

Other Works of

William Huntington

Philpot on Huntington

HUNTINGTON closely and faithfully discriminated between taking the mere lamp of profession in the hand and the vital necessity, upon which he insisted, of possessing the oil of God's grace in the heart if ever we are to enter heaven. (Matt. xxv. 1-13.) "This it was," says J. C. Philpot, "which especially made him obnoxious to the professing world as well as to the profane. You may take away almost anything from a man but his religion. To pronounce his faith a delusion, his hope a falsehood, and his love a lie ; to sift his profession till nothing is left but presumption or hypocrisy; to withstand his false confidence, and declare it to be worse than the faith of devils; to analyse his religion, beginning, middle, and end, as thoroughly and unreservedly as a chemist analyses a case of suspected poisoning, and declare the whole rotten, root and branch – can this be done without giving deadly offence? But this was the work that Huntington had to do."

J.C. Philpot

The Heavenly Workfolks

Matthew 20:13

William Huntington

1745-1813

THE
HEAVENLY WORKFOLKS,
AND
THEIR MYSTIC PAY:

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS,
Preached at Cranbrook, in the Weald of Kent, on Sunday,
Oct. 8, 1809,

AND PUBLISHED
AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD IN THAT
PLACE.

"But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny?"—Matt. xx. 13.

THE parable begins thus:- "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" ver. 1. By the kingdom of Heaven here is meant the Gospel of Christ, of which Christ himself is the sum an substance, as it treats of him and of his incarnation, and the end of his assuming human nature; namely, that he might, in our flesh, as the seed of the woman, destroy the Devil and his works, and by his obedience and death redeem us from all evil, and reinstate us in the favour and love of God; and, by virtue of his office, as King Mediator, obtain gifts for men, that God might once more dwell among them. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gift of divine love, and the blessing of eternal life, come to us through Christ's mediation; and in the receivers of these gifts God the Spirit dwells, and sets up a kingdom in their souls, which stands in power, in righteousness, peace, and joy. By these gifts does the King Mediator reign in Zion, and by these will he destroy the usurped empire of Satan, the tyranny of Sin, and the dominion of Death; – grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now, it is obvious to every one, that, in all countries, let that country be governed by the best prince in the world, yet the poor subjects of that prince are employed in some sort of labour or other in his dominions; and it is plain that the persons hired in this parable are all represented as being poor day-labouring men, and are sent to labour, though every one of these labourers is a subject of the King of kings and Lord of lords; yet the honour and dignity of the subject is not to destroy the toil of the labourer; for all the subjects of Christ's empire have something to do.

"And, when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard," ver. 2. The Jewish church, in which these first labourers wrought, is, in the Old Testament, called "a vineyard;" and so it is in the New. "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt, thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which do pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts! look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine, and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself," Psalm lxxx. 8-15.

A vineyard is a chosen spot, planted with the choicest and most fruitful plants in the world. The Holy Land was the spot that God chose; the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was the vine that he planted in it; and the tribe of Judah and his seed was the branch that God made strong for himself; and we may say that he planted it a noble vine, wholly a right seed; but it turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto him, Jer. ii. 21; but God's election of the Jewish nation was but a typical election, and their adoption was a national adoption; for there was but a small, a very small, remnant among them, according to the election of grace, Isa. i. 9. Hence, for their idolatry and injustice, he threatens to destroy it: - "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth

wild grapes; and now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard! What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Isa. v. 1-4. The land of Promise is a hilly country, especially the land of Judah; and it was a fruitful land till God made it barren for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein. God fenced it with a partition wall that separated it from all other nations in the world. He gathered out of it the hard and impenitent Canaanites, and planted it with the genuine offspring of the faithful patriarchs: he revealed his covenant name to them in the promised Messiah, which name is a strong tower; and he set his prophets as watch-men in this tower, who stood in their wards whole nights, Isa. xxi. 8. He made a wine-press, the temple, where he expected their worship and obedience, and the wine of their love, and the choice clusters, which are the fruits of the Spirit, being called Clusters with blessings in them, Isa. lxxv. 8; but, instead of this, their worship was paid to idols; and some who worshipped him gave him only bodily exercise, a drawing near to God with the mouth, and honouring him with the lip, while the heart was far from him; Hypocrisy reigned in their devotions, an injustice and Bribery in their courts; and, therefore, with the following judgments are they threatened: - "And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; I will take away my blessing, and smite it with a curse," Mal. iv. 6; and it shall become a prey to the sword of war, to Satan, sin, and death; and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. I will break down the middle wall of partition, and cast them off, and call in the Gentiles; "and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," Luke, xxi. 24; - and I will lay it waste; it shall be overrun with blindness and ignorance, sin and iniquity; it shall not be pruned by reproofs of instruction, nor be digged by the convicting ministry of the Gospel; but

there shall come briers and thorns, covetousness, worldly cares, and the deceitfulness of riches; and these only shall thrive, flourish, and grow in it. "And I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it." No cloud of witnesses shall drop the doctrine of my gospel, or distil the dew of my Spirit and my special grace upon it; for "I say unto you, that ye shall see me no more," says Christ, "until ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," Matt xxiii. 39. The prophet adds to this, "For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry" for the want of it, Isa. v. 5-7.

But that which completed the destruction of this vineyard was the wickedness of the husbandman that had the oversight of it, who filled up the measure of their iniquity by killing the proprietor and heir of it; and this our Lord foretells the scribes and pharisees; - "Hear another parable. There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandman, and went into a far country; and, when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandman, that they might receive the fruits of it; and the husbandman took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did unto them likewise: but last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son; but, when the husbandman saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance; and they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him," Matt. chap. xxi. Here we may see the difference between the voice of Envy and the voice of Conscience; and how the words of their mouth differed from the convictions of their heart. Before the populace they called the master of the house Beelzebub, and

ascribed the power of his miracles to the Devil; but, among themselves, they said, " This is the heir" but the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts now is not national, provincial, nor parochial; but those individual persons that are chosen of God in Christ Jesus-these are the real vineyard of the Lord God of the Gentiles. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." The scribes, priests, Levites, and pharisees, were the husbandmen of the other vineyard; but this vineyard has no husbandman but God himself; and all that he employs in it are no more than day-labourers; nor has it any keeper or waterer, in the strictest sense, but God only. "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," Isa. xxvii. 2, 3.

In this true vine there are two sorts of branches: one sort are charmed with the eloquence and novelty of the doctrine, especially the pathetic parts of it; and, having their warmest passions moved, they receive it with joy, and enter into a profession; but these having not the root of God's love to feed their joy, prove barren, and are taken away.

The other sort are made broken and contrite, tender and sore. Of these the Lord takes possession, binds up, and revives; and these, being rooted in the true vine by faith and love, have life in him, and he lives in them; and these bear fruit, and these the husbandman purges, that they may bring forth more fruit. - I shall now return to the parable.

And we may observe, first, That it is the householder himself that hires these labourers; even the apostles were not intrusted with this work. It was not they that spoke; but the Spirit of God that spoke in them. They went forth and wrought, but it was the Lord that wrought with them, confirming the word with signs, and giving testimony to the word of his grace by the power of his own Spirit.

First, He went out early – at four or five o'clock in the morning of the gospel dispensation, he being the Sun of Righteousness, and carrying morning light and perfect day with him wherever he went.

2. And he went out about the third hour also, and saw others standing idle in the market-place. The market-place is this world, in which there is a great deal of business carried on, especially in buying and selling. Here Ahab sold himself to work wickedness; here Judas sold his master for thirty pieces of silver. Others have had their hearts so expanded as to wish to gain the whole world, without considering the vain profit, if they lose their own souls. Some, in this market, buy the truth, and will not sell it on any account; and, as the antediluvians and the inhabitants of Sodom went on buying and selling till the flood and the flames put a stop to trade, so shall it be stopped again, for good and all, when the Son of man cometh.

