and

blameworthy still. These are the reasons why sin sometimes called flesh in scripture; because began here, and because this is the nature that Adam communicated to all his seed; for Adam is not the father of souls, or of spirits, but of bodies or' of the flesh: "God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." But one soul is not generated of another; we read of fathers after the flesh, and of the Father of spirits, in one verse: "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live;" Heb. xii. 9. We should distinguish between the body, or the flesh, as it is God's workmanship, and the corruption of the flesh, which is the evil work of that arch apostate the devil. Consider it as the work of God's hands, formed out of the earth, and it is curiously and marvellously made. And the body is now the temple of the Holy Ghost; and as such regard it: "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." Consider it also in its depravity, as corrupted by the devil, and then in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. But all that is meant, in short, concerning the flesh is comprehended in this text, "But if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The evil lusting and cravings of sin in the body, called the deeds of it, is what is meant by flesh when it is spoken of in an evil sense. Hence I conclude that every one that sinneth is of the devil; for he that is still in a state of sin, and destitute of grace, is of the devil's lineage, and does the devil's work. And the remains of indwelling sin in every saint, which is called the old man, is of the devil also, because he opposes all that is good, and wars against God, and against the soul; and therefore is of the devil, and the devil works in him.

William Huntington

XXX The Violent Storm, and Heavenly Calm

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted!
behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy
foundations with sapphires." ISAIAH 54:11

IN this chapter the Jewish elect, the children of God who passed, under the ministry of Christ, out of the old covenant into the new, are bid to break forth into singing, and cry aloud, though they did not travail with child, but came forth, as it were, at an instant; for although they had been barren, and not borne, yet, being now a gospel church, she is the married wife, and not those who abide in the old covenant, though the Jerusalem that now is had more children than the heavenly Jerusalem. Those that abode by the old covenant are desolate, and had no husband; and a large family of children, without a husband, was no honour to her, but rather a scandal. She is bid to enlarge the place of her tent, to show the church is portable, and to stretch forth the curtains of her habitation. One of the coverings and curtains of the ancient tabernacle was fine twined linen, which I think was typical of the righteousness of the saints, called white linen, clean and white. And the spouse, when adorned with this, says, "I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." This is the covering robe of the whole church; and blessed is he whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered with it.

She is bid to lengthen her cords of faith, peace, and love, and to strengthen all the stakes that embrace and bind these cords about them. And God promises that she shall break forth on the right hand and on the left, and that her seed should inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities, which had been without God, now to be inhabited by God in

his saints. Two things God comforts her against, which lay heavy upon convinced sinners, the shame of their youth, which is grievous when the sins of youth are set before them. "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions," says one, Psalm xxv. 7. He comforts the Gentiles against the reproach of their widowhood. The Jews used to call the Gentiles the forsaken and the desolate; but God promises to wipe away this reproach, and to give them better names: "Thou shalt no more be termed, Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." The name forsaken is changed for the name of God's delight; and instead of desolate it is wedded. And so it follows: "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." But I will come to my text, which is full of comfort to these poor Gentiles.

"O thou afflicted!" Many are the afflictions of the righteous: and these poor Gentiles, upon their receiving the gospel and turning to God from idols, were wretchedly used by those that abode by the old idolatry. These fell violently upon them. The devil stirred up the whole world to make new gods, and to oppose the gospel, and persecute its converts; as it follows: "The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. They helped every one his neighbour: and every one said to his brother; Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering: and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved." But God encourages Gentile Zion under all this: "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee, shall fall for thy sake," Isaiah liv. 15.

Dreadful were the persecutions which these poor creatures endured. But, besides all this, they were sorely afflicted within; for, being bred up in idol worship, find this being deeply engraved on the hearty the word must cut as deep as the root, and pierce and wound dreadfully before this false religion could be cut off at the fibres, and destroyed in all its branches; no less than a mighty power could: effect it. "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed." Again: when the false gods which they had been led to worship and adore were discovered, by divine revelation, to be nothing but vile creatures, apostate angels, devils, the enemies of God, and the only destroyers of men, this must, when charged home, and these charges seconded by an enlightened conscience, make dreadful work within; especially when the fall of man was discovered, a broken law understood, and sins, by that glass, set in the light of God's countenance. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted!"

The holy law of God, when the Almighty applies it in all its purity, holiness, and spirituality, to the conscience of the poor sinner, is a figurative tempest, as Paul calls it, a mount burning with fire, blackness, and darkness, and tempest, Heb. xii. 18. For, as in a tempest the heavens are black with clouds, so, while this store lasts, there is nothing but cloudy and dark days, Ezek. xxxiv. 12. There is in the soul a grows darkness, yea, a horror of great darkness; darkness that maybe felt, and is felt; and God himself seems hid in terrible clouds also, which appear to keep us more and more at a distance, when we are labouring night and day to draw nigh, and endeavouring to find acceptance. "Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not-pass through."

In a tempest there is generally a strong wind; hence, it is called a windy storm: "O that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest." The dreadful spirit of bondage, which is called the north wind, makes the sinner tremble, and is attended with such horrors and terrors that the soul is abashed, confused, bewildered, and confounded, and neither knows what he is, where he is, nor what he is about. And, under all this dismal and horrible gloom, there is a dreadful sound in his ears, Job xv. 21; terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempest stealeth him away; and, as a storm, threatens to hurl him out of his place, Job xxvii 20, 21. The curses and threatenings of the law, like violent claps of thunder, roll over, one after another. God answers the sinner in the secret place of thunder, and proves him at the waters of strife. At such times every minister of Christ is a Boanerges, a son of thunder. And it is with the sinner as it is described in the 6th chapter of the Revelations; at the opening of every seal there is nothing heard from the cherubim, but the noise of thunder, crying, Come, and see, Rev. vi. 1, And sometimes it appears as if seven thunders had uttered their voices all at once.

Moreover, the law is a fiery law; it reveals the hot displeasure of God at all the unrighteousness of men, and like lightning flashes cutting convictions, which, being attended with the piercing sword of the Spirit, wound, scorch, wither, and dry up, the spirits; "For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many." God himself compares the case of the poor Gentiles, under these, their afflictions, to the deluge in the days of Noah: "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the

covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." According to the above account the wrath of God is the thunder and lightning which had attended Gentile Zion in this storm and tempest; and this God owns: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee," Isaiah liv. 7, 8. And, in order to comfort her, and to calm her fears, and dissolve her doubts, he swears to her that he never will be wroth with her nor rebuke her in a vindictive way any more.

Now, as God compares the great inundation of the Gentiles affliction to the deluge in the days of Noah, I shall drop a few words upon that subject, or upon the account of God's proceedings; in which it is said, "The same day-were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," so that the torrents from above, and the fountains from beneath both conspired together. And just so it appears to be with the poor sinner when God takes him in hand. It is said, "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest." And the beginning of such a storm the convicted sinner feels, and he fears the whole contents; for this raining snares is nothing else but the heavens revealing our iniquity, Job xx. 27. Sins are the snares of the soul; and what has been kept secret in the book of God's remembrance is revealed and set in order before the sinner's eyes when God takes him in hand, and in the light of God's countenance; and they appear more in number than the hairs of our head; and strength fails under the load. But this is not all; for as sure as God applies his law, attended with his hot displeasure at sin, and discovers our iniquity in that glass, so sure, at the same time, do all the corruptions of the heart boil up, and discover themselves too; enmity, rebellion, desperation, unbelief, every concupiscence, and Satan's rage, all rise up together; for as a fountain casteth out her waters,

so the heart casteth out its wickedness, Jer. vi. 7; or as Isaiah saith, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." So that the poor sinner has a torrent from above, and a great deep broken up beneath: and between these two he is at his wit's end. But this teaching shows him and assures him how matters will go with the wicked in the great day; for as sure as Abraham, by offering up his son, saw Christ's day, so sure does a sinner; thus taught of God, see the day of judgment.

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted!" I cannot help thinking but this word, tossed, alludes to the ark of Noah, which went upon the face of the waters, for that must meet with a good deal of tossing upon a sea without a shore; and all vessels are much tossed upon the waves and swells of the sea, especially when the waters are agitated with a violent storm and tempest, such as God compares the church's troubles to in my text.

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted!" afflicted both in body and soul, tossed in a tempest, and destitute of all consolation. And so the mind of a poor sinner is tossed from one thing to another; first upon a broken law which works death and wrath; then into his own heart, where he sees nothing but then enmity, impenitency, and rebellion; then to his past life, to his own evil way, which was not good, and there he meets with a thousand crimes; then he looks forward to the day of judgment, and nothing is to be seen there but an inexorable judge to consume the adversaries. If he looks to the earth, trouble and anguish, and if to the heavens they appear as iron; if he looks to his own "performances, there is sin in them all; and if to the encouraging promises, the accounts of impostors and apostates meet him there; if he looks to the saints, their safe and happy state provokes him; and if he looks to his sinful companions, they shun and ridicule him; so that the vileness

of his nature within, and the sight of his past follies without; the accusations of conscience, and the darts of Satan; keep him full of tossings to and fro, both by day and by night, Job vii. 4. Besides this, he is tossed from one human invention to another. He tries alms, forms of prayer, vows, and resolutions; and goes for counsel to all the divines and religious characters that he knows: and some cry one thing, and some another; lo here, and lo there; and he tries all their advice, and, like the woman with her issue, gets worse instead of better; for there are but a few interpreters who understand this hand-writing; nor are landsmen of much use in this storm. Nevertheless, all this helps forward this work, though it appears to us only to help forward our calamity; for it makes us sick of an arm of flesh, and it teaches us to know the unskillfulness of such physicians; and this makes the Saviour the more precious when he appears; and, being a friend in need, he is much prized; and he that does the whole work shall receive the whole glory. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted?" No comforters among men, no comfort from the promises, no comfort from the Spirit, no comfort of hope, no comfort of love, no comfort in the world, no comfort in life, no comfort in thyself, no comfort from God.

"Behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours." I will turn thee from a vessel on the waves into a building of mercy. "I have laid in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation;" and upon that rock shalt thou be built, and neither sin nor death shall ever prevail against either thee or that. And in doing this, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place," Isaiah xxviii. 17. "Judgment also will I lay to the line;" I will exact full satisfaction of thy Surety for every breach of the line of precept: and righteousness will I lay to the plummet; I will exact a perfect obedience in uprightness; so that Zion shall be redeemed with

judgment executed on her Surety, and her converts with righteousness perfected by her covenant Head. And you that lie unpolished in the quarry of fallen nature shall come to this foundation that I have laid in Zion, and as lively stones I will build you up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." "I will lay thy stones with fair colours," and make thee and thy daughters as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace, Psalm cxliv. 12. God laid the foundation, and God takes from the quarry of the impenitent race of mankind whom he will and brings them to Christ; when he hath polished them for his purpose, and lays them upon the foundation, making them one in him, and one among themselves, and builds them up a spiritual house, a palace for the King of kings and Lord of lords; hence called a temple, an habitation of God through the Spirit. "I will lay thy stones with fair colours;" it shall be a building of every precious stone that adorns the diadem of princes; as it is written, "The Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling-stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land." Here we see the materials of this building, and what sort of stones they are; not Portland, nor marble, but the stones that adorn a crown of state, or jewels; as it is written, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that reared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him," Mal. iii. 16, 17. Here the stones of

which the church is composed; and I God will lay them with fair colours, that they may answer to the foundation, which is of sapphires. Now there are various colours in these precious stones; and we see that the breastplate of the high priest, and the materials of the foundation of the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife, were mostly the same sort of stones. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours."

Now these precious stones require a deal of cutting and polishing before the beauty and lustre of them appear, which is the principal cause of their being so violently tossed in the above tern, pest. And as the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem were the same as were set in the breastplate of judgment, and in which stones were all the names of the twelve tribes engraved, this serves to show us that the twelve brilliant stones, at the foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem, should send their lustre, and shine with all their glory, throughout that mysterious fabric called the bride, the Lamb's wife. God says, in my text, that he will lay Gentile Zion's stones with fair colours. And here I must be beholden to the students of nature for some of the colours of these stories. And before I begin I will observe this, that among all the variety of colours that are found among these stones there is not one that is black: "I am black, but comely," Song i. 5. Black was her natural complexion; her comeliness is borrowed. Nor is any of their colours that of pale, which is a sign of sickness, guilt, and death: "And I looked, and, behold, a pale horse; and he that sat on him was death." Pale is the colour of a soul sick, and sick of sin; which colour is to be changed at the appearance of grace: "Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name," Isaiah xxix. 22, 23. By all which it appears that God's

presence and God's work make a change in Jacob's pale countenance. Nor do I find any of the rouge which such as Jezebel use, who painted her face and looked out of the palace window to charm Jehu, who ordered her to be hurled from the window for the horses to trample on, and the dogs to eat. The colours of these stones seem to set forth the things which are common and natural. "I will lay thy stones with fair colours."

The diamond is the richest, hardest, and most valuable, of all the stones in nature; its natural colour is white. This colour is applied to the church: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." "And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge and to make them white." And when these are purged and set, stated from the wicked, the diamond itself doth not exceed them: "When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon," Psalm lxxviii. 14.

Jacinth is a purple colour, worn by sovereign princes; And purple raiment was on the kings of Midian, Judges viii. 26. This is the royal colour; and he hath made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign for ever and ever. Hence our Lord, Who compares the members of his church, which cleave unto him who is the head of it, to hair of this colour: "Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple. The king is held in the galleries," Song vii. 5. "I will lay thy stones with fair colours,"

Topaz, a beautiful yellow. And this gold colour is the colour of faith: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." This is the colour of faith, or faithfulness, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." He was girt about the papa with a golden girdle, Rev. i. 13. Truth was his girdle as a prophet; faithfulness his girdle as a priest; and righteousness

his girdle as a king: "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

Sardius, or sardine, a blood colour. Not only are the saints red, being washed in the blood of Christ, but red with the blood of martyrs. And of this colour is the church described: "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."

Jasper. The best is green; an emblem of life. Every thing in the creation is green. "Blessed is the man-that trusteth in the Lord: he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." And our Lord's command to the devouring locust of Turkish preachers is, "That they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads," Rev. ix. 4.

Sardonyx, reddish, bordering on white; the true virgin's colour, suitable to souls espoused to the Son of God, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." And this modest and blushing colour is the cause of the Lord's kind entreaty; "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." It is the colour of a blushing countenance, such as they have who are tender lovers of God, as may be seen in Ezra: "I am ashamed," says he, "and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head." I might mention the chrysolite, dingy green, as expressive of young converts, just quickened, and that is all; and the beryl, pate green, a pale countenance; for such souls have no life but in their convictions and appetite; and yet by these things these poor souls live, or are

kept alive: And in all these things, and in these only, is the life of their spirits, Isaiah xxxviii. 16.

A chalcedony, a pale cast of blue; descriptive of their case who are just verging out of the storm, finding the clouds blowing over, and the blue sky just appearing. Take it altogether thus: my church is as brilliant as the diamond by sanctification in Christ; in the shining majesty of reigning grace as purple as the jacinth; in purifying faith as rich and as yellow as the topaz; under the great atonement as red as the sardius; in life and verdure as green as the jasper; as a chaste virgin as fair and blushing as the sardonyx; and even the least of all the family, under the influence of my Spirit, are full as green as the chrysolite, or the beryl, not dried up, but verdant; and every soul upon which the true light shines, like the chalcedony, has got a tinge of the rainbow, and is coming into peace with me.

And thus have I endeavoured to show my reader these stones which the word of God holds forth; and he promises to lay them with fair co-colours. All the colours which I know any thing of I have hinted at. And I would, to God that the light of my understanding could but keep pace with the energy of my soul; my reader would have a much fuller account. But this word has often been both a caution and a support: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours."

"And lay thy foundations with sapphires." Here must be an astonishing change to come from the tempest of Sinai, and from the deluge of Noah, to be built as a diamond or ruby upon a foundation laid with sapphires. But the whole of this

mystery, both of the storm and of the foundation, is taken from something of the same sort that was exhibited once before this, in view of the sons of men; as will appear at the giving of the law, and at what was displayed afterward. The storm and tempest are taken from Sinai, and from the flood of Noah.

First, from the giving of the law. "And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon them. And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou changedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them." And after the law was given it is said, "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." This is such a storm as never appeared in this world before, nor will it ever appear again till the general doom, when the trumpet of the archangel will raise the dead, and the voice of the law be called over again, in all its real meaning, and be enforced with fire, and

brimstone, and a horrible tempest, which must be the portion of their cup who cleave to a covenant of works, and yet break that covenant, Read Psalm xi. 6. This storm fell upon Israel; and this same storm fell upon Gentile Zion, attended with the torrents from above, and the inundations from beneath, which appeared in Noah's flood. But after this Israel had a more pleasing exhibition, and so had the poor Gentiles in my text; and, indeed, the matter of my text is taken principally from this storm, and from what succeeded it. The storm that we have seen is in the 19th and 20th chapters of Exodus; but the following calm is in chapter the 24th, which I shall transcribe, in order to make my matters clear.

"And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord; but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses came, and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which-offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basons, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words. 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." From this account is my text taken. The Gentiles begin in a tempest, and then they are founded with sapphires. And here is the first storm that Israel saw, when the heavens above them were black, the mountain trembled and smoked, the thunder rolled, and the lightning flashed, as if the whole mountain was all on fire. "God's voice," says Paul, "then shook the earth." And such a sight, and such a storm, no soul ever saw before in this world. But it was to prepare them for a better and a more heavenly display of divine goodness. They first offer sacrifices; then the blood is sprinkled on the book and on the people; and then Moses, the mediator, the priests, and the elders, draw near, and see 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. In the former appearance of God darkness was his secret pavilion; in thick darkness he came to Moses; the heavens were covered with clouds, and nothing was seen or heard but the voice of words, the trumpet, the earthquake, the wind, and the fire: but in this appearance all is serene, calm, and tranquil; no storm, nor so much as even a cloud to be seen; the very body of heaven was not only clear, but it appeared in his clearness. And, if my reader will receive it, this is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. In order to make clear work of this, I will endeavour,

1. To inquire who this is that the elders saw: it was the Lord God of Israel.

2. Inquire a little into the pavement: there was under his feet as the paved work of a sapphire stone. And,

3. This is the representation of it: it was the body of heaven in his clearness, The divine person here seen by the elders and others was the Son of God in a human form, attended with the brilliant perfections of his deity shining forth, in which glorious rays the elders saw the whole heavens, clear and without a

cloud. And this sight was intended to lead their faith and hope to his future incarnation; at which time that stormy and tempestuous dispensation called the law would have its fulfilling, and its eternal end. That this is the divine person here seen, I shall attempt to prove by two visions similar to this sight, and both in the Old Testament, previous to the coming of Christ in the flesh: "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 I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it; from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake," Ezek. i. 26-28. In this account there is a clear firmament over this glorious appearance. Here is the rainbow, which secures the world from a Second deluge, and the saint from being drowned in destruction and perdition. Here is the representation of a throne. The glorious perfections of deity are the throne, upon which is the appearance of a man, which is our Immanuel, God with us. From his loins upward and downward he appeared as fire; for wherever he goes he is to the elect a refiner; and therefore he appears like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap, Mal. iii. 2. And if my reader will read this whole chapter he will find the cherubims are attending him, Which are gospel ministers; and the wheels, which are the churches, attending on the cherubs; and the appearance of his throne is like the appearance of a sapphire stone. This is the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in the churches; and happy are they that are enlightened to see this, and enabled to believe it, and in love to embrace it.

But again: "Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in my sight." Here again we have the firmament, the sapphire stone, and the throne; and here is Christ executing his priestly office, clothed with linen garments, and the throne attends him; for he is to be a priest upon his throne, Zech. vi. 13. The cherubims and the wheels had got coals of fire, even live coals from the altar which are the words of God: "will make my words in thy mouth fire." The cherubims dispense the word, and pray for success in the work; but it is the right hand of Christ's power that makes it effectual and gives it all its heat; it is his hand that scatters it over the city, which shows the excellency of the power to be of him, and not of man. And when the hand of the Lord scatters these coals they always go with power in the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance. I shall now come,

2. To treat of the pavement. There was under his feet as the paved work of a sapphire stone. This, whatever it is, is to be the foundation of Zion; for so says God in my text, "I will lay thy foundations with sapphires."

The sapphire stone, if report be true, is the next in value, and the next in hardness, to the adamant, or diamond. It is blue, of a beautiful sky colour; and the best sort of them have golden specks in them. The blue colour represents the heavens, and the golden specks the stars and other luminaries of the heavens. This was the paved work of the sapphire stones that were seen under the feet of the Lord God of Israel.

3. And this is the conclusion of the description, it was as the body of heaven in his clearness. The body of heaven signifies the whole heavens, in opposition to the skirts, or parts of it. And this whole body was clear, or in its native clearness. There was neither rain, hail, or snow; no storms, winds, nor tempest; not a cloud to be seen; no fogs, smoke, or vapour; the heavens were neither hazy, lowering, nor gloomy. And this is the appearance of things if we take our prospects from Christ and his throne; the sapphire stones attend the appearance of the man, and the throne on which he sits.

But then it may be asked, What is become of all the storm? Why this king, who sits upon this sapphire throne, suffers no storms to interrupt his peaceful reign; for his throne is upholden by mercy, and mercy is always calm. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The tempest is hid from the believer's eyes in this covert; and the cold north wind is hid from those who embrace this hiding place. But, then, what is to become of the procuring cause of this storm? I mean sin, the transgression of the law. The Lord answers this: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee, Isaiah xliv. 22; and, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Yea more, he hath cast them as a stone into the depths of the sea; so that the body of heaven appears in all its clearness from them. The king that sitteth upon his sapphire throne scattereth away these evils with his eyes, Prov. xx. 8.

But what is become of vindictive justice, declaring all accursed that continue not in all things written in the book of the law to do them, and that the soul that sins shall die? The man that sits upon this sapphire throne was made a curse for us; he

died the just for the unjust; upon him the judgment of the sentence was executed, and by his death justice is satisfied; and both unite to support this sapphire throne: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Here is nothing going forth here but mercy and truth; mercy goes forth for our generation, and truth to make us free indeed. But what is become of vindictive wrath, which was revealed in the storm? Answer: That wine-press is trodden, and all the dregs of that cup were swallowed up in the death of Christ. Come to him, and thou shalt experience the truth of what I advance, as others have done, and confessed it with joy. "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." In the face of Christ God for ever shines delighted, well pleased, reconciled, loving and propitious to men. Approach this throne, and thou shalt find it so; and not only find the body of heaven clear, but more; for in Christ his glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise, Hab. iii. 3.

And now let my reader observe this, the brilliant perfections of the godhead of Christ, and the illustrious glory that beams from them, are his throne of glory, or his glorious throne. This glory fills the heavens; and in the glory of his own divine perfections is he enthroned. But the human nature which our Lord assumed, and which was offered in sacrifice for us, into whose lips grace was poured, and he is blessed for ever, and in whom dwells all fullness of grace, and all the treasures of knowledge; he, with all his fullness, is our sapphire throne, our throne of grace. "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house." Compare this with Rev. iii. 7.

I will, says God, lay thy foundation with sapphires. "But other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And it is in him that God is well pleased; in him every attribute and perfection of God shines and harmonizes in the salvation, of our souls. Here is the goodness of God to pardon, while justice, by the blood of the covenant, sends prisoners out of the pit, life quickens us, omniscience provides for us, omnipotence supports us, and omnipresence protects us. The wisdom of God provides all this for our glory, while pity and compassion are displayed in accepting us in Christ; lovingkindness draws us to him, and mercy is built up for ever in the glorification of the saints; the law is honoured, and the honour and the authority of the lawgiver is established; peace is proclaimed, reconciliation is made, and friendship between God and man is restored; and grace reigns through righteousness over all the aboundings of sin, over death, and over all the wisdom, craft, and malice, of devils. This is the foundation that God has laid in Zion; and this foundation is laid with sapphires. Here heaven is cleared of all its storms, and transgressors of all their cloud of sins, while every perfection of Deity supports the throne, and conspires to uphold and adorn the church. Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved, and let thine heart be fixed, trusting in the Lord.

And now, if my reader will ascend two or three steps higher, and I will wait till he comes, I will show him greater things than these; namely, a heaven within a heaven. And in this namely heaven I saw a wonder, "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Here is a yea within a heaven, a heaven upon earth. In this heaven I see the sun's Creator outshine the sun. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." "The Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy sun shall no more go down." Over the throne is a firmament, even over the head

of Christ and his church, Ezek. i. 25, and a rainbow without a cloud. Here is the blue sky in the sapphire, and the body of heaven in his clearness. In this heaven there are precious things put forth by the moon, and under this propitious luminary new fruit shall be ripe every month, or at every new moon. "And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine." And these trees cannot cease bearing every month, because the moon in this heaven is never to be withdrawn: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself." Thus have I showed the firmament, the rainbow, the sun, and the moon; and if my reader would see the twelve signs, he may discover them on the crown of the church; Pleiades also, or the seven stars beyond the bull, he will see in Rev. i. 16; "And he had in his right hand seven stars." The inferior stars are to be found among the saints, who shine as lights in the world, and among them who are useful in converting souls; for, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." And what heaven would my reader wish to enjoy under the sun but this? Here is the general assembly, the angels, and God the judge of all, and Christ the mediator.

Having offered my thoughts on the above storm and peaceful calm, I will now enter a little into the next verse, which is; "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." The use of windows is to look through, to let in light, and to keep out rain, hail, wind, and snow; and the glorious gospel, or the glory of God shining in the gospel, and bringing life and immortality to light, is called a window, or windows. It is by and through the gospel that the dear Redeemer looks upon

us: "He standeth behind our wall," says the church; "he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice." He stood, throughout the old dispensation, behind the partition-wall that separated Jews from Gentiles; he looked forth at the windows by the covenants he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he showed himself through the lattice of the types, figures, and shadows, of the legal sacrifices; but so as to be but dimly seen. To these windows poor dark souls, blinded by Satan, and convinced of it, come, in order to get light, and to look into the mysteries of redemption and salvation. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Isaiah lx. 8. And as, the gospel is a clear revelation of former dark mysteries, anal the truth of former types; and as pardon and regeneration are promised, and the way of obtaining it pointed out; it is in allusion to the sea of glass in the tabernacle, and the brazen sea in the temple, called a sea of glass: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Now God says that he will make Zion's windows of agates.

The agate, according to account, was of great estimation in the days of old, but afterwards grew into disesteem. The different agates of different countries are numerous, and the sorts various: they are hard, and of the flint kind. It is said to be harder than fine jasper, and to receive a better polish. They are found in various countries, and of course they differ in colour. They are found in Sicily and in Candy; and there are agates found among the Indians, and at Thebes in Egypt, and in Thrace, and about the mountain Oeta, in the hill Parnassus, and in Cesbus and Messene, and also in the island of Rhodes. But the reason that these are made use of by the Holy Ghost to represent the light of the saints is the various things that are discovered in them. For you shall find naturally

imprinted in them, say the learned, the form and proportion of rivers, woods, and labouring horses, coaches, and little chariots, or horse litters, together with furniture belonging to horses; and in Messene they have flowers imprinted in them like those which grow in the highways, and in paths by the fields. Now, whether these labourers in the mysteries of nature are right or wrong, I will not dispute; but sure I am that all these things are seen by the light which shines in mount Zion. This I myself am a living witness of; for I have seen the river of life, and the streams of it which make glad the city of God: and I have seen the safety of them that sleep in the woods, Ezek. xxxiv. 25. And I read of horses in Pharaoh's chariots, and of God's goodly horse in the battle, Cant. i. 9; Zech. x. 3. Of all the stones that I ever read of, I never read of any one kind, nor even all the precious stones, put them all together, that have so many different representations of things in them as this stone hath, which is called he agate. Nor do I remember to have seen the name of this stone above twice or thrice in all the Bible. It is not found in Aaron's breastplate, nor in the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem; and yet this stone is made use of to represent the light of the church: "I will make thy windows of agates." And applicable enough it is that this stone is brought in to set forth the light of God's holy city; for when out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God is pleased to shine, here the poor sinner sees himself, his own heart, and the hearts of all mankind. In this city we see the king of glory in all his beauty, and the God of glory shining in his face. Here is the fountain of life, and all its springs; the river of pleasure, and all its streams; the tree of life, and its healing leaves; the fruit thereof, and their cheering effects. Here is the feast of fat things, and the wines on the lees well refined; here is the armour of the King of kings, and the army of heaven sharing in the triumph, and shouting victory when he led captivity captive; here is the city of God, of which so many glorious things are spoken; salvation is its walls, the faithfulness of God in his promises is its golden pavement, and the pearl of

great price, in his various characters, is its gates; God himself is its builder, and the glory of God its light. And what shall I say more? "I will make thy windows of agates."

"And thy gates carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Before I enter upon these gates I will inquire a little into the real delights of this city, the foundations of which are said to be sapphires, the windows of it to be agates, and the gates of it to be carbuncles.

The first glory of it is said to be light: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

2. The next sweet delight is the river of pleasure, which appears to me to be the perpetual emanations of divine love; for charity, says Paul, never faileth: "Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure."

3. The third glorious delight of this city is the tree of life, with its delicious fruit: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits;" and, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

4. There is to be in this city a cessation of arms, and an end to all war for evermore: "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." "The righteous perish, 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. He shall enter into peace."

5. There is to be a perfection of joy, which springs from four things: first, it is the joy of harvest: when the wheat is brought into the barn it is harvest-home. It is the joy of them that divide the spoil: the battle is ended, and the triumph follows. It is the

joy of inheritance: the firstborn is of age, and at the fullness of his stature, and takes possession of his inheritance. It is the joy of wedlock: let us rejoice and be glad, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. They shall come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head, Isaiah li. 11.

6. This city is intended to be the glorious rest of all the saints. God rested in his love when he founded it; his hand rests here in building it up. Here the labourer is to rest from the heat and burden of the day, and from all the oppositions, troubles, and persecutions, of the ungodly. "There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God."

7. This city is said to be free, and to be the mother of us all. Liberty in this state is far from being complete; for although we are brought forth from the prison, and are purged from guilt and filth, and are delivered from the bondage of the law, and from the reigning and destroying power of sin, yet we are burdened with a body of death, and the body of our flesh is doomed to the bondage of corruption; but both shall be delivered. "The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

8. The next thing of infinite value in this city is the glorious apparel of the citizens. They all wear one colour; and, as priests unto God, they are all clad in linen: "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

9. The next thing to be observed is this, namely, that there is nothing promised in all this book but to overcomers: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Hence they all appear in triumph, and all shout and sing victory. This is represented by the palm branch, which used to be carried in the eastern triumphs: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which

no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

10. They have all got crowns upon their heads. We read of being crowned with knowledge, crowned with lovingkindness, crowned with righteousness, crowned with never-fading glory, and crowned with life; but to be found in Christ in the great day, and to be owned of him, blessed and glorified with him, is the best of all glorious crowns: "In that day [and especially in the great day] shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people." Hence we read that the worshippers above cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

11. The next thing to be enjoyed in this city is immortality. These vile bodies of ours must be purged, purified, refined, and changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ; weakness must be changed for power; dishonour shall be changed for glory; corruption must be put off, and incorruption be put on; mortality left behind when immortality takes place. This is being clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; and this is what I understand by the following passage: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God."

12. The next unutterable delight, and that which crowns all the rest, is, a promised sight of our most wonderful, adorable, ever-blessed, propitious, and ever-loving Father. "The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father." "Blessed are the pure in

heart: for they shall see God." "I will make thy windows of agates."

"And thy gates carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." The carbuncle is red; that is the colour of it. And Christ crucified is the only gate of this city. Without a sacrifice, and satisfaction to justice by it, there can be no pardon; and without a mediator there can be no access to God here or hereafter; for without shedding of blood there is no remission; and into the heavenly Jerusalem there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, Rev. xxi. 27. And without a mediator none can approach unto God: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." As our surety he discharges our debts, and by the blood of his covenant we come forth from the prison. By faith in him we come to the light of God's countenance; by filth in him we come to the enjoyment of God's love; by faith in him we pass from death to life; being justified by the faith of him we find peace with God; by faith we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; "We that believe do enter into rest;" by faith we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, while those that believe not are in bondage, and wrath abideth on them. The righteousness of Christ is to ail and upon all that believe: "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our filth," "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The Spirit's grace is the firstfruits of glory, and the Spirit himself is the earnest of it; and we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith; and by the eye of faith we obtain the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Christ is therefore the only gate, as I have shewn before in this little work; and it is by the faith of him that we come to enjoy the firstfruits, pledges, earnest, and foretastes, of all these heavenly joys, pleasures, and dainties. And this I have shewn at large.

"I will make thy gates carbuncles." Christ crucified is the door of hope; hope enters by him, and centres in God. He is the door of faith to the Gentiles; the Gentiles find access to God's favour by the faith of him. He is the door of mercy; the sure mercies of David are in him. He is the door of the sheep; we cannot enter into his fold, nor feed in green pastures, but by faith in him. He is the gate of life, by which we pass from the shadow of death, and from the gates of death. He is the gate of righteousness, by which we enter into a state of justification; and he is the gate of truth, by which we enter into liberty, and find freedom of access to God. He is the strait gate, which is attended with so much opposition from men and devils at the entrance; he is the veil through which we pass into the holy of holies. In short, he is the house of God, and the gate of heaven, Gen. xxviii. 17; I say, he is the house that God has provided for us: "Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me;" and he is the gate that leads to glory; for we have boldness to enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, Heb. x. 19. But I must come to the last clause of my text, "I will make thy gates carbuncles,"

"And all thy borders of pleasant stones." The word, border, sometimes signifies the boundary of a country, as appears from what follows: "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships: and his border shall be unto Zidon." Again: But Sidon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border, Num. xxi. 23. All that is meant by these passages is the skirts, extremities, or boundaries, of a country. But sometimes it signifies the limits, suburbs, or liberties, of a city: "But if the slayer shall at any time come without the border of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled; and the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; he shall not be guilty of blood:" Sometimes border signifies no more than the bounds of a man's landed property: "And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an

hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah." Again: "Thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it; whosoever toucheth the mount shall surely be put to death." By all these places it appears that the border is the boundary of any sacred spot, inheritance, or country, and of the liberties of a city. But, then, what is Zion's border? All her borders are to be made of pleasant stones. We shall find a little light upon this subject in Ezekiel. "Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the Lord, an holy portion of the land: the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand reeds, and the breadth shall be ten thousand. This shall be holy in all the borders thereof round about. Of this there shall be for the sanctuary five hundred in length, with five hundred in breadth, square round about; and fifty cubits round about for the suburbs thereof. And of this measure shall thou measure the length of five and twenty thousand, and the breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary and the most holy place. The holy portion of the land shall be for the priests," Ezek. xlv. 1-4. Here is, first, an holy portion of the land. This spiritually signifies God's people; called fallow ground, which God ploughs up; good ground, which receives the good seed sowed by the Son of man; the dry ground, which God waters; God's husbandry, which he keeps, called Eden, and the garden of the Lord. This ground is to be holy in all its borders; the Spirit of God and his grace is to be poured out to make it so: "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." It is this water that makes this land and all its borders holy. One part of this land is to be for the sanctuary; that is, Christ shall dwell with his people, and he shall be to them for a sanctuary. And this land is to be for the priests, and for the houses of the priests. God hath made all his children kings and priests unto himself; and in this holy

portion of the Lord's land they are to labour and live; and all the borders of it are to be holy; that is, God will water with his Spirit and grace every part thereof. And in this holy land there is to be a place for the city: And ye shall appoint the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty thousand long. You will have a full description of this city in Ezekiel's last chapter. And round this city fifty cubits for the suburbs thereof. Now as this city is the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, what can the suburbs of it be but the elect of God waiting at the gates, watching at the posts of these doors; souls not yet renewed, not yet laid upon the foundation, not yet built up in faith, not yet perfected in love? These are the suburbs and the borders of the city: I will make all thy borders of pleasure stones. The saints are called the stones of a crown. And it is well known that the stones of a crown are neither all of a sort, nor all of a size. The best sight that I ever had of this sort of stones was in the king's crown, and in the prince's diadem, both in the Tower. The sardonyx, the chrysolite, and the chrysoprasus, do not appear to shine so bright as the diamond, the sapphire, or the ruby; yet there is a shining lustre in them all; for if God dwells with the broken and the contrite heart, and with them that tremble at his word, there must be a glory upon them; and this light of glory shines upon them, even when they sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; and such souls see it too; yea, they see a great light. But once more, and I have done. The border of the church does signify the glories of the heavenly country, as appears by what follows: "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted because they were not." "Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord: and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." This prophecy was fulfilled when Herod slew the children in

Bethlehem. Now, the Lord comforts the daughters of Rachel with a promise of rewarding their work in suckling these infants. God tells them that there is hope in their end, and that these children that were not alive, but dead, on which account they refused to be comforted, should come again: "They shall come again from the land of the enemy." That enemy is death, and the land of the enemy is the grave; and so it follows: "And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." Now, what border can these dead children come again to but to the thousand years reign in the new earth, and to the border of the heavenly country above? where the saints, in white linen, will outshine the diamond; and, having their vile bodies changed and washed in the blood of the Lamb, they will outshine the ruby; in their golden crowns they will exceed the topaz; and, being alive for evermore, they shall be more green than the emerald; in royal majesty they will transcend the amethyst; and their heaven will outshine the sapphire with all its golden specks. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.

William Huntington

XXXI. The Saints Right, and His Lies Against it

"Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression." JOB 34:6

JOB in his affliction had three friends which came to bemoan him and to comfort him; but they proved themselves to be but miserable comforters; for they soon fall into vain jangling, and labour to prove Job a bad man, which they conclude from God's severity with him, God's testimony of Job is, that he

was a perfect and an upright man, and that he feared God, and eschewed evil. This Job pleads when he says, "The just, the up, right man, is laughed to scorn." Against this they argue, "If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." This is the opinion of Bildad; and he enforces it by insisting that God will not cast away a perfect man, nor will he help the evil doers. Hence he concludes that Job is a castaway, and therefore cannot be a perfect man; and as God afforded him no help, he must be an evil doer.

Eliphaz sarcastically throws Job's former conduct at him, and insinuates that Job could not trust nor rely upon his own doctrine: "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled." Physician, heal thyself; practise now your former advice.

Zophar charges Job with falsehood, and asks, "Should thy lies make men hold their peace; and, when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?" Job against them all maintains his integrity, in which he is right, and tells them that he knows that he shall be justified, and that when he was tried that he should come forth as gold; and that he should see God for himself, and not for another; and in all this he bore no better witness of himself than God had borne of him. But as did not appear to deliver him so soon as he expected, and being sadly irritated and provoked his friends, he breaks out even against God himself, in which he justifies himself, but-not God: "This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent." That God destroys those that are perfect as well as the wicked, and that persons who are innocent when they are tried, if the scourge slays them suddenly it is with

God a matter of laughter; these are hard and bad speeches, of which God complains: "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God let him answer it." Again: "Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?"

After a long contention between Job and his three friends, Elihu steps forth as a moderator; and a very strong impulse of the Holy Spirit seems to have been upon him; for he tells Job that he was, according to his wish, in God's stead. Job had desired to reason with God, and he was come in God's stead to reason with him. He highly blames Job's friends, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job. Elihu believed Job to be a good man, and as such he desired to justify him. He rehearses many of Job's hard speeches, and for which he was not to be justified, but highly to be blamed. He enforces the sovereignty of God, that he gives not account of any of his matters. He rehearses the various dealings of God with man, and the end that God aims at, to keep man from his purpose, and to hide pride from man, and to bring them to obedience; and that if they obey and serve him they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure. He asks Job, "Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes? Shall even he that hateth right govern? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just?" Job xxxiv. 17-19. And for all these hard speeches he charges Job with rebellion: "For he addeth rebellion unto his sin; he clappeth his hand amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God."