In this market-place the householder saw some standing idle. These appear to me to be indisposed, rather sickly, and not able to do much; for had they been strong, robust, and alive to sin, they would have been at work; for work they must who are taken captive by Satan at his will; and, if the life of God had been in them they would have abounded in the work of the Lord. However, the master set these to work as well as the others: Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you; and they went their way," ver. 4.

"Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise," ver. 5. Those that were sent into the vineyard in the morning wrought a whole day; those of the third hour, or nine o'clock, wrought three quarters of a day; those that went at the sixth hour went at noon, and made half a day of it; those that went in at the ninth hour went at three o'clock in the afternoon; these wrought but a quarter of a day.

"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle; and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive," ver. 7. These were set to work at five o'clock in the afternoon. Now these different hours of the day seem to point out the different ages of the gospel, when it flourishes; or rather the different stages of men's lives, when they are called and converted to God. Man's life-time is man's day, and while it is day he must work, if ever he work at all. Death is man's night, and when this night cometh, no man can work, John ix. 4. Some, like Samuel, Jeremiah, and Josiah, are hired early in the morning; some, like Timothy, at twenty years of age; others at noon, when many of their years are past; and others, as Abraham, when upon the decline of life, represented at three in the afternoon; and some, like the thief on the cross, at five, when the evening was drawing on.

The question the master puts to these that were last hired is, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" By which it appears that these were old men, and that their day of life was almost spent, and that the night of death was at hand with them; and therefore the master asks, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us." I wonder that the strong man armed (Luke, xi. 21), as Christ calls the devil, did not hire them; especially, if we consider that he offered the Saviour all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, if he would worship him: but the truth of the matter is, that these men, if they had been engaged, would have done the devil's cause more hurt than good; for they were wounded in their conscience, burdened with sin, distressed in their minds, and, like the poor woman's daughter, they were vexed with the devil, and therefore could not work, having no heart to it; and such mournful souls, being under awful alarms, are apt to disturb the strong man in his

peaceable possessions, by disquieting the carnal repose of others. This seems to be the reason of their standing, almost all the day, idle, and of their not being hired; for, if ever sin sits heavy upon men, it is in their old age. These were all sent into the vineyard.

With the first that were hired Christ agreed for a penny a day; but all the others that were hired afterwards seem to take him at his word, confide in his promise, and trust to his honour; which promise is, That "whatsoever is right that shall ye receive; and they went their way."

"So when the even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first," ver."8. Now this is done in perfect conformity to the law, which law respects these labouring men, and the master that hires them: "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, " Deut. xxiv. 15. This is the law of the labourer. They were to be paid before night: and so our labourers are to get their hire before the night of death comes on. As soon as it was earned it was due; and before the sun set it was to be paid: "the sun shall not go down upon it." Nor shall the Sun of Righteousness set, nor the midnight cry come on, till every one of the Lord's labourers have received their penny.

But, to be at some little degree of certainty about this penny, we must observe that this penny is not the great reward of inheritance which is above, for that comes in a moment, at the last trump, 1 Cor. xv. 52; but this is a running penny, or daily pay. Besides, eternity is not measured by the revolutions of the sun; for there is no night there, and, of course, all is day, not days.

These labourers were paid at six o'clock in the evening; but the great reward will not be fully given until the bridegroom comes, which will not be at six o'clock in the evening, but at twelve o'clock at night: "At midnight there was a great cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Besides, the midnight cry finishes the day of this world, and is the end of it; but the evening, when these labourers are paid, is the eve of certain mysterious days – days of hard labour, which are peculiar to the people of God.

Add to this, The inheritance of the saints in light is called, an eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17, which such a trifle as a penny will by no means amount to, without greatly lessening or lowering both the sense and the contents of the apostle's noble, lofty and sublime expressions.

This penny is the pay that comes at the end of every day of hard labour; which labouring days are diverse and many; but the heavenly glory is a rest from all labour; and this glory is received after men are dead; but the recipients of this penny were all alive, and fit to go to work again, as soon as their murmuring spirits were crossed and cooled.

Again: these labourers were paid in the vineyard, which is the militant church upon earth; but the incorruptible inheritance will be received in the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Furthermore: This penny is given by the instrumentality of a steward; but glory will be given by the Lord himself: he will quicken our mortal bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body, in which no steward will be employed; it is the master only that can and will do this. Read Luke, xii. 37. Besides, glory is a crown for kings, not the penny of poor labourers.

Moreover, when this penny was paid, there were some that expected that they should receive more; which shews that they were not filled nor satisfied; which will not be the case when we receive the great reward; for then we shall be filled with joy, and with all the fulness of God.

Besides, there were some of these labourers who murmured against the good man of the house, and whose eye was evil because he was good; which shews that they were in a mortal state, with the old man of sin in them: an evil eye in heaven would make us stand in jeopardy; but these corruptible bodies shall put on incorruption, and these mortal bodies shall put on immortality; and then he that is perfect will be as his master, and no mere murmur at the good man, than the good man will murmur at us.

Christ will present the church to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle; and of course, there will be no carnality in the mind, no envy in the heart, nor evil in the eye.

But it may be objected, that these labourers were not all good men or faithful labourers, because some did not murmur; nor did they all expect more than others, though some did. To which I answer, They were paid in the same coin, and each received the same sum; which would not have been the case had there been any deceitful workers among them: for "what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" 2 Cor. vi. 15. Judas is said to receive part of this ministry, namely, the title of an apostle, a power to work miracles, and the gift of utterance, Acts, i. 25; but these are no part of the true riches. It is said that a wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren, Prov. xvii. 2; but this man is not a son, but a servant; and the gift of every servant returns to the prince at the year of release; but the inheritance is the son's for ever. Read Ezek. xlii. 17. It remains, then, that all these workmen

were faithful labourers; for the coin and the sum was the same to all-they received every man a penny; and, as there were no deceitful workers among them, so I believe there was no adulterated coin in the pay that they received. I shall now endeavour to shew,

1. What we are to understand by this penny a day, which these workfolks agreed for.

2. What their labour is in the vineyard in which they were employed.

3. Who the steward is that is called upon to pay these labourers.

4. Why the last were paid first, and the first last.

5. What was the cause of their murmuring against the good man of the house; and,

Lastly, Prove that he who receives the hire agreed for, is by no means wronged: "Friend, I do thee no wrong."

1. What we are to understand by this penny a day. A penny a day seems a very small sum in our days; but, if what I have heard be true, some labourers worked for three-pence a day at the building of St. Paul's church; and, if it be true, that a man in those days could buy half a sheep for nine pence, they could live better on three-pence per day than they can for four shillings per day now. Whether this penny was Jewish or Roman coin; whether it amounted to seven-pence half penny of our money or not, matters not; it seems plain, from the parable, that it was the usual pay of a labouring man, at least of such men as worked in the vineyards; which sort of labourers, I should think, must be the better sort of labourers;

for I should not imagine that all day-labourers are fit persons to be vine-dressers, which work requires some skill, and judgment, and is not to be learnt in a day; but to be obtained by practice, by observation, and by studying the nature of the vine.

Some good men make this penny a day to be external privileges, promises, strength and grace sufficient for the day, to help us in every time of need, and eternal life at last: but the word *grace* has a very large and extensive meaning; and may be considered as in God, as in Christ, and in the Spirit; in God's ancient councils, in the covenant, in the promises, in the souls of saints, and in its perfection in glory; and to make this penny every thing, is to make it nothing.

I believe in my conscience that this penny is faith, and nothing else; and this will appear plain if we run the parallel between the labouring man's penny and the saint's faith.

1. The labouring man's pay is his livelihood; he is to live by his labour: – "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," Gen. iii. 19 ; and God has decreed and declared, that the just shall live by faith, Hab. ii. 4.

2. "If men will not work (says Paul) neither shall they eat," 2 Thess. iii. 10; and, "If ye will not believe (says the prophet) surely ye shall not be established," Isa. vii. 9.

3. If this poor labourer be a sober industrious man, and not burdened with a family, he may, and such often do, make a saving; and in time chance his silver pence into gold, and have something very considerable to supply his wants in his old age; and the more he saves the richer he is; and hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith? James, ii. 5. Yea, and Christ himself expressly calls faith gold: – "I counsel

thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich," Rev. iii. 18.

4. When the labourer receives his hire he sets off to the market town and shops, and gets his bread and his meat, or whatever eatable he wants. So the spiritually poor, that have long laboured and are heavy laden, when they obtain faith, and hear of bread enough in their Father's house, they set off after it, as the prodigal did; and when they come they find not only bread, but meat also - the fatted calf as well as the bread of life. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; and he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him;" and this eating is explained to be believing; because faith in exercise is appropriating - it receives, and brings in, and applies the benefits, so that the mind and conscience are fed, nourished, and satisfied with the sweet repast; and the dread of perishing with hunger is banished from the soul: "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," John, vi. 40.

5. If a poor man be idle, and will not work to earn a penny, he may saunter about the market, and look at the victualling shops till his appetite be provoked to the highest; there can be no buying without money; so is an unbeliever under the Gospel: he may hear of the love of God, the death of Christ, the promises of the covenant, the blessing of grace, and the riches of glory; but these cannot profit him, not being mixed with faith in him that hears them, Heb. iv. 2.

6. The poor labourer not only procures food by his penny, but apparel also; and some, who are frugal and industrious, keep themselves very genteelly clad with their hire - while lazy drunken men wander about half naked: so is the soul of an unbeliever: he is poor and wretched, miserable, blind, and naked, Rev. iii. 17; while the believer is clothed from head to

foot with the royal robe of an imputed righteousness, Isa. lxi. 10, which is unto and upon all them that believe, Rom. iii. 22.

7. If the poor labourer wants physic or medical assistance, his hire procures it for him; while many that are, given up to idleness lie sick and die in barns and under hedges. It is just so with the poor soul that is sick at heart, sick of sin, and sick of self-no spiritual cure without spiritual faith. Hence the great Physician often enquired of his patients after their faith when they came to him; saying, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" and, if they answer, "Yea, Lord," - then he replied, "According to thy faith be it unto thee;" and the patient was made whole from that hour. We may be sick and sorrowful too; but there can be neither health nor cure without faith. "If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins." Such must pine away in their sickness, and die in despair and sorrow; for the unbeliever is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him; and the Judge of quick and dead declares that he that believeth not shall be damned.

8. The labourer secures himself an habitation also by his daily pay; there is no hiring houses, nor paying rent, without money. "So the Lord is our dwelling-place in all generations," says Moses. "Be thou my strong habitation, for an house of defense to save me," says David. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower," says Wisdom; "the righteous runneth in and are safe but without faith there is neither house, home, habitation, or shelter: "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge," Proverbs, xiv. 26; but without confidence no refuge.

How many do we see who refuse to labour, wandering about from place to place without house or home, exposed to the most inclement weather, suffering hunger and cold, and having no covering in the cold, nor home, or habitation they can call their own! So is the unbeliever: he is exposed to all

the darts of Satan, and to all the arrows of Heaven; he has no hiding-place from the storm, nor covert from the tempest; and therefore "God shall rain upon the wicked snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of their cup," Psalm xi. 6; and the unbeliever shall be exposed quite naked to all these storms.

9. The industrious labourer procures all his household furniture with his hire, all necessary goods, utensils, and tools to work with; and so is the man of God by faith "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Tim. iii. 17; but without faith there can be neither grace nor truth, fear nor favour, life nor light, hope nor help, prayer nor praise; for he is dead in trespasses and sins, and the wrath of God abides upon him.

10. The blest and most valuable article that a poor labouring man procures by his hire, is a good bed. This is his resting-place; and, as God has appointed the day for labour, and the night for rest, so he says "The sleep of a labouring, man is sweet, whether he eat little or much," Eccl. v. 12, because he goes weary to it. So the believer obtains his rest by faith: "We that believe do enter into rest," Heb. iv. 3; and this rest is our green bed, Cant. 1. 16; and it is both a glorious and an eternal rest, and will be enjoyed in Heaven in its perfection. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness," Isaiah, lvii. 1, 2. We often see poor industrious men, with their little cottages set off and set out with many useful things, and the bed bedecked with its checked curtains and patch work quilt, all needful and comfortable, while the idle and loose loiterer hath not where to lay his head, worse off than a merciful man's beast. So is the unbeliever; he is destitute both of bed and of rest; for "the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest," Isa. lvii.

20; yea, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night," Rev. xiv. 11, no rest, neither in the day of this world, nor in the dark night of hell, in the world to come. Having run the parallel between the poor man's pay and the saint's faith, I shall now consider the image and superscription of the Lord's money.

The current coin of a country is known by the image and superscription that it bears. Hence we read, that when Christ's enemies intended to catch something from his mouth against the Roman emperor, that they might bring him under the secular power, they asked him, saying, "Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou: Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money: and they brought unto him a penny; and he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him Ceasar's," Matt. xxii .17-21. The image is intended to be a likeness of the sovereign that reigns; and by this and the superscription is the current coin of a country known. The image of the Lord's penny is Love, for God is love; and the two images, I mean that of the earthly Adam and the image of the heavenly Adam, are declared in the law of God to be Love and Hatred (lovers of God and haters of God) are the only characters delineated in the whole ten commandments. Faith is the penny, and Love is the impress on it. Faith believes the love of God, and receives the love of God; and, as sure as the image always travels with the penny, so sure does genuine faith always work by love, Gal. v. 6; and, as the image on the coin distinguishes the currency of one country from another, so does love distinguish genuine faith from every thing else that bears that name; and, as money quite smooth, that has no image or superscription on it, passes doubtfully from hand to hand in trade, so the soundest confidence is attended with innumerable doubts and fears about many things, until the impression of love be received upon it; and then all doubts

and fears are cast out and dispersed, for "Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," I Cor. xiii. 7.

I come now to consider the superscription of the Lord's penny. All coin is not sterling that passes current amongst us; we have a deal of counterfeit cash and base metal imposed upon us; some is made of brass, some of copper done over with silver, and some is made of what they call *tutenag*; and, as wicked men prepare and impose this base metal upon the trade, and traders of the country, so does the devil impose upon the churches of Christ a deal of his counterfeit coin, which, for a while, passes current, till it be discovered; and then it is stopped, and cried down. "A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith," Acts, vi. 7. "Thou seest, brother Saul, how many thousands of the Jews there are that believe, and they are all zealous of the law," Acts, xxi. 20. Some have got an historical faith, an assent to the truth respecting the mystery of the creation, of the patriarchs, of the prophets, &c. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest," Acts, xxvi. 27. Some take up with a momentary faith upon sight, which is the same as Arminian grace, very short-lived: while they see they believe; but when they lose sight, then their faith dies. "Many believed on his name when they saw the miracles which he did; but Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men," John, ii. 23, 24. Some have a temporary faith, which attends the motions of natural affections: "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away," Luke, viii. 13. The other faith died when they lost sight of the miracles; but this lived till temptations came on. Some have had a miraculous faith, which admits of no doubts: this will remove a mountain, but then it must be void of all staggering, Matt. xxi. 21: this is a gift, and the apostles had grace before this gift was bestowed upon them; grace was for themselves, gifts were for the confirmation of

their mission, and for the benefit of others. Signs are not for them that believe, but for them that believe not. This miraculous faith is not essential to salvation; thousands have been saved who never had it, and many have had it who never will be saved: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you," Matt. vii. 22, 23. None of all this coin, abstractedly considered, has got the right image and superscription upon it, much less the bold and daring presumption of impostors and hypocrites; for, though these appear to be all faith, yet they have no wisdom. It is the fool that rages and is confident, Prov. xiv. 16. Faith purifies the heart, and makes wise to salvation; and, as a wise man's wisdom maketh his face to shine (Ecel. viii. 1), so the confidence of fools gives their face a gloom.

But now to the point in hand. Money bears the name both of the king and the country where it passes current; and so does it bears the name of God: "For what if some did not faith believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Rom. iii. 3. Here it is expressly called "the faith of God." It was prepared and coined in heaven, and is one of the good and perfect gifts which comes down from the Father of Lights, and is the Lord's treasure, put into the hearts of God's children, to trade with and to live by: the just shall live by his faith.