This wonderful moderator having silenced Job's three friends, and brought in so many charges against Job for false and unbecoming words spoken against God, he stopped Job's mouth so that he had not a word to say, and therefore makes no reply; upon which God came in as umpire. He lays the

same charges against Job as Elihu had, and yet acknowledges that even Job had spoken more things than were right of him than his three friends had; for they are all charged with folly; but there is not one word against Elihu; he has no censure passed upon him. Job's conduct also is preferred before all his friends. They are ordered to bring their sacrifices to Job, and his prayers are to be heard and answered in their behalf. God heals Job, and turns his captivity, while he prayed for his friends; and in answer to his prayers his friends are pardoned. They present an offering to Job their priest, and God commands his blessing upon it, and this enriches Job; and so the matter ends. I shall now return to my text.

"Should I lie against my right?" Man, when God made him, was a happy and a blessed creature. All things were given to him, and he was to have dominion over all other creatures; but he sinned, and forfeited all; so that, strictly speaking, he has no right to any one thing but the sentence of death. "The day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." He did eat; and therefore this sentence in all its meaning, and the execution of it, is man's right; and this is all that he has any right to by the tenor of a covenant of works.

But God has appointed us another head, a second Adam, and proclaimed him to us as our everlasting Father; and he has redeemed us, and restored us again to the divine favour. And many wonderful things has God given to us in him, and whatsoever God hath given to us is our right; for nothing can be freer than gifts; and what is given me I have a right to inherit. And,

1. He has promised the kingdom of God to all them that are poor in spirit: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of God." A man truly poor in soul is a debtor that needs a surety; a starving soul, like the prodigal, that wants

bread, and begs it; a naked soul, that hungers after righteousness. He is weary, and wants a resting place; and he is chased out of all confidence in the flesh, and exposed to the wrath of God; and therefore he wants a refuge, a shelter, and a dwelling-place. He has neither good words nor good works to plead; and therefore becomes a pauper on a throne of grace, and relies wholly on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. This is the poor and needy man. To this man God promises the kingdom; and this man has many adversaries. But God takes his part: "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks to thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence," The right of the poor in spirit is the kingdom of God; to the poor it is promised, and the poor are the heirs of it; and to the poor the promise of God secures it. The cause of a just man is his sonship. He that believeth is a child of God, manifestly so, by faith. Against this high character and title the devil and sinners labour hard, as may be seen in the devil's ifs and buts which he brought to Christ when he tempted him in the wilderness: "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread." Upon this head the Jews charge him with blasphemy, to which Christ replies, "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" This they throw at him most blasphemously when on the cross: "He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God." And against the sonship of the saints Satan labours with all his might; and in making this matter clear and sure to us every divine person in the ever-blessed Trinity is concerned. God makes it plain by shedding abroad his love in our hearts, and declaring that, "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Christ makes it manifest to us upon our receiving him and believing on him; for to them that receive him and believe

on his name, to them he gives power to become the sons of God; and again, Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The Holy Ghost also cries Abba, Father, and bears his witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. Our heirship and inheritance depend upon our adoption; so that if we stagger at our sonship we lose the comfort and support of the promises; for, being sons, we are heirs of promise. But in the hour of temptation, or when under spiritual desertion, and when in the old vail gathers over the mind, and a hasty spirit comes upon us, at which times the soul is alarmed, affrighted, and hurried, which confounds and baffles the soul, so that all is confusion, and we cannot make a proper judgment of any thing, and at such a time faith is not in exercise, nor is the Spirit's witness within perceived, nor Can hope or love be discerned; under such circumstances Zion concluded her God had forsaken her; Hezekiah drew the same conclusion, that he should see his God no more; and Job also, that God had sealed up his iniquity in a bag, and that he would not hold him innocent. But our adoption is the work of God; he predestinated us to the adoption of sons. God makes this known to us, and sends his own Spirit into the heart to claim it. Nor will God suffer the evidences of our adoption to be finally obscured; nor will he lose the love and filial fear of his children, nor suffer their faith, by which he is glorified, always to lie dormant. He purges the branch in order to remove the superfluities, that the Union with the noble vine may be more close, and the branch be made more fruitful; and it is by this that God gets the more glory; for, being adopted and brought into the presence of God, he will maintain our standing there. And this the psalmist knew when he said, "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely the just shall give thanks to thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence." By maintaining the cause and the right of his saints he secures to himself the thanks of the just, and the company of the upright; for these are to dwell in his presence. Besides, it

is by the blood of Christ that we are made nigh to God, and by his mediation are we introduced into God's presence; and therefore he will never cast us away from his presence, nor take his holy Spirit from us, for both are secured by covenant; and, to speak more plainly, the Spirit of God in his presence, as saith the psalmist, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence."

Moreover, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. This banquet is intended and promised to perishing souls; it is a feast of fat things, of marrow and fatness, and of wines on the lees well refined. And the great trumpet is to be blown to invite the guests to this feast; and they shall come, says God, that were ready to perish. Hence the invitation to those that were not worthy was wholly slighted; but the poor, the halt, the lame, and the blind, were compelled, and brought in. This feast is promised to the poor and needy; and to these it is secured by the purpose and promise of God. And consistent with this does our great Shepherd proceed in all his offices: "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another." Thus have we a right to this altar; it is a grant from God to the poor and needy, to which the outward-court worshipper has no right. And this feeding the poor of the flock is nothing else but giving us now and then a glimpse of the Lord's sweet face, and a reviving and refreshing sense of his powerful presence: "Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my Spirit," Job x. 12. All the preaching in the world will not feed nor satisfy the child of God if the Lord be not there. The promise of his presence being with his people to the world's

end is their ground of hope; hence it is that the children of the bride-chamber never fast when the bridegroom is with them; but when his presence is not enjoyed they are sure to fast in those days. Sometimes this feeding is done by the Spirit taking the things which are the Lord's and showing them unto us; but without the light of the Lord's countenance the things set forth are not seen; nor are they felt or enjoyed unless attended with his life-giving presence, for the Spirit testifies of him.

Again: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Here is a right to the tree of life; and they have this right who do his commandments. And these commandments are not the commands of the moral law; for they that are of the works of the law are not under a blessing, but under the curse. There is no one spiritual blessing in all the book of God promised but to faith; "As many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Besides, if they which be of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. These commandments are faith in the Son of God, and love to the brethren: "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And sure I am that the tree of life is already in the doers of these commandments; for he that believeth is passed from death unto life, and so he is that loveth his brother. These are the blessed doers of his commandments; and these have a right to the tree of life, to the leaves of it, which are to heal, and to the fruits of it, which are for meat, and shall enter through the gates into the city; for they are already fellow citizens of the saints, and of the household of God. And this city itself is no other than their own mother; their birth and their breasts are nothing else but the love of God, the Spirit of

God, and the promises of God made to the elect in this better covenant, which is called the heavenly Jerusalem.

Again: "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way." To go into the vineyard is to come out of the world and go into the church at the call of God; the labour is that of a spiritual birth, and of working out our salvation with fear and trembling, bearing the cross, denying self, holding fast our profession and the word of life, and following hard after God through evil report and good report. Now, whatsoever is right, saith the parable, I will give you; and upon this promise they went their way, exercising faith upon his word, and hoping for the promised reward, which is of grace, and not of debt. I will go now to the old law to see what this hire is: "Thou shalt not oppress an hired, servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates: at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee." Whatever this penny per day may mean, it is the wages of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is like this householder, who hires labourers into his vineyard. The kingdom of God is the grace of God, which is to reign through righteousness unto eternal life. The labourer's wages are intended to buy him food and raiment; upon this he sets his heart. The grace of life, and the righteousness of faith, are what the poor and needy sinner seeks after. The Roman penny bore the image and superscription of Cesar upon it; and the work of grace within is called the new man, which is created after the image of him

that created him in righteousness and true holiness. And the most lovely feature in this image is charity; and every believer sets his heart upon this. And sure I am that the Sun of righteousness will never go down upon this hire; for at six of the clock, according to the parable, every one was paid, and every one received a penny, the last as well as the first; and this, according to the parable, was right; and that which was right they received: "He preserveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor. He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted." In this passage we see the poor and needy in full possession Of all their right which God has granted to them in his dear Son; for they are with kings on the throne, established, and exalted for ever.

We have seen what this right is, and who it is that grants us this right; in what way it comes, and how it is secured; namely, by a covenant of promise: "It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." But, then, "Should I lie against my right?" No: I should not. But I often have, and so have others also: "For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment," Job xxxiv. 5. Now the judgment that is in favour of a righteous man, and that should always be passed upon him, and which is his right from God, whether at the tribunal of men, or at the bar of God himself, is and should be, that of justification. This is the just man's right at all tribunals, whether human or divine. "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them, then thou shalt justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked." Again: "If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, by giving

him according to his righteousness." Again: "Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked," Exod. xxiii. 7. Here we see that the right of a righteous man, at all tribunals, is justification; and if this sentence be not passed upon him his judgment is taken away. And this leads us to the true understanding of that mysterious passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, as quoted in the Acts: "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." The sentence of justification, which was due to him, was passed upon Barabbas the robber, and he was set free; and the sentence of condemnation, due to the robber, was passed and executed upon the Saviour. Every one who condemns the just takes away the right of the just, and the right of the poor and needy, hence the complaint, "They are waxen fat, they shine; yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge." Elihu had pointed out to Job that he should put his trust in the Lord; and that God in due time would pass a true sentence upon him and upon his case, and that to the shame of all his friends, and to the confusion of the devil and all his accomplices: "Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou him." This is Elihu's advice, and it coincided too both with Job's faith and conscience, for he himself had declared the same: "Behold now, I have ordered my cause; I know that I shall be justified. Who is he that will plead with me?" Moreover Job had well examined himself and his state, and could appeal to God for a confirmation of his integrity; and he had the testimony of God himself that he was perfect and upright, that he feared God, and eschewed evil. And a brighter testimony cannot be given to poor frail, imperfect men, however gracious they may be. And upon this footing Job styled himself to be what God had declared concerning him: "I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him. The just, upright man is laughed to scorn." Now, against this

express testimony of God in Job's behalf; against the honest and true confession of Job himself; against the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit; against all light and knowledge; against the verdict of his own thoughts; against the decision of his own conscience; against his own former practice as a magistrate; and against all sound reason; he no less than twice lies against his right; and he brings it in by way of an oath, and, as it were, swears by God: "Moreover, Job continued his parable, and said, As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul; all the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit." I think there is wickedness enough, and falsehood too, in this very speech, notwithstanding the oath with which it is prefaced. And here we see the wonderful conscientiousness of Job, that though the Almighty had deprived him of his right, and taken away his judgment, and vexed his soul by so doing, yet he would be far from such an example; for all the time his breath was in him he would not speak wickedness, nor should his tongue utter deceit. Job has this heavy charge brought against him by Elihu: "For Job hath said, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my judgment." This is lying against our right. But I have no call to look into the scriptures, nor any where else, for I have found more of this sort of lying in my own heart than ever I found in the infirmities of Bible saints, or in the mouth and heart of all my neighbours put them all together.

But to proceed. Job not only lied against his right to the sentence of justification, which at his delivery God granted to him, but he lied against his right at the bar of God in the future judgment: "For now thou numberest my steps; doest thou not watch over my sin? My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity." Again: "I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent." "He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked," Job ix. 22. Thus Job

lied against his right in the judgment which God promises to his children upon every fiery trial; as the Holy Spirit declares: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass; and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day," Psalm xxxvii. 5, 6; yea, this is secured by the covenant: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." And to this the faith of the church subscribes, when she says, "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." But then it may be objected, Where is the judgment of the martyrs? And it may also be objected, Where is the judgment of the Son of God, for he was condemned being innocent? To both which I answer, that though he was condemned in the flesh, yet he was justified in the Spirit, both by his resurrection, and in the hearts, and by the faith, of all his followers. And at the destruction of Jerusalem judgment was given to him; wrath came upon them to the uttermost; and the angel Gabriel tells Daniel that Messiah's death should go before, and the Jews' destruction should be an inevitable consequence of it: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the [Roman] prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

And as for the judgment of the saints that suffered martyrdom, their prayers lie yet at the foot of the altar, which were put up when they were offered: "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 white robes were given unto

every one of them, [this is their justification and wedding-robe before God;] 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." The prayers of these departed souls, which were offered up to God when they died, are left at the foot of the altar, which is Christ; and the time will come when their judgment, which was taken away by men, will be given unto them by God; and so it is written, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." The New Testament records it thus: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." It was a long time before the dying prayer of Zechariah was answered; but he left it at the foot of the altar with his last breath: "And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the court of the house of the Lord. And, when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it." These very dying words our Lord takes notice of, and promises a full answer to them: "That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation," Luke xi. 50, 51. Thus the promised judgment of the poor and needy is sure to be given to the saints of the Most High; this is

their promised right. But Job lied against it; both against the present judgment, and the judgment to come.

But again: the right of all believers, from the foundation of the world, is eternal life. It is the eternal statute of the Lord of hosts, that the just man shall live by his faith; hence it is said, that "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." And the strong believer has this life in Christ by faith; the weak believer has it in Christ by hope; hence hope is called a lively hope; and the word of life is the basis of hope: "Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." And what word was that? why, the promise of life: "This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me." But Job lied against this also: "The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth; and thou destroyest the hope of man," Job xiv. 19. If his hope was destroyed, then he could be in no better state than the poor heathens, who were without God, and having no hope in the word. And for such hopeless souls there can be no salvation; "For we are saved by hope."

Again: Job certainly had a right to the kingdom of God; for we are sons of God by faith; and if sons, then heirs; for the kingdom of God is set up in the hearts of all believers; and the empire of grace within is to reign till it waft the soul into glory. There is a glorious kingdom: we shall reign for ever, even in heaven. And Job was a sound believer, for he believed in his heart unto righteousness, and had with his mouth made confession unto salvation: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

Moreover, the kingdom of God was sure to Job by the testimony of God himself. God had borne witness to Job that he was a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in all the earth. Now, according to this testimony, he had a right to the kingdom; for the reward is promised to God's servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear God, small and great. But Job lied against this branch of his right; for he concluded that God viewed him as his enemy; "Wherefore hidest thou thy face from me, and holdest me for thine enemy?" Now heaven is not intended for enemies; all that dwell in those blissful mansions are called God's friends and neighbours: "And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." He concludes it from my text also, "My wound is incurable without transgression." If there was no cure for his wound he could have no part in the health and cure of the great Physician; and if the broken heart be not bound up, nothing can ensue but remediless grief and desperate sorrow. Job concludes it from the common destruction which he suggests would be made of all without exception: "This is one thing therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked." In this common slaughter who can escape? He predicts also the dismal end that he should make; not in the enjoyment of perfect day, or in the realms of ineffable light, but the reverse of all this: "Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness," Job x. 20-22. These dismal regions of the shadow of death, without order, and where the light is as darkness, is ten times worse than the grave, and can be no other than hell itself; for as for the grave, Job speaks pleasantly of that! "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There

the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master."

"But should I lie against my right?" No, I should not. And sure I am that none but the devil would set us at it. But why is it called lying? Why, because there is no truth in it; for not one thing spoken in this unbelieving and perverse way ever came to pass, but all fell to the ground. Furthermore, it is called lying, because Job did not in his heart believe one word of this when his lips muttered it; for Job's faith and confession contradict the whole of it: "I know I shall be justified." I shall see God for myself. "He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him;" and, "When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." All this was spoken in faith, and by the Holy Spirit; and all this came to pass; but, as for all the rest, he did not believe one word of it when he spoke it, but spoke it in anger and rebellion. It is called lying, because it was contrary to his own spiritual knowledge. He knew that God had borne witness of him, and he knew that his name stood in the Lamb's book of life: "Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." He knew also that he had the love of God shed abroad in his heart, which is that charity that never fails: "But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?" "Should I lie against my right?" No, you should not; and none but Satan would set you at it. It is called lying, because Job spoke contrary to his own conscience. Every good man is conscious to himself of his own uprightness; and so was Job: "My foot hath held his steps; his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Hence it appears that Job spoke contrary to his faith, contrary to his better knowledge, and contrary to his own conscience; and this, in plain English, is downright lying. And there is not a little of this

scandalous trade carried on to this day among God's people, especially the convicted soul when in legal bondage, and the believer when in the furnace of affliction. The awakened soul in his chains, though at the same time equipped with a firm hope, will bring forth his innumerable fears and doubts, and represent them ten times worse than he either feels them or fears them; and if he has got treasured up in his own mind ten promises, and a thousand tokens for good, he will keep all these back, except you press him close, and squeeze them out of his heart. And what is this for? Why do they keep back part of the price? Why, this is done to move the bowels of mercy, and to excite your pity; and one half they complain of they do not believe; and though they make their case singular' and desperate, they can see through a hypocrite, and censure him highly; and many that seem high in profession they envy not, but prefer their own state much before theirs. But so it is when in the furnace, though we know it is for our good; and experience tells us it ever has been so; yet enmity is so inflamed, hardness of heart and the perverseness of our wills so averse to the cross, and we are so mortified at being stripped of peace and comfort, that our anger resents it, and we seek to be avenged on the Lord himself for his fatherly anger; and we keep back all that we believe, and bring forth that which we do not believe; and thus our lips speak lies, and our tongue mutters perverseness. Reader, when thou art going to carry thy complaints to thy fellow Christian, bring forth all the best as well as the worst, and ask thyself whether thou believest all these evident tokens of perdition which thou art going to bring forth, and whether conscience will put her amen to thy complaining oration; and if not, depend upon it that thou art going on with this old cursed trade of lying. But I must drop a few words on the second part of my text;

"My wound is incurable without transgression." Job's wound, strictly speaking, was occasioned by the exhibition of the law to Job's mind, and the application of it to Job's conscience,

which discovers our sin. Paul calls it the hand-writing that is against us, and contrary to us; and of this Job complains: "Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble? For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth, Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths." A sight of sin, and even of the sins of his youth, appeared in this handwriting; and sad bondage always attends it; of which Job complains when he calls his bondage the stocks; and as the law lays open all our evil ways, Job complains of God's looking narrowly to all his paths.

Another part of Job's inward wound was, the terrors of the law, which terrify the soul with fears of future judgment; and these are attended with cutting rebukes, reproofs, and the piercing sentence of the law: "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me." Job was sorely assaulted with the blasphemous suggestions and fiery darts of Satan; besides the hard treatment of his friends, the loss of property and family, and the sore afflictions of body which he laboured under; and, if what the Jews assert be true, that Job was seven years in this furnace, it was a long, a sharp, and a grievous trial; but it ended gloriously. Now this wound was incurable. So says carnal reason, so says unbelief, and so say the lips of those that lie against their right. And this incurable wound was inflicted without any transgression as the procuring cause thereof. This Job contradicts himself: "Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth." Again: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?" Job vii. 20. Various are the voices in this book; unbelief, carnal reason, desperation, and inflamed wrath, have their voices; faith, conscience, and truth, have their voices also. But all that has been advanced by infidelity, anger, or blind reason, at the grand trial is put to silence, and falls to the ground; but not one word spoken by

the Spirit, not one word spoken in faith, and with the testimony of conscience, but what is highly honoured and fulfilled, to the glory of God, and to the comfort of Job.

William Huntington

XXXII. Charity Described in its Fountain, in its Channel, and in its Streams

"And above all those things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." COLOSSIANS 3:14

ALL that I have ever read upon this mysterious subject of charity, both in ancient and in modern productions, and all that I have ever heard upon it from the pulpit, or among the saints of God, served only to leave me just where I was; I never could come to a right understanding of it, so as to be satisfied about it, and settled in it, I found many that were in the possession of it, and in the enjoyment of it, but, they could give no consistent account of it. I once went to a prayer-meeting where a company of young men met to pray and expound the Scriptures; and charity, with the properties of it, so fully set forth in 1 Cor. 13th chapter, was the subject that was to be expounded that night; and several spoke upon it, but they knew nothing of it, either in heart or in head.