And, as the coin of any one kingdom does not pass current in all kingdoms, no more does this. It passes in heaven for anything we want, and it goes current in the kingdom of Christ upon earth, but nowhere else; and on this account the word *elect* is added to the name of God in the superscription: "Paul, an apostle of Christ, according "to the faith of God's elect," Titus, i.1. Here is the whole superscription: first, the name of the sovereign, it is the faith of God. Here is also the kingdom,

the subjects, or the people among whom this coin passes current, called *the elect*; it is the faith of God's elect.

This cash passes current in no other kingdom in all the world, but in the kingdom of God. In the east, we hear of the faith of true Mussulmen; in the west, of the Catholic faith; among the advocates for free-will, we hear of universal faith; and we often hear of the faith of nations; and, among hypocrites, we read of feigned faith; and among presumptuous impostors, we see raging confidence, or the full assurance of insolence: and, among the carnally secure, there is a faith that is dead, James, ii. 17. Thus it appears plain that this penny is faith; that this faith bears God's own name, called "the faith of God;" and that it bears God's image, which is love; Faith worketh by Love, and Charity believeth all things; and, lastly, That this coin is current only in the Lord's kingdom, and among his subjects, and is therefore called "the faith of God's elect" All other coin will be rejected by God as counterfeit, as sure as the faith of God is rejected as counterfeit by the men of this world.

And so it is written, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto you," Acts, xiii. 41; and this was found to be true among the Jews; for when Paul confessed Christ, and bore testimony to him of Jerusalem, they all cried out, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live, Acts, xxii. 22; and it was the same at Cesarea among the Gentiles; for as Paul thus spake for himself, "Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning doth make thee mad," Acts, xvi. 24. Any thing would pass current but real conversion to God, and living faith in Christ Jesus; and as God's faith is despised by men, so men's faith is despised by God, being corrupt both in the principle and in the object of it, such men

being given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, 2 Thess. ii. 11. This faith is a delusion, and the object of it a lie.

I come now to show what the labour in the vineyard is, in which these workfolks were employed. The first work, doubtless, is planting; hence we often read of planting a vineyard. Jesus Christ is the true vine; and to bring the sinner off from his own stock, from trust in his own heart, from reliance on his own arm, from leaning to his own understanding, and from all confidence in the flesh, most certainly is the first branch of this labour; and, when sinners begin to discover themselves to be but the degenerate plant of a strange vine, whose grapes are wild, and whose clusters are bitter, and see also the bad soil they grow in, so as they feel the power of faith attend the word, and "the power, grace, and beauty of Christ set before them, the whole bent of the soul is after him, and faith goes at the head, attended with an innumerable train of desires and prayers, tears and longings, to obtain nearness to him and an interest in him; and, when once Faith takes hold, and is strong enough to maintain its hold, the soul finds life. and strength sensibly communicated to it, just as the sap of the vine is communicated to the branch. This is the main work, communion with Christ, in order to obtain life and power from Christ, to make us fruitful to God: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches; and as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me;" and as sure as Christ admits the soul to nearness and access to him, so does faith embrace his dying love; and as faith gains ground it purifies the heart from sin. This removes the wretched evil that separates him from us; and when Love comes in it pulls down all our idols: and, as sure as faith gives the Lord a residence in us, or, as Paul says, Christ liveth in me, or dwells in the heart by faith, so sure does Love exalt him and crown him King without a competitor in the renewed affections; but it may be objected, It is God's work to plant, and not man's; for Christ

declares that "every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." All this is true; but the efficient cause does not always make void the instrumental cause. God employs labourers in this branch of his work: "Paul planted and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

2. The next branch of this labour is watering; but there are some clouds which have no rain. These are the sons of Death, called "the ministers of the letter;" and the letter killeth. These cannot water the Lord's vineyard, because they have not the water of life in them; nor can they be of use to any, but to those professors who are in the flesh, and make a fair shew in it, and who are satisfied with a name to live. If the cloud without water can move the passions and stir the bowels of corrupt nature, such bowels are refreshed; and such professors call this *power*, and give it the name of "a watering time;" but those who receive the Lord's pay dare not walk nor work in this craftiness. They are supplied from a better fountain: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink;" and, as the Scripture hath said, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This water is a river, which has a living spring for its source, and is living water, and so distinguished from all other waters; and, as it flows out, it is intended for others. This water drops as the rain, and distils as the dew, in the ministry of the Spirit, while thirsty souls that are in Christ, and who have the mouth of faith, suck it in, and find its quickening influences; because it enlivens the soul, strengthens faith, and makes it grow: it encourages hope, and makes it take the faster bold; and it stirs up love, and joy, and peace; and all these are enjoyed in Christ the Head. Hence you read of faith in the Lord, hope in the Lord, joy in the Lord, and of peace in the Lord; and these are no inconsiderable parts of those fruits brought forth by those branches which abide in the vine.

3. The third part of this labour is digging. One branch of God's curse upon the Jewish vineyard is, That "it shall not be pruned nor digged," Isa. v. 6. This work is done by Christ. "All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the hearts." It may be said to be done by the ministry, when searching discourses are, delivered; and by believers themselves, when seriously engaged in self-examination; which work is necessary, as it leads us to discover the depth of man's fall, the sad crop of lusts and corruption that are within, the danger that these have exposed us to, the impossibility of salvation by works, the disproportion between us and the holy law of God, the necessity of the blood of Christ to purge us, and of the grace of God to subdue the remains of corruption, and how nearly allied the devil is to the sin of our nature, and what access he too often finds to his own allies: how needful it is to observe and watch against these! – what danger these often bring us into, even so near to the great transgression as, to our view, nothing but words are wantiny to complete it! Such enmity and rebellion is conceived in the heart, that, if there was not a watch before the mouth to keep the door of the lips, the conception would come forth, and we fear all would be lost for ever: "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me; then I shall be upright, and innocent from the great transgression." This digging work serves to convince us of the need of momentary support, and of God's protecting power, of continual supplies of grace from the Lord's fulness, and of promised strength to assist us against the devil and sin. It serves also to exalt the grace of God, and his unparalleled condescension in taking up his residence in such polluted creatures, and teaches us to cleave to him when we see such formidable and innumerable foes, both within and without, against us; and it drives us to be the more earnest, fervent, and importunate with God for help in every time of need, our case being not a common one, not one in ten millions ever seeing themselves while in this world, in such a

perilous state as those do who are enlightened by God himself. The reins of such instruct them in the night season; and such instruction contributes not a little towards a pure language, savouring, of the grace of God, and of his grace only. A true sight and sense of human depravity makes men more and more evangelical, both in spirit and principle; for they can glory in nothing, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the time will come when they that trust in the flesh, and glory in themselves, will find all their glorying vain. Having touched upon planting, watering, and digging I come now,

4. To manuring. Fruiting plants want dung. The Jewish church, which is called "a vineyard," is said to have a fig-tree in it; and this fig-tree in the vineyard seems to me to represent the priesthood in the different branches of the Levitical tribe. "He spake also another parable. A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he to the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down," Luke, xiii. 6-8. These three years seem to represent the term of our Lord's personal ministry, and the following time the ministry of the apostles: but all digging and dunging seem to be of no use; they hardened their hearts against all convictions, and despised the Lord and his grace; and, as the fig-tree was barren, so was the vineyard; for, if the priesthood be corrupted (Mal. ii. 8) the church must be corrupt; for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, Matt. vii. 18. Hence John, when he came, laid the axe to the root of the tree, Matt. iii. 10; and the Roman army was God's battle-axe to cut them all down together. Had this fig-tree been manured, the vineyard must have been manured also, for the fig-tree grew among the vines; the Lord says it was planted in the vineyard. The ministry of John, of

Christ, and of all the apostles, was a most heart-searching ministry; but this digging was of no use to this barren fig-tree, nor to the barren vineyard; and Christ was full of grace and truth, and great grace was upon all the apostles: but these barren souls received no manure by any of these means; and the tree must be made good before the fruit can be good.

Branches in the living vine stand in much need of being often manured by the grace of Christ. Our perverse and stubborn wills want divine power to bring them into subjection and compliance with the will of God in his various and trying dispensation - we cannot submit and lie passive of ourselves. "Be still, and know that I am God," saith the Almighty; but I find a command will not do alone without grace; and this appears plain in the parable of the two sons - "He said to the first, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard: he answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented and went," Matt. xxi. 28. The grace of repentance produced obedience, but the naked command did not.

Our treacherous memories often want refreshing, by having the same things repeated and impressed upon us, lest at any time we should let them slip, the enemy watching to take away the word out of the heart, in order to make us unfruitful.

Our understandings want fresh light, being often beclouded by the old veil, by spiritual desertions, and by dark and intricate providences. God promises that light shall be sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart; to make our path shine more and more unto perfect day.

Our judgments need repeated information and instruction, in order to make them sound, settled, and firm against the attacks of seducers, who lie in wait to deceive and beguile the souls of the simple. A sound judgment is a bulwark against those archers that bend their tongues for lies; and this also is promised to us and it comes by the Spirit of God, through the

mediation of Christ Jesus: "The Lord is exalted, for he dwelleth on high; he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness; and Wisdom and Knowledge shall be the stability of thy times," Isa. xxxiii. 5, 6. Being thus furnished by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, a man can form a judgment of what he hears, and make a private judgment of his companions by their fruits. He sits in judgment often upon himself and his own state; he judges his own conduct, and, upon dubious and doubtful doctrines, providences, and circumstances, he is enabled to come to some satisfactory conclusions about them. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged," 1 Cor. xi. 31; and happy are they that are justified when they speak, and clear when they judge, Psalm li. 4.

The mind of man is often led astray by the sensuality that works in it; and, though purified by faith, yet it wants stirring up: as Peter says, "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," 2 Peter, iii. 1. When the Spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind, favours us with his operations, life and peace are enjoyed: "My meditation of him shall be sweet," says the Psalmist: "I will be glad in the Lord," Psalm civ. 34. Christ came, that his people might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Hence preaching the word, reading and meditation, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving; the communion of saints; watching the hand of God within, and the providence of God abroad in the world; observing his judgments that appear abroad in the earth; the death of the saints; and the strange punishments of the workers of iniquity; these, and all these, have various effects upon them that love and fear God; and the good Spirit takes his advantages of these things, to gird up the loins of our minds, to make us watch and be sober, observant, and diligent. When Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, great fear came upon all the churches; when the devil drove the seven sons of Sceva and some of the chief priests out of the house wounded and

naked, for abusing the name of the Saviour, it was known to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus, and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, Acts, xix. 16, 17; fear fell upon some, and others triumphed and exalted the Lord. The death of Herod made his flatterers tremble, and excited the gratitude of the saints. "When the wicked perish, there is shouting." When Justice overtook Haman, the days of Purim were kept; and when Elymas, the sorcerer, was struck blind, the deputy saw what was done, and believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord, Acts, xiii. 12. Under a frowning providence, Naomi changes her name to that of Marah; while, on the other hand, Jacob is overwhelmed with gratitude when he compares the staff with the two bands. The good Spirit works by all these things. All things are for the elect's sake: "Everywhere, and in all things," says Paul, "I am instructed," Phil. iv. 12; and by all these are the vines manured and made better. Add to this,

Every child of God knows that his peace, both with God and conscience, is often disturbed and interrupted, as was the case with the apostles and primitive saints. Hence every visit the Lord made to them was with "Peace be unto you;" and this was not an empty sound in their ears, but the calm of Heaven in their hearts; and hence also the apostolic salutation of "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied," I Peter, i. 2. The common callings of men, the necessary business of this life, often make inroads into the quietude of heaven-born souls, besides the expected oppositions of the world, the flesh, and Satan; but the Lord still pays his visits to the city and children of Zion, that Peace may be within her walls, and Prosperity within her palaces.

Every grace also wants strengthening and encouragement; hence we read of "being strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man," Eph. iii. 16; for the Spirit puts forth his power in the grace which he produces in the soul. On this

account we read of being strong in faith and of abounding in hope; and of faith growing exceedingly, and of the charity of every one of the Thessalonians toward each other abounding, 2 Thess. i. 3; and this growing and abounding Paul ascribes to the Spirit's might, animating and strengthening the inner man. Having dropped a few hints upon printing, watering, digging, and manuring the vineyard,

I come now to the work of pruning, or dressing the vines. That there is such a branch of labour is plain from the word of God; because the apostles and first Jewish ministers have a promise, that strangers should stand and feed their flocks, and the sons of the alien should be their ploughmen and their vine-dressers, Isaiah, lxi. 5; and one part of God's threatened vengeance to the Jewish vineyard is, That it should not be pruned nor digged, Isaiah, v. 6. The vine is different from most, if not from all, fruiting plants. The young shoots of some plants are two or three years old before they bear; the peach, the nectarine, &c. bear at one year old; the shoots they make one year are their fruiting wood the next: but not so the vine; his branch, leaves, and fruit, come forth from the bud altogether; hence they require more pruning than any other plant, to lighten them of the burden of wood they make, to strengthen the branches which are left for fruit, and that the shoots may come strong, and the fruit fine, and that a plenty of sap or life may be preserved to feed these fruitful branches, which a vine overloaded with wood could not maintain. God's good Spirit of grace is poured forth upon the soul at once, when light and life are given; and by these, which are from the Lord's fulness, is the soul joined to the Lord, and becomes one spirit with him: this is the union between the true vine and the branch; and "every branch in me that beareth fruit," saith the Lord, "my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Every predominant corruption, struggling for mastery, if it gain an ascendancy, is sure to interrupt this union, and occasion a sensible suspension of the divine communications.

Hence, as the knife is taken to the vine, so cutting reproofs and rebukes are often given to the most choice branches in Christ Jesus. Jehoshaphat was rebuked, both with words and a sense of God's wrath for indulging his corrupt affections to king Ahab: "And Jehu, the son of Hanani the seer, went out to meet him and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord," 2 Chron. xix. 2. In the same way is David reprov'd by Nathan for his unlawful proceedings with Uriah, and informed that the sword should never depart from his house; and the conspiracy of Absalom was intended to whet the edge. Peter met with the same, for withstanding the Lord when he was on the way to his suffering. Much of this pruning work is done by the ministry of the word, which none know any thing of but God, and the conscience that seconds it. Sometimes this pruning work is carried on by God himself, by hiding his face; by keeping the soul at a distance; by leaving the mind to hang long in doubt; by suffering souls to be dry and straitened in prayer; by taking no notice of them under the word; by comforting others, but passing them by and their case; by contending with them; by frowning upon their purposes; by walking contrary to them; by increasing the number of their enemies that trouble them; by making their own countenance proclaim to others the barrenness of their souls; by suffering infidels to triumph, when believers lament and mourn, John, xvi. 20; by causing Satan's offspring to fare sumptuously every day, when the heirs of Promise would be glad of their crumbs, Luke, xvi. 20, 21; by keeping silence at the scoffer when he sets his mouth against the heavens, but chastening every morning those that reverence him; by suffering the fool to be at a loss where to bestow his fruits and his goods, and Paul to suffer hunger, cold, and nakedness; by smiting David for cutting off Saul's skirts, but sparing the rod when Saul murdered fourscore priests; counterbalancing at times a liberal heart with an empty pocket, and loading the covetous with a stock in hand

for a thousand years to come; and exercising a good conscience, willing to live honestly, with a long and heavy burden of debt, as the poor widow who cried to Elisha, whose husband died in debt, which debt he had contracted with Ahab, in order to feed a hundred prophets, fifty in a cave, when Jezebel had slain all she could find, as the Jews relate; God suffering the best of men at times to be entangled with the worst of sinners, as Obadiah with king Ahab, Hannah with Peninnab, Jacob with Laban, Daniel with the princes of the provinces, Moses with Abiram and Dathan; and David, first with Saul, then with Joab, then with Abithophel, and last with Absalom; Jesus with Judas, and Paul with Alexander the coppersmith; and if any thing under Heaven will try flesh and blood to the quick, all the above thing will; they are sufficient to move the hair of the head, to make blood rankle in the veins, and vengeance to boil in the heart: but these things are intended to crucify us to the world, to curb our corrupt affections, to dissolve all union with the enemies of truth, to make our friendship with Christ and his family the sweeter, to make us prize and content ourselves with the more enduring substance, and to keep us looking out and longing for the inheritance above.