Many glorious things are spoken of this gospel grace in the holy Scriptures; and, as liberality to the poor is strongly enforced and highly commended in the word of God, many have mistaken this grace, and imagined that it signifies almsgiving; and to such Paul, in his account of charity, has proved a stumblingblock, when he sets charity above all

ministerial and miraculous gifts and operations, and even above all the liberality of men, saying; "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing, And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Then they ask, If giving all one's goods to feed the poor be not charity, what is? Charity is a gift from God: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Charity is one of God's good and perfect gifts, as appears from Paul's advice and counsel to the Corinthians: "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way. Follow after charity." The best gift that ever was or ever will be given to men is the Lord Jesus Christ; and the next is the most holy and ever-blessed Spirit of God. The next gift is eternal life, which is God's gift to us in Christ, and comes to us by the Spirit. The gift of an everlasting righteousness is a most invaluable and wonderful gift; and so is charity. These are the best gifts.

The fountain of charity is God; he is the fountain of living waters, and charity is the river pleasures that flows from that fountain, and is no less than the self-moving, free, sovereign, discriminating, and everlasting love of God to the sons of men, set upon us in Christ Jesus. This the Son of God saw in eternity; this the Son of God highly approved; with this he closed, and that with all the love of his deity, and undertook for us, which secured this love to us in him for evermore. And of this our celebrated poet sings; and in this he sings truth, when God speaks of Adam's fall and of Christ's undertaking:

He with his whole posterity must die
Die he or justice must, unless for him
Some other able and as willing pay
The rigid satisfaction death for death.
Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, the just the unjust to save
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
MILTON.

This is the fountain of charity; here it began. God the father's love, and the love of the Son, met together, as mercy and truth have done since; and the love of both were displayed in the gift of God, which is Christ, and in the death of Christ: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Our Redeemer's love also is displayed in his dying for us: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This is the real fountain of charity; and the Mediator and his mediation is the only channel through which charity flows to men; and the Holy Spirit, with his grace, is the river of life in which charity flows; and it is one of the streams of the river of pleasure which makes glad the city of God. "Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

But then it may be asked, If this charity be the love of God to us, and the love of God in us, why does it bear two names, first, charity, and then, love? That matter has puzzled a good many. And, as charity seems to be peculiar to the New Testament, it may be asked, Was there no love under the old dispensation: for we read of God's shewing mercy to thousands of them that love him, even in the law itself? All this is true. There is much said about the love of God in the Old Testament: and many under that dispensation did know it,

enjoy it, exercised it, and confessed it; but it ever was, and ever will be, a gift, a grace, a blessing, of the new and better covenant; and all the ancient saints that enjoyed it, enjoyed it by being in covenant with God, and by virtue of union with the covenant Head; it never came from the law, nor by the law; for the law worketh wrath, not love.

Charity, as considered in God, and in the fullest sense, never was clearly revealed till the Son of God appeared in human nature. In the fullness of time, and at the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, God's charity appeared in all its glory: He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. This love was promised long before, but the manifestation of it was at the appearing of Christ: "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him," I John iv. 9. Nor was the charity of Christ fully manifested till his death took place: "Here-by perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Here is the charity of the Father and the Son Doth made manifest, and that in the fullest, sense.

Moreover, the Messiah was to be king mediator; but he was to obtain his kingdom by conquest; he was to vanquish and spoil principalities and powers, and to lead captivity captive, before he was to ascend his mediatorial throne. Upon his resurrection from the dead all power in heaven and earth was given to him; and upon his ascension he was crowned with glory and honour. This Christ calls going into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, Luke xix. 12. Upon this exaltation of our king Messiah new laws were given and great alterations made, as is generally the case when new sovereigns invade and take a kingdom. The divine oracles inform us that upon the ascension of Christ a law was to proceed from him: "Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people."

Charity is a branch of this law which was to be given forth by the Son of God when he was exalted and glorified in human nature. Milton perceived something of this, but he does not describe it so as the scriptures do; but what he says upon it is right:

Only add, Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest; then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this paradise, but shall possess
A paradise within thee, happier far.

The law which came forth from Christ hath two branches:

1. Faith. Christ is the author and finisher of faith, Heb. xii. 2. This is one branch of his law.

2. The other branch is charity. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This is called a new commandment, which makes that of the former covenant old. The old commandment respects the neighbour, "Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself;" but this respects the children of God; it is, that ye love one another. The old commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" but this new commandment goes further, Thou shalt love one another, as I have loved you; which John explains, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Now Christ displayed his greatest love in dying for us: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" and greater charity hath no saint than this, to lay down, as Paul did, his life for the brethren, when he said,

"Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all."

I observed before that the law of Christ hath two branches, faith and love; and to this John agrees: "And this is his commandment, That we should believe, on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him." Paul says the same: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." This is the law that came by Christ, and this the Spirit writes in the hearts of all believers; and this work of the Spirit includes every law in the book of God; and this is the law that Paul means, and no other, when he says, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

When Christ gave commandment that his gospel should be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith, the end that Christ aimed at in that command is accomplished in every soul where this law of faith, which worketh by love, comes: "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

Having discovered the fountain of charity, which is God, and the channel of charity in which it flows, namely, Christ the mediator; and that it belongs to the law of the Messiah, and is inscribed in the hearts of all the saints by the Holy Ghost; I shall, now treat of the objects of it;

That is, I shall inquire who are the proper objects of this charity, as exercised either by God, by Christ, or by the saints, And this is a truth, that not every individual of mankind is the object of charity, nor yet my neighbour; for there is no mention made of these by our Lawgiver at the giving of this new commandment; had the height hour been mentioned it had

not been a new commandment, but the old one. But it is a new commandment, Love one another; love the saints, love the brethren. The elected children of God are the only objects of it, whether we consider it as exercised by God the Father, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit, or by the saints. And in this matter our Common Prayer-book, in the Catechism, has greatly exceeded the bounds of scripture: What is required of them who come to the Lord's supper? To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men. But this universal charity was rebuked by God himself, even under the Old Testament: "And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. And Jehu, the son of Hanani the seer, went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord. Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God."

This charity is sovereign and discriminating even in God himself. He loves his own elect children with an everlasting love, all others only partake of his providence. "He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment," but no further. Hence it appears that his elect are the objects of his eternal love in Christ; all others are the creatures of his care, and are supplied by his providence, as I observed before.

And this love is discriminating, as all do not share in it: "I have loved you, saith the Lord: yet ye say; Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas

Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever," Mal. i. 2-4. Here are some that God himself says he hates, and against whom he hath indignation forever. Now I know that God in his nature is love; yet he has indignation against some; and I know by sad experience that the carnal mind of every man is enmity, and the spirit that reigns in him in a state of nature lusteth to envy; yet the commandments of men tell us that we must live in charity with all men; so that we must extend our love beyond God himself, for he does not extend his eternal charity to all mankind; and I am fully persuaded he will never damn me because I cannot exceed him in love. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master" without excelling him. Hence I conclude, that to live in charity with all men is one of the doctrines and commandments of the church of England, The Arminian will bear hard upon me for this, I doubt not; yet even his charity is no more universal than mine; for although I confess I cannot love them that hate God, yet I am as sure that they hate all them that love God. Thus charity is sovereign and discriminating, even in the Arminians; and so it is in God himself, who is the fountain of charity.

It is sovereign and discriminating in Christ Jesus, who, as mediator, is the channel through which this charity flows. All men do not share in his dying love: "I lay down my life for the sheep." But we read of a herd of goats, of foxes, wolves, bears, swine, dogs, serpents, and a generation of vipers, none of which are included in the dying charity of the Son of God. And as they are not included in his dying love,

No more are they in his prophetic office; for he came for judgment into the world, that they that see not, might see, and that they that see, might be made blind; and he thanks his

Father for hiding these things from the wise and prudent, and for revealing them unto babes, and heartily acquiesces with him in it: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Nor does the chief Shepherd exercise his charity in feeding the non-elect: "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another." These that our Lord declared that he would not feed, these that he loathed, and these whose soul abhorred him, whom he declares shall die, can never be the objects of Christ's charity. Nor does our Lord include all the world in his intercession any more than in his sacrifice: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." And in this also the service of our establishment exceeds the charity of the Son of God himself; for though he prays not for the world, yet she prays him that it may please him to have mercy upon all men.

Nor is the world included in the charity of the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to testify of Christ, and to shed abroad the love of God in the heart, and to comfort the saints with it: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Hence it appears plain that not all mankind, nor even those that are called neighbours, nor the world, are the objects of God's charity; the elect of God, among angels and men, are the only objects of that divine charity which comes from God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Charity is a fruit of the Holy Ghost; among the members of the new man of grace it is called true holiness: "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." And this true holiness is charity: are holy and without blame before him in love, Eph. i. 4. Having proved that divine charity is sovereign and discriminating even in God the Father, and in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost, so it evidently appears to be even in the administration of it.

Mary Magdalene was a very lewd and bad character, and was led on in sin by seven devils that had possession of her; but the love of God flowed into her heart with such irresistible force as drove all the devils, the power of sin, the guilt of sin, the love of sin, her enmity to God, her unbelief, rebellion, &c. all before it; and left Simon, the Jewish pharisee, in full possession of all his dead works, further from the kingdom of God than either publicans or harlots. And so we read of some, even among the heathens, and especially at Corinth, that were the most notorious sinners, and yet were washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, read 1 Cor. 6th chapter; when numbers of the Jewish scribes and pharisees, so far from reaping benefit by Christ's charity, he threatens them that at his departure the devil should enter into them with double force: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and, when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

I come now to prove that none but the children of God, and such as favour the Lord's cause, are the objects of the saints charity. Christ tells his disciples that they all have one Father,

even God; and tells them that all they were brethren; and his command is, That ye love one another, as I have loved you; he extends it no further than to one another. The subjects of God's grace, therefore, are the only objects of this charity: "He that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him." Here John makes the image of God the object of a believer's charity; and so Peter also: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And, above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Here Peter tells them to have perfect charity among themselves. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." This abounding charity was toward each other. Hence it appears that charity is sovereign and discriminating, even in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and strictly speaking, that the saints of God, and those that favour his righteous cause, are the proper objects of the saints charity. And it will be hard work to prove, from God's word, that all mankind are the objects of a saint's love, according to this new commandment. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." These evil things were not in the world when God made it; all that he made was very good. These came into the world by Satan, who alone brought sin. Nor are these evil things to be found now in the world, abstractedly considered. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, reign in no creature but men and devils. He, therefore, that loves the company, and can feel union with wicked men, is in love with all these lusts and corruptions. Gospel charity will embrace a child of God upon

the first sight, if he was a stranger before: "Ye are taught of God to love one another." The bowels of charity will move and sound toward every-soul that is under real concern about his state; the simple, the sincere seeker, and all that favour the cause of God, the truth of God, and the saints of God. And, on the other hand, charity will damp, grow cold, and in the end be entirely quenched, toward the object it one embraced; at the appearance of apostasy, at the appearance of an attachment to heretics, or to any damnable heresy; and at the appearance of any alienation from Christ; or, to be more plain, charity will forsake that professor that forsakes Christ. When men have done with Jesus, charity has done with them. When Judas was pointed out to be the traitor the apostles had done with that withered branch, and the priests and pharisees gathered him into their company.

In this business the devil often displays the quintessence of infernal wisdom; for, when God discovers a hypocrite, and makes him fully manifest, so that in your private judgment you cannot hold him, justify him, or even judge favourable of him in any one thing, insomuch that charity has refused him and done with him; even then comes Satan, transforming himself into an angel, of light, and works with all deceiveableness in the natural affections of the saint; in order to keep his tares among the wheat; and under this deceptive influence of Satan natural affections become inordinate, as may be seen in Samuel: "And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?" I myself have paid dear for this: Under this influence the false brethren got into the church at Jerusalem; and under the same, Arius, though once condemned and cast out of the church, got in again, and kept his standing in it to the destruction of thousands and millions of souls; and by this whole congregations of hypocrites are kept together to this day, who have not a breath of divine life in them. Natural affections love nature and natural men; but real charity

respects a person not as a man, but as a saint; nor can it, nor will it, embrace a man unless it feels a savour of Christ in his conversation, or discovers some feature of Christ's image in the person. Even our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as man, wept with pity and compassion over Jerusalem, when at the same time, as God, the day of vengeance was in his heart. Natural affections and divine love are two things; they were so even in Christ. But it may be objected, Does not God say, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; and if he thirst, give him drink?" In these things God himself is set before us as our example, even by Christ himself; and he is the best example: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "God loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye, therefore, the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." God's love here extends itself to the stranger no further than giving him food and raiment; for all that die strangers to God will in the great day be sent away with Depot from me; I know ye not. Love ye the stranger, and even thy enemy: if he hunger, feed him; and if he thirst, give him drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, Prov. xxv. 22; and if we heap not live coals from the altar we shall heap coals of juniper. This rule our Lord himself enforces: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." And now mind what follows: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect," &c. Matt. v. 44, 45. We are here commanded to pray for our enemies; for it is often seen that the elect, before they are called, are the worst enemies, as may be seen in Paul, and in some at the crucifixion of Christ, for whom Christ prayed, Luke xxiii. 34, compare Acts ii. 36, 37, And I believe that the grea 346 ter part of the best friends that I now have in this world were once my greatest enemies. And sure I am that it will appear in the great day that

none have abounded, even in this work, like the real lovers of God. There is a wide difference between the love of God to the stranger in clothing him and feeding him, and the love of God to the saints, by which they are saved. There is also a difference between divine charity and natural affections: the former embraces the image of God, the latter relieves a fellow creature. But there is nothing more common in our day than to palm the sacred name of charity upon natural affections and upon dissembled love, and even upon corrupt and inordinate affections, which are members of the old man, but not of the new.

William Huntington

XXXIII. The Son of God in Triumph, and Satan's Work in Ruins

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." COL 2:15.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy, the works of the devil." I JOHN3:8

I WILL endeavour, from these words, to show,

1. The origin of the devil.
2. The devil's works.

It is the opinion of some that there is no such creature as the devil; which appears to have been the notion of Muggleton and Reeves, two impostors that preached in the days of Oliver Cromwell. They held that the evil nature in man is that which is called the devil. But then it is a wonder where that evil nature came from. I once knew a woman, a shining professor,

who held this opinion through all her profession: her husband was a minister of the gospel. However, at length she fell into soul distress, and wished much to see me. I visited her, and soon after received a letter from her, saying she had long denied the existence of Satan, and God had now given her into his hands that she might know there is a devil. This circumstance undeceived her in that particular, and yet she went on to be deceived; for, after she had been for some time deranged, she got better, and then she put off the mask and cloak of religion.

It is thought by some, and, if I mistake not, Milton was of this opinion, that angels were created long before this world was made; and that the angels fell in eternity before ever time began, But the word of God seems plainly to contradict this; "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." If the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all that dwell in them, were made in six days, angels, the inhabitants of heaven, must be included in the work of those six days; and perhaps the angels were the first living creatures that God made. For in God's speech to Job he asks, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" It appears to me that the angels are called stars because of their glorious and shining appearance, and morning stars because first made in the morning of the world, even as the time of Christ's second coming is called midnight, being at the end of it. And they are called the sons of God, as all rational creatures are by creation: We have all one father; one God hath made us all. Hence one of the angels said to John, who was going to worship him, "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, if I am not much mistaken, the anthem of the angels, which was sung in the morning of the creation, is still extant in the oracles of God. This I gather from its being altogether expressive of creating power, but not a word in it of redeeming love. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 11. Though I do not imagine this song to be now sung by angels to the exclusion of the saints, for elect men as well as elect angels have cause enough to praise creating power as well as redeeming grace; but the choicest matter of the saints' song must be touching the King; and their sweetest anthem, and which shall be sung on the highest key, and that to all eternity, must be this, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," Rev. vii. 10. And again: "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." Now, as redemption is expressly called a new song, it shews that the hymn of the creation was an old one, the new song making the first old.

Desperate, rebellious, implacable, treacherous, deceitful, false, cunning, vile, foul, filthy, impure, and unclean, as the devils now are, sure I am that they never came out of the hands of their great Creator in so vile a condition, and in such a perilous state; for, when the whole creation was finished, the following is the testimony which God gives of his works: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good; and the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

That the devil was once an archangel, or one of the first rank and higher order of angelic spirits, I have no doubt; because, fallen as he is, he still keeps up his dignity, and claims a kind

of sore, reign power and authority over the rest of the fallen angels: and this our Lord intimates when he distinguishes him from them, calling the leader the devil, and the rest his angels: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

None of the names by which our arch-enemy is now called, seem to be his original one, for all his present names are big with mischief, and are such as he obtained by his rebellion, apostacy, and enmity against God. He is called a roaring lion, being king of devils, as a lion is of beasts, seeking whom he may devour, the souls of men being his only prey.

The sea-dragon, and the old serpent, because he once abused that creature in his seduction of man; and because of his subtlety, craft, and cunning; and because of the venom of sin, which he has instilled into mankind, and upon which he works, and by which he tempts men to evil, and then accuses them of it; and, finally, because all his ways are crooked and perverse, always counteracting the will, the work, and the ways, of God; and they are unwearied at it, being spirits, immaterial; and their agility is great.

He is called Abaddon, and Apollyon, both which signify a destroyer. He has destroyed all mankind; and all the reprobate part of mankind are finally destroyed. He has destroyed all the angels that were seduced by him; and he has ultimately destroyed himself, being the author of sin, death, and misery; and these will reign in him, and over him, to all eternity; and as he is supreme in sin, so he will be in death, misery, and in suffering, and that for ever; and this he believes, and at this he trembles.

He is called the wicked one, that steals the word away from the careless hearer; and the evil one, being originally, independently, ultimately, unalterably, and eternally evil.

He claims second sovereignty, as a rival to the Almighty, and is therefore called the god of this world, that blinds the minds of them which believe not; and has been exalted, adored, revered, revered, and worshipped, as God. Temples have been erected, and altars built, and sacrifices, both human and brutal, have been offered to him: "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God."

The prophet Isaiah, in his funeral oration upon the king of Babylon, seems to borrow some of his materials from the brilliant appearance which this angel made before he fell; and, if the king of Babylon's fall from all his glory and majesty into a state of desperation and madness are included in the oration, the fall of Satan is included also. I mean, when Nebuchadnezzar was removed from his kingly throne, and stripped of all his glory; when a beast's heart was given unto him, and when he fancied himself a brute, went upon his hands and feet, all-fours, like a beast, and ran wild in his own forest among the cattle, eating grass as the ox, and wet with the dew of heaven and the showers of the mountains; till, in a long seven years apprenticeship, he could learn this short lesson, To know that the heavens do rule, Dan. iv. 26. The fall of that proud monarch, both into madness and into death, appears to be taken from the fall of Satan: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cast down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! for thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit," Isaiah xiv. 12-15. In this sublime and elegant speech I think we have Satan's original name; it is Lucifer, which signifies bringing light, or day-star, and serves to show us the shining lustre of glory that was upon all the angels when God made them; a shining glory attended them wherever they

went, as it does attend on all the elect angels to this day. Hence we read of the glory of the holy angels, Luke ix. 26. Now, as there is nothing evil in the name of Lucifer, which is, as some say, day-star, or bringing light, it bids fair to be his original one; his present names he obtained after his fall, as they are all big with mischief; but this he bore before he fell.

Moreover, it is apparent that the whole apostacy from God, both of angels and men, originated or began with one of the angels; for our Lord himself ascribes it to one only, and he is now called the Devil and Satan. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." All which seem to show us that Satan was the ringleader of all the apostacy, and is spoken of in the singular number, and as such called a murderer, the father of all murderers, and the father of lies, and of all liars.

The first sin which took rise in the mind of Lucifer, according to the word of God, appears to be pride. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." And it was pride that went before the destruction of Lucifer, and a haughty spirit procured his fall. Paul, in his advice to Timothy, about the choice of a minister, tells him not to choose a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. According to this text the procuring cause of the devil's ruin and destruction was the pride of his mind; and, when this sin was by himself conceived, he went on from bad to worse, from sin to sin, or from pride to rebellion; for he is charged by our Lord himself with a departing from the truth, &c. Christ says that Satan was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, John viii. 44. There is one thing very observable in the above text, that is, Satan being called a murderer from the beginning; which seems to intimate

that the non-elect angels stood but a very little while. For, if the heavens and the earth, and all that are in them, angels and men, were made in those six days, and the first appearance of the creation be called, as it most certainly is, the beginning; "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," so in the above text Christ calls Satan a murderer from the beginning; it plainly indicates that the fallen angels and our first parents stood but a very little while; and no wonder, for they stood alone; they had not momentary support; and "Wo to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up."