Moreover, crosses and trials, disappointments and mortifications, wounds and bruises, break the heart, and keep it broken; the spirit is meekened, softened, and made sore, tender, and contrite under them; and this is by no means a soil in which lusts and corruptions can flourish; and I may add, that although there are no joyous frames under this pruning work, but rather grievous ones; yet there is much life, keen sensations, and a most voracious appetite after the best provisions, great deadness to the world, and much energy in prayer: "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit," said the good king, in Isaiah, xxxviii. 16. I shall now drop the pruning, and come

To the weeding, or keeping, the vineyard clean. How they did this I know not: whether it was done with what we call a *hoe* or a mattock, I cannot tell; but that this work must be done, and was done, is plain, by Solomon's observation of a vineyard, in which this work had been neglected: "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo! it was all grown over with thorns,, and nettles had covered broken down the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was Prov. xxiv. 30, 31; thorns and nettles had covered the very face of it, so that you could not tell what it was. It was thorns in our Lord's parable that choked the word sown in the thorny ground; which thorns our Lord calls "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches." Anxious cares are the fruits and effects of unbelief, distrusting the faithfulness of God to his promises; riches are the grand idol of corrupt affections, and corrupt affections the root of that evil the Lord tells us that there is a deal of deceit in these riches. They promise every earthly pleasure, and the abundance of all good things: they promise all medical assistance and attendance if sick; they are a security against all the fears of creditors, bumbailiffs, and prisons for debtors; they insinuate that the possessors are high in the divine favour, supposing gain to be godliness, that Providence has discriminated them; they promote greatness in the world; they prompt to an affected and feigned consequence; they cause many of the poor and needy to truckle, cringe, and make suit unto them; they command respect; and what the wise man says is too true, that the rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit, Prov. xviii. 11; but Paul says, "Many that have coveted them have erred from the faith, and have been seduced to trust in uncertain riches, instead of the living God;" for "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," I Tim. vi. 9. Wealth is a snare, and an ingredient by which the tempter works, as it procures plenty of fuel for every unhallowed fire that burns;

and I know of no way of keeping these thorns and weeds under, but that of constant and fervent prayer to God; by keeping ourselves in the love of Christ, by a daily cross and by self-denial; mortifying, crossing, and denying the suits, cravings, and desires of our corrupt affections; this Paul calls crucifying. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," Gal. v. 24. There is another branch of labour in the vineyard, which I do not rightly understand; but that there is such a work as keeping, and such a workman as a keeper, is plain from the Scriptures; for the Church complains, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept," Cant. i. 6. These keepers seem to be a sort of watchmen, intended to preserve the fruit; because they are said to keep the fruit: "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me. Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred," Song viii. 12. These keepers seem to be employed to guard the fruit from thieves and from vermin, because the Church prays against these: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes," Cant. ii. 15. The worst thieves in this world are the merit-mongers, who rob God of his sovereignty, and of the glory of his grace, and Jesus Christ of the glory of his finished salvation. False prophets are called foxes in the prophecies of Ezekiel, xiii. 4 i and they are called "foxes of the deserts," because they are barren of all that is good, as a desert is. The vines of our country, growing on the walls and on houses, and being enclosed in gardens, are not in danger of these vermin, as foxes and such like creatures; but vineyards planted in open fields are, being little, low, busby plants, supporting themselves upon their own stem, as our currant-trees and standard honeysuckles do; and these might be much annoyed by the foxes, for aught I know. But how can we take these? I know of no other way than by solemn appeals to conscience with the words of truth, so as to leave a lasting conviction on their minds; and after this, though they remain in heresy, and

are subverted, and sin, yet they are condemned of themselves; and such are already taken and held in a snare: "A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say is there not a lie in my right hand? Isa. xlv. 20. Thus God "taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong," Job, v. 13. I come now to the next general head, which is,

3. To shew who is the steward that is called upon to pay these labourers. By the steward here, I do not understand it to mean a divine person, either God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit; for neither of these are ever called "stewards," that I know of; and it is safe to take no unwarranted liberty with the word of God; and especially in imposing an office or character upon the Lord which he hath not taken to himself. The priesthood among the Jews, or the whole body of priests, are called "a steward."

There was a certain man which had a steward, and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods; and he is ordered to give an account of his stewardship, for he is to be no longer steward, Luke, xvi. 1, 2; and we know that the whole body of Jewish priests and rulers were turned out of their office; and the apostles were put into it; and, according to Paul, they were stewards: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1. The glorious mystery of three Divine Persons in the Godhead is made known to these stewards; they know the grace of Christ, the love of the Father, and the witness of the Spirit. The mystery of godliness, or of God manifest in the flesh the mystery of the union between Christ and the church; the mysteries of the empire of grace; and the mystery of changing the quick at the last day, are all revealed and made known to these stewards.

But I do not think that this honourable office is wholly confined to ministers, but even to any heaven-born soul who has a choice experience of grace; according to Peter, "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 " I Peter, iv. 9, 10. By this it should seem that every soul that has received the gift of life, by the spirit of grace; and that has an experience of quickening, pardoning, and justifying grace; all who have obtained a good hope through grace, and the grace of faith and love; and who are enabled to refresh the bowels of others, may be called "stewards of the manifold grace of God:" but I believe that, primarily, ministers are intended, as appears by the following words of Christ: "Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing; of a truth I say unto you, That he will make him ruler over all that he hath," Luke, xii. 40-44. This honourable officer is first called "a steward," a faithful and wise steward; secondly, "a servant:" Blessed are those servants."

1. These are called "stewards of the mystery of God:" " God by revelation," says Paul, "made known unto me the mystery," Eph. iii. 3. This mystery was committed to Paul, as a faithful steward, that he should preach it to others, "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery," Eph. iii. 9.

2. Paul was a steward of the manifold grace of God, which God himself put into his heart: "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. i. 14; and this grace Paul preached to others,

and others received it; for which Paul was thankful to God: "Ye are all partakers of my grace," Phil. i. 7.

3. These stewards seem to me to be the keepers of the Lord's wardrobe also; for when the prodigal returned to the household of faith, the Father said to his servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, Luke, xv. 20. More servants than one are employed in dressing up this penitent: the word "servants" is in the plural. He that brought forth the best robe preached a discourse upon the righteousness of Christ, and free justification by the imputation of it; he that delivered a discourse upon the free, sovereign, and everlasting love of God, brought forth the ring; and he that preached peace and reconciliation with God, through the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, shod the prodigal's feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, Eph. vi. 15. There is one thing to be remarked in this parable, and that is, that our texts and subjects do not come by chance, nor is left to our own will to choose what the subject shall be; there is a spirit within to guide the mind, and to incline and bend the will. The father told the servants what to bring forth; and he that shewed the prodigal his needs, and drew him to the household of faith, ordered the servants what they should bring forth out of his treasures, even things new and old, Matt xiii. 52; old, as Abel the first obtained them, but new to every soul that receives them. I have sometimes, formerly, heard ministers introduce their text thus: "The portion of God's word which I have chosen for our present consideration is so and so; which is what I never liked. "It is not you," says Christ, "that speak; but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." If he is then the Speaker, it is not man that dictates to the Spirit; but the Spirit that dictates to man.

4. These stewards are to furnish the table, and to feed the household of faith; "Who then is that faithful and wise steward

whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant,!" Luke, xii. 42.

According to these different accounts, these stewards are intrusted with the mysteries of God, and with his manifold grace; with the wardrobe also; and have orders to bring out the best robe, the ring, and the shoes; and in this last parable they are to furnish the table, and to give to each of the household a portion of meat in due season; and this work that servant did, which, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, is bid to bring in the fatted calf; that is, to preach Christ crucified, and to set forth his death, and the ends of it, as Paul did when he says, "Before whom Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you," Gal. iii. 1. The flesh and blood of Christ are meat and drink indeed; and the knowledge of him, when souls are fed with it, is eternal life to all believers. Some good men make Christ to be this steward, fearing, as I suppose, that too much honour should be given to the ministry, derogatory to the honour of Christ: but, if we consider what the Holy Spirit says in the Scriptures upon this head, that these servants are stewards of the mysteries of God, stewards of his manifold grace, and I may say stewards of the wardrobe also, and of the regalia, to bring forth the best robe, and the shoes, and even the ring; and are stewards of the household, to furnish and set out the table, and to give to each a portion of meat in due season, it appears strange to me that it should be too great a matter for these honoured servants to pay a penny to day-labouring men, when we see every day that a household steward pays the bills of a family and the land-steward, bailiff, or foreman, the labouring men. We have proved that this penny a day is faith; and that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and so we read that "many of them which heard the word believe; and the number of the men was about five thousand," Acts, iv-4. The jailor received faith from the word spoken by Paul; and

the Ethiopian eunuch received his penny by Philip the same way, Acts, viii. 37.

But it is not every degree of faith in the heart that comes up to the meaning of my text. Faith may be communicated by the Spirit to the souls of sinners, and work long before it be discovered by others; and, indeed, sometimes it is hardly perceptible to the recipients themselves. A soul convinced, convicted, and quickened by the Holy Ghost, believes at once the justice of God, the holiness of the law, and the truth of divine revelation, and believes Christ to be the true and only Saviour of mankind; yea, and he may believe every thing else, except that of his own interest in these things; here is faith working, like seed sown in the field or garden; but then none but God and the convinced sinner know any thing about it; and how can others be moved to envy or jealousy at that which they do not see? Faith, whether weak or strong, seen or not seen, is the penny, but not the whole of it; because the image and superscription do not appear. When the whole penny is received, with its image and superscription, faith appears, love appears, joy appears, and the full assurance of faith appears; doubts and fears are fled, and all the treasure of the heart flows out at the mouth, and appears in the countenance, words, and actions; and this is plain from the parable; for as soon as the one-hour labourer received his penny, all the rest of the labourers saw it, and were provoked to envy at the sight of it; which is what they could not have seen if it had been concealed in the heart, as faith at the beginning generally is. Having offered a few thoughts upon the steward, I come now,

4. To shew what we are to understand by the last that was paid; and why the last was paid first. By the last, I understand here and there one whose conversion to God comes suddenly, and at an instant, when God in this sense cuts short his work in righteousness, as he will do in time to come, when

a nation shall be born at once. The apostles, some of them at least, attended Christ's ministry three years; they continued with him in his temptations and he compares them but to women in labour when he left them, at his apprehension: but there were three poor souls paid by the master himself, and who received their penny before any of the apostles received theirs.

The first is the centurion; when he said "But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. And when Jesus heard it he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," Matt. viii. 10.

2. The Syrophenician woman, to whom Christ said, "O woman, great is thy faith? Be it unto thee even as thou wilt," Matt. xv.. 28; and what could the Lord say more? or what more could she expect? Had these words been spoken in our days, they would have been counted as leading to all manner of licentiousness; "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt!" "Then," says the meritmonger, "farewell all good works." No, not so. I have no doubt but this woman, at her return, vexed the devil by her faith as much as ever the devil had vexed her daughter. She was to have her will of the devil, and to do with him as she would; and I will be bold to say that she neither spared him nor his works.

3. The next soul that I consider as paid before the apostles was Mary Magdalene, out of whom seven devils were cast, and all her sins pardoned at once; faith purified her heart in an instant, and her faith wrought by love; and having much forgiven she loved much, because she was much beloved.

4. The thief upon the cross obtained his penny at once. He prayed, and was answered to his full satisfaction; and we read of no more complaints, desires, or cravings. Christ had promised, and he believed; and knew that Paradise was most

assuredly his. How long these poor souls had laboured and toiled in the chains of their sins, and in their legal bondage, previous to this, I know not; but I have no doubt but their convictions and labour were sharp and severe, for the whole need not a physician, but the sick. If they had not been sick they would not have been healed; but healed they were, and received the penny too before any one of the apostles was paid; for neither of these received their penny till the day of Pentecost was fully come. The apostles attended the Lord's ministry nearly, if not quite, three years; and they waited fifty days afterwards before the glorious penny, in all its meaning, came. Not so Cornelius and the company that was with him; for when Peter, performing the office of a steward, was sent to pay the penny to him and his friends, it came at once: "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter; because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost; for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God," Acts, x. 45, 46. These poor souls obtained their pay in a much shorter time than the apostles did; and yet they received every man a penny; and this Peter owns when he is called to give an account of paying this penny to the Gentiles (compare Acts, xi. 16, 17, with Acts, xv. 8-10): "God, which knoweth the hearts (says Peter) bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." The apostles toiled three years before they were paid, and these seem to have wrought but a few hours; and yet Peter owns that the pay was the same: "God gave them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us at the beginning, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

Paul, when he was sent into the vineyard, had hard labour for some time, as he himself owns. "Remember," says he, "that, by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," Acts, xx. 31; but not so the gaoler,

who cried out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house; and they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house; and he rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house," Acts, chap. xvi. Here is the whole penny at once; here is faith, and the image also; faith wrought by love, and love casting out all fear and torment; there was a comfortable assurance, and this assurance of salvation filled them with joy: "Believe, and thou shalt be saved." The gaoler believed, and rejoiced in God's salvation.

The hardest labour in the vineyard is that of planting, or working out our salvation with fear and trembling; because, Satan, sin, conscience, law, and gospel, yea, God himself, seem to be against us. This is the strife at the strait gate; for they that come to Christ are sure to come labouring and heavy laden: but when the union with the true vine takes place, the soul finds rest; after this the yoke is easy, when compared to the yoke of the law; and the daily cross is light, when compared to the burden of unpardoned sin: but of this labour there is no rule, some labour longer than others do; and the soul-travail of some is much keener and sharper than that of others; but the penny is sure to come to all the children of Zion, sooner or later. Mary, the mother of our Lord, seems to have obtained it at her meeting with her cousin. She and Elizabeth received the penny together, Luke, i. 41. Zacharias, for his unbelief, laboured dumb nine months before he was paid, Luke, i. 67. These three the Lord paid himself by the Spirit: they did not receive their penny by the instrumentality of a steward; but the full assurance of faith, the love of God, the joy of the Holy Ghost, all of which are peculiar to the elect of God, are conspicuous enough in them all; and this is the penny with its image and superscription.

This penny is said to be daily pay; because all God's household, and every righteous person in it, are to live by faith. "The just," says God, "shall live by his faith and all believers do so live as never to perish, or be lost or damned; yet there are certain seasons when this pay is received in a very conspicuous and glorious manner, as hath been shewn; and we do receive it again and again. Some receive it but once, as the thief upon the cross; and good old Simeon was kept long waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost had informed him that he should not see Death till he had seen the Lord's Christ; and as soon as he caught him up into his arms the penny came, and he finished his course in the joy of it. Some I have known to receive it after all has been given up for lost, and they have given themselves over to desperation and death; and then it has come; and these have run about with it, glorying, and triumphing till they have provoked not a few to jealousy; and, by being so lavish, and so charmed with the penny as to depend more on the cash in hand than on the householder, this penny, like all other money in constant use, has worn smooth, so that the image and superscription were hardly perceptible. Such souls, by being purse-proud, like good Hezekiah, have been kept short, and brought into bondage and wrath again, as it is written, "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore, there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah," 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, 26. After this we read that Hezekiah prospered in all his works, and great honour was done him at his death; and indeed every fresh discovery of Christ Jesus, and every enlargement of heart, every breaking forth of light had love upon the soul, puts a new face upon the penny, and is a restamping the image and superscription; or, as Paul says, it changes us into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the

Spirit of the Lord, I shalt now come to the next head, which is to shew,

4. Why the last were paid first, and the first last? It is intended to cross the self-will of man. Our character is, That we are self-willed 2 Peter, ii 10; and to teach us submission to the sovereign will of God: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious;" and, therefore, salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy. God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and this is a hard lesson to learn; and all God's family will find it so, if their corrupt nature is like mine.