The devil's malice and murder of mankind Were from the beginning; and, as for the time of Adam's standing, it was so short, that not one word expressive of time is so much as once mentioned to denote it; neither year, month, week, day, hour, or minute; all that is said of him is, that he was and is not; he was a glorious creature, and then a brute. "Man being honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish."

The next thing observable in our Lord's assertion is, that the devil abode not in the truth, Then it may be asked what this truth is that the devil departed from? "The secret things," says Moses, "belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever." The things which were then revealed and made known, and which are to be found in the scriptures of truth, appear to me to be these:

1. When Adam stood before his Maker as the sovereign ruler of the world, as the head and representative of mankind, and as the heir of all things which this world affords, all which, even to the green herb, was bestowed on him, I say, Adam, then standing in the image of God, is declared, by the scriptures of truth, to be the figure of him that was to come. Hence in the Old Testament Christ is called the everlasting

Father: and he is called Adam also in the New: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Christ therefore is the truth of that type, and the substance of that figure; and no doubt but this was made known from the beginning; for, if all God's friends and neighbours, which must be angels and saints, are called together to rejoice at the finding of one lost sheep, that there may be joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, it can hardly be thought that so great and wonderful a mystery should be concealed in the beginning.

2. Another thing that seems to me to be made known from the beginning is, a secret decree of God; and all God's decrees are truth. This we have in the Psalms: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Song this day have I begotten thee," Psalm ii. 7. The day there spoken of is what the wise man calls perfect day, in which the shining path of the righteous is said to end: "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Heaven and eternity with God is called day; as it is written, "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there," Rev. xxi. 25. The begetting the Son above mentioned does not, I humbly conceive, respect his holy and divine nature, but his personality. This decree seems to have been declared from the beginning; for without a revelation how could it have been known to men or angels that God had a son? "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?" I have no doubt but this was revealed to all the angels at the beginning, for it is plain that the devils, in the days of Christ's incarnation, well understood it, and confessed it: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment

me not. For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man."

3. There went forth also a commandment from God to all the angels of heaven, and I believe it went forth at the beginning, which is this, "Worship him, all ye gods," Psalm xcvi. 7. We are told by the Holy Ghost that the true meaning of that command is this, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let ail the angels of God worship him." And in that command the Lord's sonship seems to be clearly revealed. The universal particle, all, shows that there was not one angel exempt from that divine command, "Let all the angels of God worship him;" and this was to be done when the firstbegotten was to appear in the world, that is, when he became incarnate; for, as Christ is God, and God is immensity itself, and fills all space, the bringing him in does not signify any motion from place to place, but the humiliation of himself when he became man, or when he assumed human nature; and it is plain that all the elect angels of God did worship him on the very day of his birth, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were afraid, And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a saviour; which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men," Luke ii, 8-14. There is one particular in this passage that strikes me, and that is, there is first an account of one angel speaking, and of no more; "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Again: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not;

for, behold, I bring you good tidings," &c.; and then all the heavenly host began their anthem. From which it appears to me that he was an archangel, that led in the worship of our Immanuel, and very likely the angel Gabriel, which was the name of the angel that brought to Zacharias the tidings of the birth of John, our Lord's forerunner; as it is written, "I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings." We have the name of this angel again, telling Mary of our Lord's conception and birth: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph." Hence I conclude that it was the angel Gabriel that led in the worship of Christ; and all the rest joined the chorus and followed in it. From which it appears that the truth from which the angels departed lies in these three things:

1. That Adam was the figure of Christ, and Christ the truth of that type.
2. That the decree declared respecting the sonship of Christ is the second branch of truth, for he is the Son of the Father in truth and love.
3. The word of God is truth, whether it be commandments or promises, and shall stand fast for ever; for the scriptures cannot be broken, nor shall one jot ever pass away unfulfilled; nor will God call back his word, or alter the thing that is gone forth out of his lips; and this is a truth, among many others, "Worship him, all ye gods;" "Let all the angels of God worship him." And this command stands fast, for all the angels of God did worship him; and, if fallen angels did not, or would not, it doth not alter the matter, for it is plain they have lost the title of being angels of God, and are all called devils to this day, and will continue to be devils to all eternity.

I do not suppose that all these things were fully made known to the angels at the hour of their creation, but rather at the marriage of Adam and Eve, and more fully in heaven soon after; for God declareth "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 all my pleasure," Isaiah xlvii. 10. The angels knew their Creator to be the Son of God, for unto the angels he saith, "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." And they had all seen Adam, the figure of him that was to come, by which they knew that their Creator was to be made a little lower than the angels, or for a little while inferior to them. This was made known to them, and they were to adore him in his incarnation; for, "When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." This seems to have been the rock of offence even to these angels, and it was the stumblingblock of the Jews of old. And against God manifest in the flesh do all devils Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Arminians, and Arians, and all others that are stanch in Satan's cause, kick to this day, which shews whose interest it is that they espouse, and whose work they do.

Satan abode not in the truth, says Christ. To abide in the truth is to acquiesce in it, embrace it, and obey it. But Satan rejected it, and rebelled against it; and for this rebellion he lost all his native glory, the favour of God, and of the Son of God; at which all his happiness, modesty, humility, holiness, love, reverence, and filial fear of God, forsook him, when pride lifted him up and swelled his mind; and enmity, malice, and revenge, inflamed him, smoked and burnt in him. O what a change was this! "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Their first estate was glory, holiness, and happiness; but now misery. Their habitation was heaven; but now it is this world, and the hearts of sinful men: He worketh in the children of

disobedience. Their chains are their unpardonable transgressions, the hot displeasure and wrath of God, and the curbing restraints of his providence. Their darkness is their implacable enmity against God and his saints, their dark designs against them, and their furious and impetuous haste, being always hurried on by rage and malice to resist and counteract whatever appears to be the will and design of God.

At the fall of angels God did not deprive them of their strength, light, knowledge, wisdom, or understanding; these are left to aggravate their misery. They are wonderfully strong. This appears by the havoc they made in Egypt when God cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them, Psalm lxxviii. 49. And in Job also. When Satan obtained leave of God to afflict him, a banditti of Sabeans fell upon the oxen, asses, and servants; a fire from the air burnt up both sheep and shepherds; the Chaldeans fell upon the camels, and slew all their keepers; a wind from the wilderness smote the house at all its four corners and killed all the children at once. He soon mustered the armies of his wrath, and raised both wind and fire when God let him loose, or lengthened out the chain of his providence. Nor did he stop here; he smote Job in his mind with the darts of his rage, and his body with boils from head to foot. His power is great; God himself calls him, the strong, Isaiah liii. 12. And having such strength aggravates him, because, look which way he will, he meets with omnipotence. If he looks to God he trembles at his power; and if to the poor sheep of Christ, they are possessed with an omnipotent spirit; and if to the world, there is the omnipotence of Providence checking, restraining, and overruling; so that he is like a wild bull in a net.

His light of knowledge is great. There is not an influence, operation, or sensation, of the Spirit, no, nor yet a fruit or grace of the Holy Spirit, but what he can counterfeit, Hence

We read of voluntary humility, long prayers, vain repetitions, will-worship, dissembled love, feigned faith, temporary joy, hypocritical hope, and vain expectations; and the devil is the author of all these, Nor is there a doctrine or truth in the Bible, from the fountain of all truth, I mean a trinity of divine persons in the one God, down to the lowest precept which is to regulate the conduct of a saint, but what he can pervert, has perverted, and does pervert, by throwing over them false glosses, obscuring their beauty, weakening their strength; by confusing the mind, putting wrong constructions upon them, and giving false apprehensions of their meaning, and making false applications of them. And an enlightened mind may see the devil working in such preachers as clearly as you may see the wind wave the standing corn, or a serpent wriggle in the grass. Not a truth but what they will name, and not a truth but what is artfully perverted; and under all this such humility and meekness, such sympathy and love, such bowels of mercy, pity, and compassion, for every class of sinners; but, at the same time, such hatred to God, to his sovereignty, to his decrees and councils, to his discriminating grace, and to the objects of his choice, as makes it manifest that they are of that wicked one. And this is the root and branch, the basis and fabric of Arminianism; Satan representing the Almighty to them in a false light, in which they think God to be just such an one as themselves. And, under: the Operations of Satan transformed with an image before them, even the Jews have had their wild affections stirred, and their corrupt passions moved, till the influence has terminated in an infernal and burning love to devils, even till they have slain their own Children without pity, to charm the devil with the sacrifices of infants; of which infernal fire God complains: "Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the rallies under the cliffs of the rocks." Well may God call them the sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore, Isaiah lvii. 3. Satan transformed, operating upon the fleshly affections of unrenewed sinners, is

no less than a sinful and vile union with unclean spirits; and from hence every wild and unnatural lust and corruption has been moved and stirred up, infernal imaginations have raised such fire in the wanton passions even of women, as to set them to crying and howling over devils: "He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. And, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz, Ezek. viii. 15, 14; which is the devil concealed.

They exist in continual fear-and expectation of their future judgment and the awful sentence of it, which they know will be passed and executed by the Son of God in human nature; for God will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, Acts vii. 31. This the devils believe, and at this they tremble; they therefore said unto Christ, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

The rebellion of Satan did not stop or rest with himself; the unparalleled contagion spread, and an innumerable multitude of the angelic host were infected with it, and drawn into it. When John is speaking of the papal empire under the name of a dragon, and of the many shining ministers of the letter being drawn into apostacy and errors by popery, he seems to allude to the fall of Satan, where he says, "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth," Rev. xii. 4. A great many fallen angels there must be when we read of a legion in one man; seven in Mary Magdalene: nor is there one graceless sinner in all the world that is not led captive by them. In the fall of Lucifer we see where all rebellion first began, and by whom it was spread; and this all our desperate and incurable Jacobins will one day find and confess to their everlasting shame, contempt, and confusion of face.

Whatever might have been conceived in the mind of Lucifer at the sight of Adam, who was the figure of Christ, it appears that the open rebellion did not then break out, for the scriptures seem to intimate that it took place in heaven. And strange it is that the unparalleled condescension and humiliation of Christ should be the occasion of Satan's infinite pride. Never was there such humility as that of God manifest in the flesh; and this was seen of angels 1 Tim. iii. 16. And never was there such pride; in any creature as in Satan refusing worship to his Maker in a nature made a little lower than his own. But God loveth the Son; and this opposition to him was highly resented, and ever will be. God summoned Satan and all his adherents, and arraigned them, and brought home his charge against them, and left it upon their mind and conscience, and the divine displeasure of God against it; but Satan's full trial of condemnation did not take place as yet; this was reserved to a future time; all that is said upon this head is, that God put no trust in these angelic servants; and his angels he charged with folly, Job iv. 18. Some good men understand that passage to be meant of good angels; and they talk of the charge being comparative folly. We know there can be no comparison between the creature and the Creator; but, as the angels of God are called elect angels, holy angels, and we read of the glory of the holy angels, mentioned by Christ himself; I think it is impossible that they could always behold the face of God if they could be charged with folly. And these angels do the will of God in their obedience so perfectly, that our Lord teaches us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." God pronounced all his works to be very good; but folly is always expressive of evil, in some branch of it or other. And, as the angels remain in their original and creative innocence, purity, and holiness, and are made known in the scriptures of truth to be elect angels, and are confirmed in their standing now in Christ, who is the head of all principality and power, if there is any folly in these holy creatures, it must reflect dishonour upon their creation and upon their Creator, for they are what

God made them; nor have they any thing in them but what God put into them. And who will ascribe folly to God, or to the work of his hands? No one text in all the book of God ever pointed out or allowed sin or folly to be the workmanship of God; nor are they to be found in or among any one of the creatures that he made, when they came out of his hands. But it may be objected that they are called his angels; he charged his angels with folly; which shows that he claimed them as his. I answer, they were his before they fell; and even now he lays the same claim to them as he does to all wicked men; the deceived and the deceiver are his. The reason these good men urge in favour of good angels being intended, is, that the words charged with folly are not strong enough to express the just indignation of God against such consummate wickedness as that of open rebellion against the Almighty himself. To all which I answer, that for his disobedience, apostacy, and rebellion, Satan was charged with folly, and cast out of heaven; but as yet he had not taken his full trial, he was not as yet fully judged, because, like the Amorites, he had not filled up his measure; his iniquity was not yet full. But, when he had ruined our first parents, and all the human race in them, then we hear of his full trial, and of his eternal sentence. But this was to take place in paradise in this world, which is the devil's stage of action, on which this unpardonable transgressor is to finish his work of deceiving, until all his adherents have filled up their measure as well as he, and then shall the end come.

After this Satan was cast out of heaven; For John seems to speak in allusion to this when he is predicting the dethroning of the pagan Roman emperors, in which Satan had long reigned and ruled, and by whose instrumentality he had long persecuted and murdered the saints; when, by the coming of Constantine, a Christian emperor, "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. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." All these things seem to be borrowed from the fall of Satan, and by which pagan emperors and their ministers are compared to the devil and his angels.

Peter says, that Satan was not only cast out of heaven, but was cast into hell. "For, if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," &c. Now, if the word, hell, signifies the dreadful state into which the angels are fallen, even as our Lord's sufferings are called hell and the pains of hell, it is easy to be understood; but if by hell is meant the bottomless pit, the real receptacle of the damned, it is a wonder how he got out. This is no where revealed, that I know of; but, if it was so, it was permitted for the trial of mankind; for the devils are by no means in a place of confinement, or they are not confined in any prison; for Peter says that our adversary the devil is continually going about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And this is obvious enough, not only by the wickedness of the openly profane, but by the swarms of heretics, hypocrites, and impostors, with which the professing church is almost overrun.

The highest seat of the Satanic empire, where the devils reside, hold their counsel, and keep their court, is in the air; this the scriptures testify abundantly. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." This appears also by our Lord's parable of the sower, in which he calls the devils the fowls of the air: "And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up;"

and the explanation of that part of the parable is, that Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts, Mark iv. 14. And, when the disciples returned from their labour in the ministry, and told Christ of the devils being subject to them through his name, our Lord said unto them, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." By all which it appears that the devils hold their council, and keep their court, in the air; their pride still mounting them as high as they can possibly get.

And where they keep their Court there they will find the beginning of their torment, for so it is written: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth Upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together; as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. 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," Isaiah xxiv. 21-22. The host of the high ones that are on high are the devils, and are distinguished from the kings of the earth, which will be punished upon the earth in the battle of Armageddon, after the destruction of the beast; and this punishment will commence upon the first resurrection, in which all the just will rise, and at which time this world will be burnt up, and a new heaven and a new earth will appear. The devils and all the wicked, says the prophet, will be gathered together into the pit, and be shut up in the prison of hell, and will remain there a thousand years, in which time Christ will reign in a glorious manner before all his saints, from Adam the first down to the last soul called by grace. The first of these the prophet calls the Lord's ancients. And, when the thousand years are out, which the prophet calls many days, they will be visited, that is, they will be brought forth to be judged at the last judgment. And even the apostle John seems to have taken some of his matter

from this passage of Isaiah, when he tells us that "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," Rev. vi. 17. And this pouring out the vial of wrath into the air is explained to be the binding of Satan; "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season," Rev. xx. 1-3. In all which John agrees with the prophet Isaiah, that upon the first resurrection, in which all that are blessed and holy will rise, the devil and his angels, which are in the air, and which are called the host of the high ones that are on high, will have the wrath of God poured out upon them. The earth and all the works of it will at the same time be burnt up, and the wicked will be burnt up also in the general conflagration, just as it was in the days of Lot: "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." The bodies of the wicked being burnt to ashes with the world, all the souls of these wicked men, together with the devil and his angels, will be gathered together; as prisoners are gathered into the pit, or dungeon, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited, Isaiah xxiv. 22. At the close of the thousand years reign these prisoners will be visited, for death and hell must give up their dead. Death must give up the dead bodies, and hell must give up all condemned souls, in order to appear in the general and last judgment. And, when all these are raised, then Satan must be loosed for a little season, and will once more deceive the ruined race of mankind, even when they are raised from the dead. "And when the thousand years are expired Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and

shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand upon 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." The devil and his adherents still bend all their rage at Christ and his saints, for hell will never cure them of their malice and indignation; they encompass the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but all in vain; for saints, in an immortal state, cannot be deceived nor hurt. The dead, small and great, must stand before God, Rev. xx. 12. And even angels shall, in one sense, be judged by the saints. And all who are not found written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire, Rev. xx. 15. But this fire will be poured out upon them before their eternal imprisonment takes place. "Fire," says John, "came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them," which is not to be understood of that fire which will burn up the earth, but of the wrath of God. Read Isaiah xxx. 33.

Having given my reader a small account of the origin of the devil, I now proceed to treat,

2. Of the works of the devil. That all the angels were present when the Lord delivered the law to Adam appears plain; for after Satan had entered into the serpent, he brought forth some words that the Lord spake to Adam at the delivery of the law. "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "And the serpent said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" By this speech it appears plain that Satan knew that the divine prohibition respected a certain tree, of which they were not to eat; and his putting it to the woman by way of question was intended to beget a doubt in her mind, and to confuse her, and bring her to hesitate; and it had that effect, for in her

answer she deviates from God's expressed assertion, thou shalt surely die, and answered, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." This was giving the lie even to God in his revealed word; and this lie poor Eve conceived: and, as this appears to be the first lie that ever was told in the world, and was told by Satan, he at this time obtained the name of the father of lies; and in Eve's mind he begat it, for there can be no father without a child. And this is what our Lord alludes to when he says that Satan "abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it," John viii. 44; Satan having gained this ground, he plied the woman with all his three engines at once.

1. The lust of the flesh: "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food."

2. And then with the lust of the eye: "and that it was pleasant to the eye."

3. With the pride of life; it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. And with all these three he attacked our Lord in the wilderness.

1. With the lust of the flesh: "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread."

2. With the lust of the eyes: "And he shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." And,

3. With the pride of life: "All these shall be thine, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Satan foiled the woman, but the woman's seed foiled him: "All that is in the world? the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." And here we see where all these

came from, namely, from Satan; and poor Eve conceived first a lie.

2. Unbelief: "Ye shall not surely die; which she believed; and by eating the forbidden fruit she conceived all these at once. In this affair appears the mystery of the wise man. "This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me. There was a little city, and a few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it; now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard." This little city was Zion in the loins of Adam; the great king, Satan; the siege, his temptations; the bulwarks, are the devils image; the wise man that delivered it is Christ; his wisdom that is despised is his gospel; the words that are not heard are the words and promises of life and those that are given up to despise them are of their father the devil.

"She took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband, and he did eat." What this fruit was is variously conjectured; the citron, or citron apple, bids the fairest to be the forbidden fruit, because Christ, speaking to the church, says, "I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee." In which words we have,

1. The depths of man's fall, and all the elect among them, for we are all the children of wrath even as others: hence it is said, "I raised thee up."

2. Raising them up signifies quickening them, and raising them out of a state of death and condemnation.

3. The mother that brought the church forth, and that bare her, is the covenant of grace, the heavenly Jerusalem above, which is free, for she is the mother of us all.

4. And at that time the covenant of life and peace exhibited her first promise, and held forth for the first time her breast of consolation: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

5. And, as the words, brought thee forth, are repeated, it shows that they were not only raised from the dead and quickened, but brought forth from bondage, guilt, and fear, to the experience of mercy, compassion, goodness, and love; for without the operation of these there is no coming forth, but a hanging back and sticking fast. And, upon the whole, it appears that our first parents were the first elect called, the first converted, the first spiritual seed that appeared in the world, and the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb. Oh superabounding grace!

This vile and malicious crime of Satan, in leading all the human race into apostacy, shows his implacable enmity to God, and inveterate hatred to human nature, which still appears; for although we have no account that devils disagree, or are cruel to each other, yet they appear most desperate and cruel to mankind, and even to those sinners which are the greatest drudges in the devil's service, as may be seen in his making Judas hang himself when Satan got possession of him, and driving king Saul often into insanity, and then to fall upon the point of his own sword; and by harassing others with unremitted accusations, who have been led by his allurements into the greatest enormities. Upon the whole, he is a most desperate enemy to the Almighty, and a most cruel and savage tormentor of the sons of men.

But in this his seduction of mankind he filled up his measure, and ripened himself for judgment: "And the Lord God said

unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." The whole of this is very obscure, but it is easy to observe the hot displeasure of God in it in these words, "Because thou hast done this." In heaven the elect and confirmed angels resisted and escaped his seduction; and the Son of God, against whom Satan rebelled, being omnipotent, soon avenged himself on this enemy; but man, poor, earthly, frail man, is for ever ruined in himself, and divested of all power either to resist or extricate himself: therefore, for this unparalleled cruelty, this unprovoked indignation, I will not spare; "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle."

Satan obtained two names by this his deception, that of the old serpent, Rev. xii. 9, because he abused that creature as the instrument of this mischief: and, as he had brought mankind under the sentence of death, he the beginning, John viii. 44. The sentence that was passed upon the serpent fell with all its weight upon the devil, the old serpent; for beasts and reptiles are not, properly speaking the subjects of the curse and wrath of God. When God cursed the ground, barrenness with briers and thorns were the effects of it: and when God tells the great men among the Jews that he had cursed their blessings, it means that the laws which he had given them would be a trap to them in Messiah's days, because they would trust in the types instead of truth, and in the shadows instead of the substance; and that their very tythes and offerings on which they lived, would prove a bane instead of a blessing; for "to the unbelieving there is nothing clean, mind and conscience being both defiled." But what; is the curse of God upon serpents, cattle, and beasts of the field? All divine laws that God has given are to rational creatures, God's wrath is revealed against sin, and his curse is levelled at sinners. And, for my part, I do not; think that the

sentence of the great Judge of quick and dead fell either upon the serpent or on the beast of the field. Neither do I believe all that good men have said about the serpent's formerly going erect, though now reduced to crawl, and formerly eating better food, but now much dust with its meat, on account of its crawling in the dust, &c. for it is well known that there are many creeping things of the serpent, kind: the hooded serpent, the horned serpent, the fiery flying serpent, the basilisk, and the dragon; the deaf adder, the common adder, the viper, and the asp; the water snake; the land snake, and the rattle snake; the conger eel; the common eel, and the lamprey. All these are of the serpent kind, and go all alike upon their belly. Now, the serpent which the devil abused was but one, and could be but of one kind; but of what kind we know not. And the sentence of God is in the singular number, upon that serpent in which the devil appeared, and upon that only: "Upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life." So that, when that one serpent died the sentence was fully executed. Whereas, if it be true, as some learned men conjecture, that serpents before man's fall went erect, it follows that God's sentence has fallen upon every kind of serpent, from the dragon to the eel; for all these go upon their belly. But the sentence of the serpent, which stands upon record, is by no means so unbounded. Nor do I believe that the dust of the earth is the meat of serpents; for those who keep serpents in the kingdom of Abyssinia, for the purpose of divination, feed them with white bread and milk, which Mr. Bruce says those creatures are very fond of: and, if they eat much, it is allowed to be a good omen; if little, a bad one: and by these things those pagans judge of their good or bad success in their wars or other undertakings. But enough of this.

I believe the dreadful sentence of the great God, which was passed upon so great an offender; and for such an unparalleled offence, amounts to much more than such trivial

things as the above. There was an innumerable company of fallen angels in league with Satan, who were all included in him; and in the loins of Adam, then fallen, there was an innumerable multitude of reprobate sinners, who at this time, and upon this trial and judgment of Satan, are, and that by God himself, called his seed: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." By the woman I understand Eve in type, but the church in truth; and by the woman's seed Christ, for he was born of a member of the house, hold of faith, and is the faithful and true witness himself; and Mary was a believer who bare him, and is blessed on account of her faith: "Blessed is she that believed, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her by the Lord." Christ therefore is the first seed; first in the choice and purpose of God; first in the promise; and first in eminence, title, and dignity, being the plant of renown, and all the rest but plants of disgrace: and next to Christ all the elect in him, which are expressly called Christ's seed; and they are likewise called the church's seed, Isaiah liv. 3. This is the woman and her seed. And there is another seed which God calls the seed of the serpent: "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." By the serpent's seed here, the other fallen angels that adhered to Satan are not intended; they are called the devil's angels, but are never called the devil's seed. The devil's seed are the reprobate part of mankind, which continue in Satan's image, espouse and adhere to Satan's cause, fight under his banner, and for him; who do his works, love his service; who imitate and unite with him against Christ and his believing and obedient family. Their badge and characteristic is enmity; "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." And sure I am that even the Mediator came not to stand in this gap: "Think ye that I am come to send peace upon earth? nay, but rather division, yea a sword and a fire; and to set three against two, and two against three; and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." These are the serpent's seed, according to Christ's account; for he calls

them serpents, and adds, "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." These says Christ, have seen and hated both me and my Father; and you shall be hated of all such men for my name's sake. These murdered Christ, and all his children which they could come at, as this seed have endeavoured to do ever since, more or less; and, whether they are under restraint or let loose, whether they act or lie dormant, they are to be known by their enmity: "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." Nor shall all the wisdom of the Arminians ever bring about a reconciliation between these, though they debase the just to the dust, and exalt the criminal to the clouds. This seed of the serpent not only bear his image, and defend his usurped empire and assumed authority, but they bear his name, and are expressly called serpents, and a generation of vipers, who cannot escape the damnation of hell. Now, as the devils are called lions, dragons, serpents, &c. and some of them are called by Christ fowls of the air, which devour the good seed of God's word; so these sinners are compared to cattle; called goats, Matt. xxv. 32, in opposition to sheep; they are called bulls, Psalm lxxviii. 30; heifers at grass, Jer. 1. 11. All these the scriptures represent as the rebels and enemies of God and of his heritage; and these we may call cattle, for God himself calls them the same: and though the same metaphor may represent a saint as well as a sinner, as it does by the prophet Isaiah, who in one place calls a Gentile minister of Christ a ram of Nebaioth, Isaiah lx. 7; and in another place a rebellious Edomite appointed to the slaughter is called a ram also, Isaiah xxxiv. 6, 7; yet God will judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he-goats, Ezek, xxxiv. 17. This seed of the serpent are likewise compared to wild beasts: Herod is called a fox; a wicked ruler a bear; Nero a lion; and a persecutor of Christ's sheep a wolf. Therefore it appears to me that the sentence of God which he pronounced against the serpent, fell upon the old serpent the devil with all its weight; and that he is cursed of God above all the devils, being the

head of all apostacy from God, both of angels and men; and that he is cursed above all the sinners of mankind, which are the serpent's seed. But we see no curse discovering itself upon cattle in a literal sense, nor upon the beast of the field, according to the above sentence of God. Many of them are very useful tractable creatures; the ox and the ass are both brought forth to reprove the ignorance of Israel: "The ox knoweth its owner, and the ass its masters crib; but Israel doth not know." Balaam is rebuked for smiting his ass, and Israel for being a burden to the weary beasts; and, as to the serpents, I much question if any alteration ever took place in them; and it is remarkable that immediately upon the fall of man, he is compared to beasts: "Man being in honour abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish." Take notice here, that as soon as man fell he became like the beasts that perish, which makes it manifest enough that the beasts of the field, in the first part of God's sentence, are the reprobate part of mankind, which in the latter part of the sentence, are called the serpent's seed. The serpent being cursed above all the beasts of the field appears to me to amount to this, that the old serpent, the devil, is cursed above all the sinners of mankind, and that reprobate sinners are the beasts of the field: "I said in my heart, concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts." And they are beasts which will receive the same curse in the last day; the Judge will set the goats on the left hand, and say, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

But it may be objected, that one part of the serpent's sentence is, "Upon thy belly shalt thou go." I answer: belly sometimes, in the language of scripture, means no more than the wounds, lashes, and reproaches, of a guilty conscience: "Because he hath oppressed and hath forsaken the poor; because he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not; surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly." And sometimes it signifies

affliction, depression, and abasement: "We are accounted as sheep for slaughter. Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? for our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly cleaveth unto the earth." And sure I am that Satan feels no peace in his conscience; reflecting on his former happiness pierces him; his expectation of greater misery torments him; the curse and wrath of God smoking in his conscience stirs up and inflames his enmity, and hurries him on seeking to avenge himself: but all in vain. He has no quietness in him conscience; he seeketh rest, but findeth none.

The belly of this serpent cleaves to the dust. We have no account that Satan ever eases his mind, or spends any of his desperate rage, upon other devils; but to men he cleaves close enough, and hates to let them go; for it is upon men, who are but dust and ashes, that he vents all his spleen. When the unclean spirit went out of the man he had no rest till he returned into his house from whence he came out, Matt. xii. 44.; and the dreadful sensations of the best saint under heaven differ little from the feelings of the devil himself when Satan is suffered, for the trial of faith, to have access to him, and to influence the carnal mind with his infernal rage, and to stir up the filth and rebellion of the heart; as may be seen by Peter in Satan's sieve; Job in the devil's hand; and the incestuous Corinthian when delivered up to Satan. Peter blasphemes, Matt. xxvi. 72; Job gets desperate, Job vi. 26; and the Corinthian is swallowed up, 2 Cor. ii. 7. Men mad, and men given up to desperation and black despair, afford the most relief to Satan of any; for, when the old serpent has conceived in his mind a fresh burden of rage and wrath, he, having these in his own power, and access to them at all times, fills them with his own indignation, and that eases himself.

The next part of Satan's sentence is, "Dust shalt thou eat." God himself declares of man that he is dust: "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." This must mean the body, not the soul. Now the apostle tells us, that "Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." And in these fleshly lusts doth Satan delight; hence he is called a foul spirit, an unclean spirit; and they who allow themselves to live in all uncleanness are expressly called the sons of Belial, 1 Sam. ii. 12; Judges xix. 22. And this appears to me to be the last part of Satan's sentence, for upon these things Satan feeds; and whatever change is made in the worst of sinners by grace it makes no alteration in his food. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall, eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," Isaiah lxxv. 25. The whole sentence passed upon Satan is as follows: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life: 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."

I cannot believe that the Almighty would talk in such a way to a beast of the field, or pass such a sentence on so insignificant a thing as a serpent, which could not understand one word he said; nor do I believe the serpent to be much more subtle than the ape and the fox, until the devil entered into it and made it so: all its superior subtlety was from Satan. Nor do I believe that cattle and beasts of the field are, strictly speaking, the objects of God's wrath and curse; for many convicted sinners, under the dread of damnation, have longed to be in their place; nay, I myself have wished it, and upon no other consideration than this, but because there is no hereafter to them, nor any curse upon them. Devils and men

are the transgressors of God's laws; and upon these, and upon no other, will the curse of the law be pronounced in the great day. And it should be remarked, that those who are called cattle and beasts of the field, in the first part of the sentence, are called the serpent's seed in the latter part of it. And these we see are under the curse; and the enmity between the saints of God and the seed of the serpent smokes, flames, and rages, to this day, and ever will, in all that cleave to a broken law, and as long as the curse of it abides upon them.

I come now to the works of the devil. Two things in man the devil abhorred:

1. The image of God in him.

2. The human nature itself, because the Saviour's assumption of human nature was Satan's rock, of offence. This was seen of all the angels in Adam, for Adam was the figure of him that was to come; therefore the devil aimed at the ruin of human nature to prevent it, and by that means made a way for it. The Holy Spirit, who formed God's image in man, and kept him shining in it, upon man's fall left him; and upon the entrance of sin it was wholly defaced, or else it was entirely withdrawn, and man began to cover with a covering, but not of God's Spirit; sin. Satan having brought man into sin, sin separated between God and man, and man fell under the sentence of death curse of the law and under the wrath of God. The devil having effected this his, design, which is what Paul calls, four times in one chapter, the offence Rom. v. because God was angry with man, and man became an enemy to God, this breach Satan hoped would never be healed, and this gap never closed. He, having got man under his power, drew in him his own image; hence sinful men are called the children of the devil.

Now they are called the children of the devil on various accounts.

1. Because, as sinners, the devil begot them. "Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," James i. 15. Eve lusted after the forbidden fruit, and Satan told her she should not die for eating it, Thus she conceived a lie; and Christ says that the devil was a liar from the beginning; and, when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it. Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Ghost, are said to conceive the falsehood in their hearts; and it was Satan that filled their hearts, Acts v. 3, 4. A whorish heart, Ezek. vi. 9, is the devil's strumpet; "And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils after whom they have gone a whoring," Levit. vii. 7.

2. They are called children of the devil, because by sin they are like him, and bear his names. Satan is called a liar, and so are all mankind; Satan is called a lion, and so are sinful men; he is called the old serpent, and they are called serpents, and a generation of vipers. Satan is called a destroyer, because he has destroyed all mankind, and aims to destroy the sheep of Christ; and sinners are called the destroyers of God's heritage, Jer. 1. 11. Satan is called an enemy, and reprobate sinners are the same; they hate both Christ and his Father; and all the saints are to be hated of all such men for Christ's name sake.

3. They bear the image of the devil.

God's image was glorious: Man is the image and glory of God, 1 Cor. xi. 7; Satan's image is disgrace and shame, Rom. vi. 21.

God's image was honour; "Man being in ho, hour abideth not." Satan's image is dishonour, 1 Cor. xv, 43.

God's image is light; "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." Satan's image is darkness; The God of this world blinds the mind, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

The image of God is uprightness; "God made man upright:" the devil's image is perverseness; "A perverse and crooked generation," Deut. xxxii. 5.

God's image is wisdom and knowledge: "Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him:" the devil's image is blindness and ignorance; "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

God's image is created in true holiness, Eph. iv. 24; the devil's image is nothing but sin.

God's image is righteousness, Eph. iv. 24; Satan's image is guilt and condemnation.

God's image is love; "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God:" the devil's image is enmity against God, Rom. viii. 7.

God's image was life, the devil's image is death, This image our first parents conceived, and in this fallen man propagates his seed: he begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and this image God hates. "As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image." Every one that is found in the day of judgment in Satan's image will be sent away from Christ, and will go with the devil and his angels.

4. Men are called the children of the devil, because they do his works: and they begin their works just as he did. The devil

began with lying, and so do all his children: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." Hence our Lord says, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

5. In Satan's image the kingdom of the devil stands. There are but two sorts of children, children of God and children of the devil. Over God's children Satan reigns not, but in his own children he reigns and rules; and his empire stands in his own image, and in nothing else. The souls of sinners are his throne, and the heart his palace. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace his goods are in peace," Luke xi. 21; compare with Isaiah liii. 12. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world; according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." And all the time that Satan keeps the palace men are nothing but drudges and slaves to him, for he works in the children of disobedience: he holds them in his snare, and leads hem at his pleasure. "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

The devils have erected a sort of empire and government among themselves, as appears from what the word of God says. Christ, at his death, is said to spoil principalities and powers: he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them on the cross, Col. ii. 15. And we read of a kingdom which the devil has usurped: "If Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?" We read likewise of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; and it should seem that they attend upon the different branches of their infernal empire severally. That of murdering and lying our Lord charges upon the devil and Satan. The man of sin also, with his false doctrine, which is called all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, is said to be after the

coming of Satan, who is the head of the apostacy, the chief and king of the devils and of all sinners.

Unclean sinners are called children of Belial.

The covetous are palmed upon Mammon.

And idolaters upon all the devils. "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrificed, they sacrificed to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." I come now to treat of the manifestation of the Son of God.

"That he might destroy the works of the devil." The scriptures declare that Christ hath destroyed the devil's works, and even the devil himself; for Paul says that through death Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who, through the fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage, Heb. ii. 14, 15.

These things, which the word of God declares, though with which the face of things in the world does not seem to agree, are not a little puzzling to weak believers; for we hear of the whole kingdom of the beast being full of darkness, and whole nations still in idolatry; and even in this land, where the truth is continued, every old heresy is revived, and every doctrine of devils advanced and defended, and all sorts of profanity riding in triumph. And, as for religion, a dead form preveils every where; nay, among professors themselves, how many have a name to live and are dead? Legions of impostors fill the pulpit, and swarms of hypocrites the pews; so that there are but a few names even in Sardis.

This wonder arises from our ignorance of the scriptures. Christ never undertook in behalf of any but the elect of God, nor will he ever destroy the devil's works out of any soul living but out of the objects of his own choice. Very early intimations

were given of this: for, at the same time that God declared the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, he assigned a seed to the serpent, which are called the children of the devil; between whom and the seed of the woman God put enmity, which soon appeared in Cain and Abel. Abel was a child of God by Faith, as all the elect are and shall be: and Cain was of that wicked one, and slew him. And in this matter the two seeds were made manifest, and the enmity that was put between them. And even among the Jews, instead of the devil's works being destroyed out of them, Christ declared that the devil should fall with greater force upon them after his departure, as it is written, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none. Then he saith, I will return into my house, from whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." These Jews are called Satan's own house. The gospel of Christ tormenting him, he left it; and at his return he claims it still as his own: and, in order to repossess it with more firmness and fortitude, he goes and takes to himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, by which it appears that some devils are more desperately wicked than others, and these enter in and dwell there: and, if their last state is worse than the first, neither the devils nor their works were ever destroyed out of them. Even where the gospel comes the seed of the serpent only sin and rage the more: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto you." These despisers are no other than the serpent's seed: between whom and the saints God has put enmity. These, instead of believing in Christ, defend the empire of Satan to the uttermost. Some of the pagan Roman emperors abdicated their thrones, and died in despair, only

because they could not extirpate the Christians; and others armed themselves, in the days of Constantine, and appeared in open war, and fought with the devil at their head, vindicating Satan's cause at the expense of a sea of blood; and even perished in support of the devil's usurpation: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 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," Rev. xii. 7-9. And even John himself, the penman of my text, speaks very strongly of the universal possession of Satan when he says, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." The first step taken in destroying the devil's works, was

The incarnation of Christ; for, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise took part of the same. This bringing Godhead and manhood together brought God and man together: hence he is called Emmanuel, or God with us. To this the Psalmist alludes when he says, "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man, whom thou hast made strong for thyself," The strength of this man lies in the union between the two natures, which was to answer all the good purposes of God towards men in destroying the devil's works, and in setting up an empire of grace on its ruin.

The Son of God was manifested, or, as Paul says, "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Now the Godhead was manifested by the miracles he wrought. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cane of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory." By raising the dead;

by rebuking the sea and the winds; by his authority over the devils, and their fears and tremblings, at his presence; by the adoration and worship given him both by men and angels; by the Father's voice three times from heaven giving testimony to him; by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him; by the power, wisdom, and majesty, of his word; by the communications of pardoning and every other grace; by eternal life attending his voice; by the heavenly light that shone into the hearts and souls of men; by the change made in the worst of sinners; by his transfiguration on the mount; by his patience, humility, and fortitude in death; by the prodigies that appeared in the earth, in rocks, graves, and the vail of the temple rending, when he yielded up the ghost; by his resurrection from the dead, and his appearances to his own followers afterwards; by his ascension into heaven in sight of eleven witnesses; by the coming of the Holy Ghost, as the fruit and effect of his mediation; by the miraculous power displayed in the apostles; by the conversion of Jew and Gentile; by the unparalleled fortitude of his martyrs; and by the irresistible spread of his kingdom in the world, in the face of all opposition, both from men and devils, and by its continuance to this day; "God was manifest the flesh."

Men with their bodily eyes saw his flesh, before his death and after his resurrection, and no more; but the eye of faith saw God shine in it, and shine through it. "God was manifest in the flesh."

2. At eight days old Emmanuel was circumcised, and by that ordinance he became a debtor in man's room; yea, we put off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, Col. ii. 11; and if we put off our sins by Christ's circumcision, then, by the same ceremony, he took them on himself] In the life of our surety a perfect obedience was given to every precept of the law. He bore our sins in his own body; he received our sentence; he endured the curse, by being made

a curse for us; he suffered all the wrath revealed in a broken law, and died in our stead, the just for the unjust; and in this he effectually destroyed the works of the devil for us. Upon this finished work the law was magnified and honoured for evermore. God was reconciled and well pleased, the debt-book cancelled and nailed to the cross, iniquities were removed in one day, and an act of grace took place in heaven, that, by the blood of the covenant, a gaidelivery should be proclaimed to all the king's debtors. And upon the resurrection of Christ our discharge was obtained, troth was cleared, and the covenant confirmed; the wrath of God was appeased, the sword of justice sheathed, sins purged, and man was ransomed; the grave was vanquished, death swallowed up in victory, the devil's works by Christ destroyed, and apostate and apostatizing man made nigh to God by the blood of Christ.

But he destroys the works of the devil in us as well as for us; for, upon the accession of Christ to the right hand of God, the Holy Ghost is received and sent forth to take possession of the Lord's purchased inheritance; and upon his coming the devil is cast out of the human heart, the atonement of Christ is applied to purge the conscience, the imputed righteousness of Christ is put on for justification, and condemnation is removed; the washing of regeneration defaces the devil's image, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost reinstamps once more the image of God, while the poor sinner stands wondering at the sight, and melting in the power. "All we, 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," This blessed image is,

1. Glorious light.
2. Renewed in knowledge.
3. In uprightness of heart.
4. In righteousness.

5. In true holiness.
6. In heavenly-mindedness.
7. In the life of faith.
8. In peace and friendship with God.

And in these stand the kingdom of God, and in nothing else. "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." This new man is the whole work of grace, and the whole of implanted grace; and in this stands the kingdom of God; for, "Even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Christ's seed are Christ's subjects. Christ reigns over his own children: "Let the children of Zion rejoice in their king." Christ's children bear his image. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. And his kingdom stands in his own image. The kingdom stands in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost. But they that have not the Spirit of Christ are none of his; for he produces all grace in us, and sets up and maintains the Messiah's kingdom in the heart. This cuts off and casts out all that make a fair show in the flesh; and, to complete this work, we are delivered from the law under which all the seed of the serpent continue, being under the curse that was passed upon Satan, and on all his seed in him; and we are brought under the everlasting love, grace, and mercy, of God in Christ Jesus, which are all secured to us by covenant. The remains of Satan's corruption, by the saints called the old man, is to continue in being until death, as a spur to our diligence, and to magnify the grace and power of God in us; both which are allsufficient, and evidently appear to be so when we are the most weakened and dismayed by this body of death. The working of it consists chiefly in unbelief, enmity, rebellion, and the workings of uncleanness in the carnal mind, and in striving most to oppose when the saint is most bent upon good. But this old man was condemned in Christ crucified when he died: he is put off when the new man is put on: is to have his requests

daily denied; shall never be imputed to us as sin; is to be put off for good and all with the body at death, and never to be seen or felt more. And, at the resurrection, the Spirit that now dwells in us shall quicken our mortal bodies, and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Christ: and then shall the devil and all his seed perish in their own corruption, and be destroyed with endless destruction from the presence of God, and from the glory of his power; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it.

The Utility of the Books, and the Excellency of the Parchments

A SERMON DELIVERED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,
ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 1796:

THE DAY APPOINTED BY GOVERNMENT FOR PUBLIC
FASTING AND PRAYER.

"Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the LORD,
What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon,"
Numbers 21:14.

"And the books, but especially the parchments." 2 Timothy
4:13

THE apostle at this time was a prisoner at Rome, in the happy enjoyment of a good conscience, and in daily expectation of martyrdom; his race was almost run, the fight of faith was

nearly finished; and the last enemy, death was coming forth, and Paul knew that there was no discharge in that war.

He was now grown old; the certain young man called Saul, at whose feet the executioners of Stephen laid down their clothes, was now Paul the aged. He had long died daily; life by his ministry had worked in others, but death in him; his outward man had been some time decaying, and his inner man had been renewing day by day.

Paul had been once in the third heaven, where he had seen the prize he ran for, and the crown for which he fought, so that he knew there was no uncertainty in his race, nor beating the air in his warfare.

But, though his tabernacle at this time was tottering, and a run of years had almost run it out, yet this corrupt thing, which is forbid by the law, was to be offered in sacrifice upon the service, and for confirmation, of the faith of the saints. Paul had given one answer before the emperor Nero, at which time every companion in travail forsook him, not one yokefellow stood with him; but at the flight of the soldiers the captain of our salvation stepped forth, as the person principally concerned in Paul's cause. "The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known." It should seem that the trial was long, and that many questions were asked, and wonderful answers were given; so that the court of judicature became a chapel, the senate heard the glad tidings of salvation from a prisoner in chains at the bar, and both the senate and the spectators, instead of a sermon, heard the gospel by way of dialogue. The emperor asked the questions, and Paul gave the answers; the first brought forth his strong reasons, and the other answered them in the power of the king of Jacob. Nero tried Paul, and Paul tried him; he condemned Paul, and Paul condemned him; he brought Paul to death, and Paul's ministry was a

savour of death unto death to him; and so they killed each other. Nero killed his body, and that was all he could do; but Paul killed him both body and soul.

These dialogue discourses the Lord was pleased to own and bless; Paul's bonds were manifest in all the palace; yea, as the Lord stood by him, and strengthened him, so he likewise discharged his arrows of conviction at many in the court from the bow of Paul's tongue. He suffered Paul to preach at the bar, that the Lord might summon many, by Paul's answers, to the bar of equity; so that a deal of business was done both in the court of judicature and in the court of conscience; hence we read of saints appearing even in the palace; "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household."

Paul's first answer had been given, and he was now looking for a second hearing; and after that he expected his discharge from labour, and his dismissal from the stage of time, and therefore he exhorts Timothy, the next in command, to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life."

He forewarns him of perilous times, and erroneous preachers and professors, when men should appear to be lovers of themselves, and enemies to sound doctrine. He counsels him to do the work of an evangelist, not that of a minister of the letter, nor that of an external reformer, but the work that is peculiar to a minister of the Spirit, who aims at and enforces regeneration, and an inward renewing by the Holy Ghost; from which inward change of heart, and indwelling of the Spirit of God, proceeds every good word and good work, such persons being created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. He persuades him to make full proof of his ministry; to let fly and discharge the whole counsel of God, in its own force, power, and naked simplicity; and that with solemn appeals both to

God and conscience; and to front it and back it, preface it and sequel it, with all prayer, and then to watch the event and effects of it, and so to make a discovery of the full force, power, and proof of it; upon sight of which he would be encouraged and emboldened to be faithful in it, seeing and knowing it to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

He informs him also of the different stations of his yoke-fellows. Demos had fell in love with this world, and left him; Crescens was gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia; and none was with him but Luke. He desires Timothy to bring Mark with him, who was profitable for the ministry. This seems to me to be the same Mark that fled from the work at Pamphilia, and whom Paul would not take with him; and on whose account Paul and Barnabas, the two great champions, parted asunder, and each of them took a young ensign with them; Paul took Timothy, and Barnabas took Mark.

Mark seems to have been one that was apt to faint, and yet pursued again when he recovered strength; and, though his faith was too feeble to go over the brook Besor, yet his heart was so honest that he was determined to abide by the stuff; and now, being a little more inured to the hardships of the field, he is found to be profitable for the ministry, when all profiting by Paul's personal ministry was about to be lost; so that, upon the whole, it appears that Mark had grown in grace, and had increased in strength.

Timothy is desired to use all diligence and come quickly to him, who at this time was the ordained and established pastor of the church at Ephesus; near to which it seems was a place called Troas, where a favourite host of Paul's resided, named Carpus, with whom, at his last departure from thence, he left all his personal effects, except what he took with him. This was acting according to his own doctrine; "No man that

warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." His journey to Rome might appear to expose him and his property to some danger; wherefore he leaves the principal and most weighty things of all his treasure with his host, which consisted of three things, his cloak, the books, and the parchments.

The parchments, like Rachel, in Jacob's two hands, are placed hindermost, and a very jealous eye is cast upon them; "Bring the books, but especially the parchments." We know Paul had suffered the loss of all things, and therefore he cannot be thought to die in possession of much earthly treasure. I have at times thought I would give the whole world, if it was mine, to be an heir of all Paul's grace and knowledge, though I should not choose to have given five pounds to have been his heir at law; for in his deepest need the church at Philippi supplied his wants, and sent it by Epaphroditus. One Onesiphorus found him at Rome, and supplied him, and was not ashamed of his chain, for whom he puts up a most hearty prayer, that he may find mercy of the Lord in the great day, agreeably to the Lord's own promise, "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, thirsty, and ye gave me drink, in prison, and ye visited me;" from all which we conclude that Paul left but little of this world's riches behind him.

It is certain that Paul knew nothing of us, and yet we are found among his residuary legatees. What became of his cloak. I know not: but I reckon that his dear son. Timothy got that, for who should have Elijah's mantle but his successor, Elisha? And, as for the books and the parchments, I believe they are both in our possession to this day, and I hope that they ever will be. Now for the words of my text.

"And the books, but especially the parchments." From which words I shall consider four things.

- I. What I understand by the books.
- II. What by the parchments. And,
- III. Why this special charge is given concerning them. And,
- IV. I shall bring some things, both from the books and the parchments, suitable to the present occasion.

First, the Books. By the books I understand the five books of Moses, and the books of all the prophets, by which he compared his own conversion to the faith, and his own call to the ministry; together with his commission to the apostolic office, which was to proclaim the predicted salvation of God to the Gentile world, to which his commission reached, and to which it was chiefly confined.

The first book of Moses, called Genesis, contains a prediction of this great apostle's work. "The Lord shall persuade [or enlarge] Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." This was the first hint dropped of the salvation of us, after the destruction of the old world, and the discriminating clemency of heaven had appeared to Noah and his family in the ark. Japheth was the father of the Gentiles; by him was the islands of the Gentiles overspread. To persuade, is to work faith in the heart; to enlarge, is to disentangle, unyoke, release, and bring forth from confinement, those that are shut up under a broken law, in unbelief and in the strong holds of sin and Satan, and barred out/and kept at a distance from the favour, countenance, presence, and all communion and fellowship with God. To dwell in the tents of Shem, is to have the curtains of divine favour spread over us, the cords of everlasting love stretched out to us, and the stakes, the chosen pillars of truth, the elect among the Gentiles raised up.

He produces from the books the prophecy of Moses, another prophecy on this head. "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." The prophecies of Hosea and Isaiah are both produced in proof of this, and the apostle by these saw that himself being raised up, commissioned and sent to the Gentiles, was an accomplishment of the prophecies and promises made to us.

By the books the apostle squared all his work in the Lord. "He testified both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

From the books he took his words and phrases. And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The books were Paul's rule, line, and plummet, by which he tried all his architecture, as a wise master builder; and, if any thing was required of him which he had not God's judgment or sentence upon, he informs us of it, and tells us that he gave it as his own private judgment. "This speak not the Lord: but I speak this by permission, not of commandment. And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord."

Paul's experience, judgment, faith, ministry, doctrine, discipline, worship, life, walk, and conversation, were all tried by the books; his judgment of things was laid to the line, and the righteousness that he preached to the plummet.

He compared spiritual things with spiritual; spiritual predictions, with spiritual accomplishments; spiritual promises, with spiritual fulfillments; spiritual works on the heart, with spiritual words in the books; and here he saw mercy and truth going before in all the promises, and faithfulness and love following after to make them good.

From the books Paul takes all the legal sacrifices, feasts, and other observances of the Jews; the types, figures, and shadows, under the former dispensation; the tabernacle, and the mysteries of it. The covenant made with them, and all the vessels and things belonging to the sanctuary service, are brought forth, and, under the operations of the Holy Spirit, they are distilled by our great apostle, and drawn out, and handed down, in all their pure, spiritual, and evangelical sense and meaning; and Christ, in his great undertaking and finished work, is set forth before us as the end to which they all pointed, the substance which they all shadowed out, and the great antitype which they all typified: hence Christ is called our altar, great high priest, sacrifice, atonement, and passover offering, who suffered without the gate, rose from the dead, ascended on high, and entered the holy of holies, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

From the books the apostle traces faith, from Abel down throughout the antediluvian world, the patriarchal age, and Mosaic economy, till time failed him in pursuing the spiritual genealogy of the heavenly fraternity. He tells us what their faith was, and what their faith did: First, what it was; it was the-substance of things hoped for. They hoped for the appearance of the Messiah, redemption by him, and glory through him; and Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, who is king of grace and king of glory, was the substance of all that they hoped for and expected. And their faith was the evidence of things not seen. They saw not the Messiah in his incarnate state, nor the prophecies and promises fulfilled by him, nor the

way into the holy of holies consecrated through the veil of his flesh, nor he in glorified humanity, made higher than the heavens: yet their faith was the confidence of these things, and in confidence their strength stood; by the eye of faith they saw the promise at a distance, and by charity they embraced the promised seed; and, as they lived, so these all died in faith; the eyes of their bodies were closed in confidence, and their souls awaked in open and endless vision. They left their flesh to rest in hope, and their souls are called the spirits of just men made perfect.

These obtained a good report through faith; their testimony stood in their confidence. God gave witness to their faith. This was the end of their faith, and the end of their conversation; and, through their faith and patience upon earth, they now inherit the promised glory in heaven.

By the books Paul got at the true account of the creation and generation of the world; whereby he traces all things up to the first cause, the triune parent of all, and the all-wise disposer of all events. He never found in all the books any thing like the eternity of the earth, as deists dream, and fools believe. Paul doth not make God a reformer or a reviser, but the Maker and Creator of all things. "By faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear."

We are well informed who founded the earth, and who spread out the heavens; and how the one is to be dissolved, and the other wrapped up at last, when the mystery of God shall be finished, and the measure of iniquity filled.

From the books Paul gathers the account of the ancient counsels, covenants, and settlements, of eternity. The heavenly Father's counsel and will of purpose; his absolute choice of the virgin Mary's seed to be assumed in her womb in the fullness of time by the divine word, and to be made by

eternal union one with him; of the Saviour's agreeing to take part of the children's flesh and blood; of the Father's love to us, and choice of us in him; of his giving him to us, and we to him; of the life he gave us in him, and of our predestination to be conformed to his image, to life and glory in him, and of bringing us to the external enjoyment of it by him.

He shews from the books the prophecies and promises that went before, and the accomplishment of both by the appearance of Christ, and the glory that should follow his appearance, both to Jews and Gentiles. The rejection of the Jews for their unbelief, and the salvation of the Gentiles upon it; the restoration of all the tribes, and the Gentiles fullness with them; the universal reign of Christ; his second appearance at the world's end; the resurrection of the just at it; the new heaven and the new earth: the glorious rest that remains to the people of God; the keeping of the great Sabbath in the thousand years reign; the resurrection of the wicked, and their final judgment, at the close of it; together with the delivery up of the kingdom of grace to the Father, that the kingdom of ultimate glory may take place; which, in the fulfilment and blessed enjoyment, is all that heart can hope, or hope expect.

From the books we learn the creation of angels by Christ, and the decree made known to them, that, when the first begotten was to be brought into the world, in human nature, all the angels of God were to worship him.

But some resisted this their Maker's will, and in this matter despised the very race of human beings, and rebelled against that divine revelation, or that decree declared, and so abode not in the truth, for which they were charged with folly, and banished from their own habitations, from the mansions of bliss; to which folly, out of revenge, they add that of the great transgression, by endeavouring to counteract the will of God

in every thing relative to our salvation. They beguiled Eve, and seduced Adam by her means, and so brought sin into the world, and death by sin; by which they have usurped kingly dominion over the children of men, in whom we have all had our conversation in times past.

The books shew us the destruction of Satan and his works by the death of Christ; how Satan's head was broken by the Saviour's bruised heel; the judgment of angels at the last day by Christ the Judge, and by the verdict of every, preacher, and by the testimony of all the saints; and the books conclude with the eternal banishment, imprisonment, and punishment of Satan, and all his angelic legions, and of all the human myriads that have favoured and supported his cursed interest, and who have died in alliance with him.

But again, besides these sacred books of the holy scriptures, we may see that, as Paul's work lay amongst the heathen, and his enemies were always plotting against him, if he could pick up any book of theirs which in any sense made for his purpose, he chose to make use of it. The Athenians seem to have been determined to engross all the gods, and their affections, to themselves; and, fearing lest there should be any god which they knew not, they determined not to provoke him to jealousy, and therefore dedicated one altar to him, if there should happen to be such a being in this world, or elsewhere; and, having thus secured themselves from the anger or jealousy of every god, as they hoped, it appears, that they made a law to punish either with death, or something capital, any person that should declare or proclaim any strange god among them; and by this law it should seem they apprehended Paul, when he preached the death and resurrection of Jesus; "Then Certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the stoics encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached to

them Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? for thou bringest strange things to our ears; we would know, therefore, what these things, mean." Paul seems to have some knowledge of this law, and makes good use of what he knew of it. He informs them that they could not lay such a thing to him, nor support such a charge against him; "For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God, Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Now, as there most certainly was such a God, and whom they acknowledged, to be an unknown one, and had dedicated an altar to him, Paul applies the inscription of the altar to their ignorance in worship, and declares in his doctrine that God to them which they confessed they knew nothing of, and so worked himself out of that clause of their act, and out of the hands of his accusers: in all which we may see the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove.

Again, Paul handles another of their books against them. "God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's bands as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for in him live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are his offspring; forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, and silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device,"

Once more, Paul quotes a passage out of a Cretian poet against the Cretians; "One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies;" in which he represents their national sin to be

that of lying, their dispositions to be savage and brutal, and that their hands were slow to labour, and their bellies as slow, dead, and heavy, being indulged in gluttony and excess; and declares this witness to be true, and bids Titus rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith. I shall now dismiss the books, and the use Paul made of them, and treat,

II. Of the parchments; by which I understand,

First, The gospel written by Luke. This pious man soon found the apostle out after his conversion to the faith, and continued with him to the last, and was the only person that was now with him at Rome. He styles him the beloved physician; and, for the gospel which he had written, he owns that his praise was in all the churches; and it is thought by some that, whenever Paul mentions according to my gospel, the gospel by Luke is intended, or referred to. This man was a beautiful penman; his style is elegant, and his strokes noble; and he seems to have been a mart of eminence, and some note in the world, which appears by the dedication of his works to some great personage, as governor of some province, whom he addresses in his high office. Most excellent Theophilus.

Secondly. By the parchments I understand the Acts of the Apostles, of which Luke was the penman; and it seems as if he was both an eye and an ear witness of the signs, wonders, and mighty deeds, of which that parchment is a narrative and faithful history.

Luke, I believe, accompanied Paul in his voyage to Rome, suffered shipwreck with him, and seems to be appointed of God to be Paul's observer and scribe, as Baruch was to Jeremiah; he was a particular observer of the good hand and handy-works of the Lord, and what he saw he penned, and so handed down to posterity the mighty act, terrible majesty, and the lovingkindness, of the Lord.

Thirdly. The parchments also might contain the decree and appointment of the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem about circumcision and keeping the whole law in order to obtain salvation, with which advocates for the law Paul had no small contention and disputation, till the matter was settled by the whole synod of apostles at Jerusalem, which Paul delivered to every church that he visited. "And as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem."

Fourthly. The parchments, no doubt, contained exact copies of all the epistles which God, by his apostle, had sent to the churches; to the church at Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Colosse, Philippi, Ephesus, to Thessalonica, and to the Hebrews. Paul was not ignorant of Satan's devices; he knew that the devil ever had been, and still was, God's ape as well as God's enemy; that in the prophetic age he had sent forth false prophets, and during the time of the Levitical priesthood, he had furnished the world with false priests; priests of Baal and priests of Jupiter, and priests of nobody knows what. In Paul's days, when apostles, the highest officers that ever appeared, were sent out, false apostles were sent out by Satan also. In this age Satan transformed himself into an angel of light, and the ministers of Satan were transformed as the ministers of righteousness. In the future ages the apostles knew that ordinary teachers would succeed the extraordinary apostles, and that false teachers would be found among them, as false apostles were among these; and therefore in order to forestall the devil's market, and to bring his infernal monopoly to nothing, to prevent the quackery of the devil's agents, and the circulation of their spurious medicines, Paul keeps exact copies of all his epistles, written verbatim on vellum.

Fifthly. And, if the gospel of Matthew and Mark were now written, as most probably they were, though the gospel of

John I believe was not, it is most likely that Paul had secured them; for, if he perused the heathen poets, it is not likely that he would let these escape his library. Peter was well acquainted with Paul's epistles, and no doubt but Paul had procured the gospels both of Matthew and Mark, and perhaps the epistles of all the other apostles extant at that time: and the apostle being now come to a point, he had long been in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better; yet the love of the churches held him by the skirts; and made him confess that to abide in the flesh was better for them. And, though formerly he had been undetermined, "which I shall choose I wot not," yet now he appears to have come to a determination, and chooses to depart, and therefore wishes to set his house in order; and, like an affectionate father who had laid up for the children, he gets his matters and effects together, which were out in the world; all his property seems to be with him, except his cloak, the books, and the parchments.

The cloak, I am inclined to think, was given to Timothy; the books were distributed to his fellow-labourers, whom he enjoins to speak the same things that he had spoken; the parchments seem to have been bequeathed to all the Gentile churches; and, as to the rest of his property, I believe that was nothing to nobody; which leads me,

III. To consider the excellency of the parchments, or why such an especial charge is given concerning them. "Brief the books, but especially the parchments." Now the apostle well knew that the books were greatly spread abroad in the world; they were in the royal library at Alexandria in Egypt, and in whatever city any number of the Jews were settled, and a synagogue of theirs was erected, that there the books were kept, for Moses of old time had in every city them that preached him; but the parchments were not so universally spread, and therefore the apostle concluded in his own mind

that the devil himself could never destroy the books, but he chose to guard against all danger that might befall the parchments.

Besides, Secondly. The books were now in one sense out of date, and some of the contents of them, especially those that contain the covenant of works, were waxed old, and were just ready to vanish away; for, when he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old, Hebrews viii. 13. But the parchments were in their infant state, or state of minority at least, and not quite completed, as the gospel by John, and the book of the Revelation, seem-not as yet to be brought forth; so that, like a tender father, who often takes the greatest care of his little ones, Paul, having neither wife nor children in the flesh, employs his mind and care about the things which, of all things beneath the sun, were the nearest to his heart, that is, the church of God, and the parchments.

Thirdly. The Jews, wherever they were scattered, whether they were religious or irreligious, were universal admirers of the books; but were the greatest enemies under heaven to the parchments. He knew that, like Herod, they would use their utmost endeavours against this young child; and, as they had killed the Lord Jesus, and some of his apostles, and aimed at the destruction of all the rest, it was not likely that the parchments should escape, if they should fall into his hands; for, if they excommunicated and cursed the followers of the Lamb, and forbad the preaching of his gospel, no doubt but they would blot out the contents of the parchments from under heaven.

Fourthly. The books, it is true, contain all the prophecies and promises of things to come, and what the Messiah was to do: but the parchments contain an account of his having appeared, and of what he has done. And as John, who pointed to Christ's person, was the greatest prophet that ever

was born of woman; and as the least subject in the kingdom of God, after the day of Pentecost, was greater than John; it is plain that the ministry of the Spirit is greater than that of the law; Jesus is greater than Moses; things accomplished greater than things predicted; sealing up vision and prophecy better than things foretold; the things provided for us better than the things of the Old Testament; faithfulness and truth in fulfilling greater than truth alone promising; and, of course, the parchments are more excellent than the books.

Fifthly. The false apostles had laboured hard to undermine Paul's reputation, to supplant him, and alienate the affections of the saints from him; in order to which they come to them with excellency of speech, great swelling words of vanity, alluring through the lust of the flesh, and much wantonness; and had crept into houses, and led captive silly women; yea, though they hated Christ, his gospel, Paul, and the whole gospel church, yet they had preached Christ out of envy, and in pretence, on purpose to add affliction to the apostle's bonds, that, while he was a prisoner confined in chains, they were labouring to pervert both the gospel and the professors of it.

Paul had before this confronted them. "I will come unto you shortly, and will know, not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power; for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I will know the divine power and energy of God upon their souls, their mission and commission, from Christ; what power they have with God in prayer, and what spiritual seals they have got to their ministry. Thus Paul, and the church in his day, are commended of Christ. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; and for my name sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted," &c.

The apostle having thus confronted and confuted these ministers of Satan, they were obliged to adopt another method of craftiness, and that was to forge epistles, and send them to the churches, as if they came from Paul. Paul soon detects this cheat, and sends the watchword abroad. "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, that the day of Christ is at hand; let no man deceive you by any means," 2 Thess. ii. 1-3. And, to prevent destruction by this snare of the devil, he signs every epistle with his own hand-writing in future. "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write," 2 Thess. iii. 17. The sure token in every epistle was his own hand; so he wrote, and all that wanted his signature was counterfeit, or spurious.

His manner of writing appears to me to be this. He drew the matter from his great Master by humble prayer, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit he wrote it down; and these were copied by Timothy, Epaphroditus, Tychicus, Titus, Lucas, and others; and exact copies of them all were written by Luke, to prevent all counterfeits by Satan and his apostles; in order that the parchments might be handed down to the churches in future ages, neat, pure, untainted, and unadulterated, as the unsearchable riches of Christ, left by will to the churches, that they might flow from our great Aaron's beard to the skirts of his clothing, until the top-stone of mercy's fabric be brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

And now, as the apostle had long had a proof of the fidelity of Timothy, and of the unfeigned faith of him, and of his mother Eunice, and of his grandmother Lois, and having no fellow-labourer like minded, who would naturally care for the state of the church, he charges him to use all diligence to come to him quickly, fearing he should die before he came; that he might

appoint him the executor of this his last will and testament, that he might be enabled, being both an eye and an ear-witness to the bequest of the apostle's whole effects, to detect, and to disprove any forgery that should ever after appear in the apostle's name in the world, or among the churches of Christ; and likewise that Timothy should deliver the same, by copies, to all the churches, and at the same time keep an exact, copy of all the parchments in his own study, and, among the rest, that which contains his own charge, that he himself might preach no other doctrine. "This charge I commit to thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having pat away, concerning faith have made shipwreck, of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme;" which leads me

IV. To some improvement of the subject to the present occasion. Some will say, What has Paul's death, his last will and testament, and his books and parchments, to do with the pre, sent state of our nation, the war that we are involved in, the hardness of the present times, and with our present appointed fast? Answer. If neither the books nor the parchments grant any warrant to any appointed fasting and prayer, we can have no expectation either of being regarded, heard, or answered, in our prayers put up on the present occasion; for, if no such warrant be granted, nor any such indulgence be allowed, either in the books or the parchments, where are we to find any encouragement to use our interest with God on such an occasion as this?

However, we are not at a loss either for precedents or promises in times of calamity. "Call upon me in time of trouble," saith the Lord, "and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." The kings of Israel often proclaimed a fast, and

called upon the subjects of their-realm to use their interest with the God of heaven in behalf of their own families, their own country, the worship of their God, and for the protection and safety of their sovereign.

Moab, Ammon, and the Edomites, combine against Israel under the reign of Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat proclaims a fast, and seeks God by prayer; Judah, out of all his cities, unites with him, and seeks the Lord also; and the Lord was found of them. He informed them by a prophet that they need not fight in that battle; the God of armies would Win the field, and their work should be first to praise the beauties of holiness, and then to divide the spoil.

When God blesses a nation with his everlasting gospel, he reinforces that nation with an additional army. All nations have some soldiers, and every believer is a good soldier of Christ Jesus. The church is an army with banners, as well as the troops in the field; and sometimes a formidable host has been destroyed by prayer, when they could not attack them in their ranks; prayer is one part of the armour that equips the christian. Pharaoh and all his host is destroyed, at the cry of Moses, by the Red sea, and in a way not very common. Israel was saved by flying, and Pharaoh was destroyed by pursuing.

Notwithstanding the abounding wickedness of this nation, and the awful spread of damnable heresies in it, I believe in my conscience that God hath more monuments of mercy, and subjects of his special grace, in Great Britain, than he hath in all the world besides. No small number lie in the compass of my own knowledge, both in town and country, who know God for themselves, who have felt his power, and found access to him, and who are sound in spirit, practice, and principle.

Moreover, God, in times of public calamity, often condescends to go, even with an ignorant people, as far as the light of nature can guide them to go after him. This may be seen in

the matter of Nineveh. Jonah proclaims its overthrow in the public streets; and, having sounded the awful alarm, the whole city was roused; and, though no Mediator was set before them, nor Spirit of supplication promised to them; and though they had nothing but a peradventure, Ah, who can tell? to rest on; yet they put away the evil of their hands, fast, sit in sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; and God repents of the evil, according to his own declaration. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them: and at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them," Jer. xviii. 7-10.

Of all the human race, we are the greatest debtors both to providence and grace; for, while God's judgments have been so conspicuously abroad in the earth, we have sat unmolested under our own vine, and under our own fig tree. And who can take notice of the destruction of that great family whose ancestors have brought so many of Christ's sheep to the slaughter, and not see the hand of God in all this? "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Perhaps all the annals of time will not produce a period when so many have been numbered to the sword, as in this war; and who can look and not see that the slaughter has been chiefly among the children of that great whore, who has been so long drunk with the blood of the saints? God's promise to her is, "I will cast her into a bed, and they that commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, except they repent; and I will kill her children with death."

And, as the Lord God of recompences will surely requite, and avenge the blood of his servants, I take this to be the principal reason for his not suffering any power to ward off the blow on the continent; though his good hand hath been visibly seen with our fleets in the protecting our own country. Britain appears to be one of the isles that should wait for his law, and hath been long favoured with it; and hitherto truth hath been our shield and buckler.

What astonishes me above measure is to find so many in England who have their affections so alienated from their own country as to have their hearts and souls in the interest of our common enemy. He that hates the place of his nativity is unworthy of a residence in it, and he that betrays it is a first cousin to Judas. Ephraim acted this strange part; he cast off the royal family of David, and then gathers his affections both from Judah and Benjamin; and in the end Asher is found to be confederate with him. "And he helped the children of Lot." The Almighty is so exasperated at this, that he will not allow him the common age of man; "Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people," Isaiah vii. 8. Another prophet lives to see his glass almost run out, and his long captivity coming on. "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned; strangers have devoured his strength, yet he knoweth it not; yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not," Hosea vii. 8, 9.

His Assyrian confederate soon leads him into captivity; and to the promised land he is not returned yet, though it is above two thousand years since he left it.

The present time is one of the times of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be delivered out of it. It is a time of universal, and, I was going to say, of unparalleled oppression. The staff of life seems to be locked up in the hands of three classes of

creatures, the monopolist, the rich overgrown farmer, and the mealman. You may call the first the hopper, and the other two the upper and nether millstone; and with this treble engine of mischief the devil at this day grinds the faces of the poor of this nation. I am acquainted with many farmers in various parts of the nation, men of truth and religion; and I am fully persuaded, by what I have seen and heard, that there is just as great a scarcity in England as there was in Egypt during the seven years plenty.

The conscientious farmer that will sell, and the little one, and the poor farmer that must sell, are attended in every market by the monopolist. The rich overgrown farmer, and those that neither fear God, nor regard man, will not sell; they withhold the corn, that the people may curse them. The mealman, when he gets it, if report be true, and the bread we eat daily proves it, gives you a mixture either of beans, oats, barley, peas, or rye. This is whispered abroad by some that work in the mill, and has been told in London by those that drive the cart; and thus you pay eighteen or twenty shillings per bushel for hog-corn. But will not God visit for these things, and shall not his soul be avenged on such oppressors as these? He will visit these men sooner or later, for he has cursed them in the books, and damned them in the parchments.

Last summer, just before harvest, a gentleman of the county of Sussex, foreseeing, by all appearance, a terrible famine coming on, turned his thoughts to various things, in order to prevent this evil arrow. He set to work to make bread of rye and wheat; he ate it himself, and brought it to a large town where I have much acquaintance, and there recommended it even to gentlemen. Some approved, some not; however, most viewed it a good make-shift, and concluded that every one would eat it rather than swoon in the streets. When harvest came in, and the new corn began to come to market, this same gentleman was found to have five loads of old wheat by

him, which at that time, I believe, would have fetched forty pounds per load; but this price was naught, it was naught with the seller. Thus he lent his friendly aid to help forward the calamity of an artificial famine; and, having assisted, in procuring the disease, he set his mind to work to find out the remedy; and by his last deed this lord of the gentiles was called a benefactor.

Yesterday a poor God-fearing man called on me, named Coston, from Woking in Surry. He is own brother to one of the six students who some years ago went to America. He has worked at husbandry, at various places about the country, for years, and hath a wife and five children. I asked him if there was the least appearance of a scarcity in any one part of the land he had been in? He said, 'No, not in any one thing.' I asked him what flour was at per bushel with him? He said the worst sort of all was eighteen shillings; but he informed me that he had left off eating any thing made of wheat for this eight months, and bought nothing but barley. I asked him what they might charge him for that? He replied, Last week I gave nine shillings per bushel and it was wretched stuff; but Mr. Hodd told me it would be ten shillings next week.

These are the grateful returns which are made to the Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, for one of the most plentiful crops of barley that ever clothed the hills or valleys of Great Britain. God sends a plenty, and men make a famine; and so the ears of the Lord God of sabaoth are perpetually filled with the cries of the Egyptians for bread. But where is Joseph, where is Zaphnath-paaneah, the Revealer of secrets and the Saviour of the land? The heir of all things is at the right hand of God; send your prayers there in this matter; you are encouraged both by the books and the parchments.

An oppressor is a character that is excluded the glorious visions of heaven. He that shall dwell on high, and see the

King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off, is one that despiseth the gain of oppression, and that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, Isaiah xxxiii. 14-17. This is the language of the books; and the parchments tell you to let your requests be made known unto God, and in due time you shall reap if you faint not. And the books say, "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."

Your perpetual prayers will hasten the coming and kingdom of the great Messiah; and the first work that shall ever be performed at his appearing shall be in avenge the poor and needy, by an entire destruction of this engine of the devil called oppression: and by this hospitable act the King of Zion will spread his fame from pole to pole, when all the inhabitants of the terraqueous globe will welcome his reign, bless his appearance, and hail their great Deliverer; for so saith the books; "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endures. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him. All nations shall call him blessed."

Some, under this infernal yoke of oppression, under this artificial famine, let fly the anguish of their souls in open rebellion against the higher powers. This is adding sin to sin; this rebellion is strictly forbidden by the books, and it is condemned by all the parchments.

This satanic art of oppression was carried on under the government of one of the best of kings that ever lived, and under one of the wisest that ever reigned. David and Solomon both complain of it; and, though they were both despotic

princes, yet neither of them could destroy it. In David's days the devil had a privy council of these engineers. "Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish; they are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily; they set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth; therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them," Psalm lxxiii. 7-10. If you would know what is meant by waters of a full cup in the books, you will find it explained in the parchments. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and d snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil."

Solomon complains of this sin, of this evident token of perdition. "So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter; wherefore I praised the dead more than the living," Eccl. iv. 1, 2. The oppressed here is in the same state of the oppressor; that is, destitute of the grace of God; neither of them had a comforter; the first had leanness in his soul, and the latter leanness in both soul and body; and so it was the poor oppressing the poor, which is a sweeping rain that leaves no food behind. But, blessed be God, this is not our case; for God hath put gladness in our hearts, which is of a better nature than that which springs from an increase of corn and wine, Psalm iv. 7.

It was the cry that Israel put up under this yoke that brought the God of Abraham from the third heaven into the bush. "Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people,

the children of Israel, out of Egypt." And what did they get by this their oppression? Why, they got ten of the heaviest plagues that ever fell upon a nation; the destruction of their firstborn, the spoiling and ruin of their country, and the overthrow of Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea.

When God intends that a man shall fill up the measure of his iniquity in haste, he generally gives him up to his own heart's lust; and then his eye and heart are never satisfied. Thus he gave up Pharaoh, thus he gave up Nabal, and those also that beat his people in pieces, and grind the faces of the poor. And those whose souls were plotting fresh schemes of oppression, while they were engaged in the very service of God; "And the songs of the temple shall be howling in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence. Hear this, O ye that swallow up the poor and needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works." To give a man up to this infatuation is one of the worst judgments from God that is to be found in the land of hope. "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."

Those at the helm of affairs have struggled hard to undermine this soul-damning sin; but many of the landholders, it is to be feared, have their eyes upon raising the rent of their farms, and therefore will not be very forward to make head against an evil that brings grist to their mill.

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and a high wall in his own conceit," saith Solomon. But he adds, "A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof." This is done by prayer; for there is no wall, no bulwark, no human oppressor, no, nor even the very council of devils, that are proof against the prayer of faith. "Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." This is the language of the books; and the parchments say the same. "All things are possible to them that believe."

Those that are rebelling against the higher powers imagine that it is in the power of their and to destroy this root of all evil, and to break in pieces the oppressor. But this is a work that none but the King of kings can do, and which he hath promised he will do: but the oppressed must cry and pray for it. Hear the language of the books, "Thou shalt not vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child; if thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless." Take notice here, if they shall be afflicted, or oppressed in any wise, and they cry unto me, I will surely hear them. But thou shalt not rebel against the higher powers, because the Lord is King of kings; they are set up by him. "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice; by me princes rule, and nobles, yea, all the judges of the earth." Therefore, "thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse them, no, nor speak evil of the ruler of thy people," Ex. xxii. 28. This is God's command to us; "And cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Thus you see the rebel is cursed by the books; and, I add, he is damned by the parchments. "There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God: he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist. shall

receive to themselves damnation," Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Ye must be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience sake; not for fear of punishment, but in order keep a good conscience toward God. We have got a set of men in the nation that want to blow up all our walls and bulwarks, and to make Great Britain a field of blood. And what have they done? Why, just nothing. And what is the cause? The cause is, the will of God; he would not have it so. Then have they not resisted his will; and have they not resisted the power? Yea, they have; and such are rebels by the books, and they are damned by the parchments.

"Fear God, and honour the king," is the command of God to all his children. The government that we are under protects us in the worship of our God, and will not suffer us to be molested by any; and this is a blessing to us. We have no call to be afraid of the power while we do that which is good, for such shall have praise of the same; "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil," Rom. xiii. 3. Rebelling against God, resisting his will and ordinance, and speaking evil of dignitaries, shall never bring prosperity to the land, nor comfort to the conscience; this may be proved both from the books and the parchments.

This is a day appointed for fasting and prayer; and may God grant that we may be thankful for our high privileges, and for the hope that he hath given us of the better inheritance, and that we may seek the welfare both of king and country, that we may all unite in our prayers to God, and that daily, that he would be pleased to remember the poor and needy according to his promise, and that he would for Christ's sake break in pieces the oppressor.

I was informed last night of a certain farmer, not seventy miles from London, that hath now by him seventy-five loads of wheat, which at this time would fetch, I suppose, near 2000l.

But is any thing too hard for the Lord? He says, The corn, the wine, the oil, the wool, and the flax, are mine, I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the beasts of the field are mine, all the cattle of the forest are mine, and so are the flocks upon a thousand hills. To God then let your request be made known; this is our door of hope in this valley of Achor; call daily upon him to remember the cry of the humble, and not forget the oppressor; and then add watchfulness to prayer, and you shall not long engage in this work before you shall see both the fruits and effects of it; and, by the good hand of my God upon me, I will meet you daily at the throne of grace upon this business. To this we are encouraged by the books. "I will hear, I will hear [saith the Lord,] the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."

"Seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you;" and pray your heavenly Father, daily for daily bread, and do it earnestly, in secret, and he that seeth in secret shall reward you openly; and this is promised in the parchments.

Be earnest in it. Men ought always to pray and not to faint; and to be importunate; and in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not. May the good Spirit help your infirmities, and the great Advocate plead your cause; and may the Father of all mercies and God of all comfort hear your prayers and answer them agreeable to his own promise in Christ Jesus, which is revealed to us both in the books and in the parchments, and that to the glory of his own name, and to your present and eternal welfare. Amen, and amen.

W. H.