2. It is intended to provoke us to jealousy; and jealousy is a most effectual antidote against ease, sloth, and carnal security. God hates lukewarmness, deadness, and idleness in our worship and warfare; and there is but little danger of this where the flames of jealousy are kindled: "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; he shall stir up jealousy, like a man of war," Isaiah, xlii. 13. The Lord, we see, stirs up this jealousy. Some are jealous of their own honour, as the persecuting Jews were; these God provoked to jealousy by them that were not a people, as they had provoked him to jealousy with that which was not God. They had moved him to anger with their vanities; and by the foolish nations of the Gentiles he angered them. The faithful are jealous of the Saviour's love, and cannot endure a rival in it, when themselves are deserted and neglected; as the spouse, when the daughters of Jerusalem were embraced while she sought him, but found him not; and called him, but he gave her no answer. There were a low sparks of this fire kindled in some of the apostles, when James and John, with their mother, sued for the right and left hand of Christ in his kingdom.

3. The last were paid first, to mortify an highly favoured principle, which is common to all mankind; I mean, some ground of boasting, which God will not suffer. How often does the prophet Isaiah detect this favourite idol! "The mean man shall be brought low; and the haughty shall be humbled, and the Lord only shall be exalted in that day." If the labourer that had wrought the whole day, and who had borne the heat and burden of it had been first paid, and his pay treble to any of the others, their labour and burden-bearing might have been considered partly as the procuring cause of the additional pay: but he that wrought but one hour was paid first, and he that laboured the whole day was paid last; and every one received a penny: - Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith."

4. The last were paid first, to debase that legal self-righteous spirit, which is so deeply rooted in the souls of mankind, and has been ever since the fall; and which is so odious to God, that it sets the Pharisee further off from the kingdom of heaven than either the publican or the harlot. How desperately did this sour leaven work and ferment in the elder son when the prodigal received his penny! He charges God himself with injustice for embracing the prodigal, and neglecting to reward him according to his own merit: "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I thy commandment at any time, and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hath killed for him the fatted calf; and he was angry, and would not go in;" and, as God did not display his power to compel him to come in to the marriage-feast, he was left to the power of his own will; he would not come in, and he was left without, and given up to the day of future reckoning, to learn from Omniscience and the spirituality of God's law, what legal pride and human merit could do for him.

5. The last were paid first, to display and exalt the grace of God; to shew that salvation and glory are free, and not merited; and that they are God's gifts, and not man's wages; for if this penny, which is faith, and the image on it, which is God's love, and the superscription, which is the faith of God's elect, and eternal life, which is to all that believe, came upon the labourer that wrought but one hour, it could not be the reward of human merit, because there is not the least proportion between the labour and the pay; and indeed, to speak the truth, they worked from this penny, and not for it; for, when the master told these men to go into the vineyard, and they should receive whatsoever was right, it is said they went their way; which shews that they believed him, and the word that he had spoken unto them; and therefore went at his command; and what is this but the beginning of the wages which was felt in them before one stroke of labour was struck? It is the determination of the Almighty to exalt the grace of his dear Son. This he tells us both in the Old Testament and in the New. The temple in type and the church in truth, shall not be built by human power, nor by the might of worldly policy, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts; that, as Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the temple, and Christ the foundation of the church, the same hands should finish both; and he that founded it should bring forth the top-stone of it, crying Grace, grace, unto it. By grace are we saved who are in a militant state; and God displays the riches of his grace in glory by Christ Jesus in them who are already glorified; so that the last saint that shall be called is the last lively stone that shall finish the battlement; and when the Lord bringeth forth this stone it shall be with shoutings, "crying Grace, grace, unto it" Here is no voice of human merit, no voice of boasting; nor the voice of Self-Righteousness and Free-Will in all this universal shout; both the rearing-supper and the house-warming seem to reflect one united and harmonious shout, without jargon and without discord. "It shall be," says God, "with shoutings, crying Grace, grace, unto it." I shall now come to shew,

5. What was the cause of their murmuring against the good man of the house. The cause was, That they conferred with flesh and blood, and consulted with carnal reason; and the conduct of the householder was most certainly contrary to the common customs of all civilized nations. What! make no difference between a man that works twelve hours and he that works but one? What! shall one man do all the work, and another be honoured by being first called to the pay-table, who has no more than just warmed himself at labour? The whole day's pay is received for one hour's work, and he is gone home, and to market; while we, the longest at labour, and the last paid, shall not be at market before the others are in bed! "I think that God hath set forth us, the apostles, last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised," 1 Cor. iv. 9, 10. We are not ignorant of that root. All these things are according to the rules of reason, and human customs and reason are strong upon these heads; but they have no weight with the Sovereign Disposer of all grace. "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons saith the King of Jacob," Isaiah, xli. 21.

There is such a thing in man's corruptions as self-love: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves," 2 Tim. iii. 2. God has made a law against this evil: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" Had this been the case here, there had been no murmuring about the penny: but this law is weak through the flesh, Rom. viii. 3: the law gives no power to subdue this evil; and therefore, the flesh rebels against it: and the best of men, at times, get into a legal self-righteous spirit; and this influence works not alone, self-love and self-pity are ingredients that always work with it; and under these influences every token for good to others is observed with a jealous eye, all their

favours are grudged, and the very kindness of the Lord to them is highly resented: "These have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal with us." I believe there are but few of the Lord's family that are altogether ignorant of this leaven. Had these murmurers been at this time as Job was, when God let the beams of his glory discover the inmost recesses of his heart, and they, like him, had been abhorring themselves at the sight, and repenting in dust and ashes, they would have found that "to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet;" and self-debased sinners, who find any sweetness in their own mess, will not envy the five-fold mess of Benjamin.

Again: Some of God's chosen people have, while in a state of nature, been curbed, and kept much in by the reins of Providence; as Joseph, Samuel, and others; when, on the other hand, some have run to great excesses; as Mary Magdalene, Manasseh, and Peter. These moral characters have a deal of dross about them, and their own apparel cleaves close to them; and, if the convincing, and convicting work of the Spirit be not deep, sharp, and severe, their purging and stripping work goes slowly on; and when such see a notorious sinner come forth, and run away with the penny in an hour's time, then this murmuring begins, as in the following case: "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house; and he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully; and Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and, if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." This is all the licentiousness that the grace of God leads men to. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Salvation came to this man in a minute, unsought, unimplored, and unexpected; and we have an account of his joy; and we may see the love of God that entered into his heart, by the love of

money being driven out. This man received his penny at once; and what was the consequence of this? Why, when the others "saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner," Luke, xix. 7. Here we see the last in man's account paid first; and the other at the old trade; that is, murmuring at the good man of the house.

Once more: This murmuring often discovers itself in them that labour hard in the word and doctrine, and who meet with many temptations and persecutions by the way, who are much exercised in their souls, and who frequently go bound in the spirit, and are often straitened in the work, burdened with the care of many, having many to feed, and often in want themselves. Hence they complain, "We have borne the burden and heat of the day, and these have wrought but one hour; and thou hast made them equal with us." "While Peter spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter; because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost," Acts, x. 44, 45. "And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them; but Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning and expounded it by order unto them," Acts, xi. 2-4. Peter's reply silenced the voice of murmuring but nothing but death will eradicate the cause of it. Those that bore the burden and heat of the day wanted a little room left for works of righteousness that they had done; but there is no room granted for boasting; and those that contended with Peter seem to be prejudiced in favour of their own countrymen; but God will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and all obstructions must fall before his sovereign will. I come now to my last head, which is,

6. To shew that he who receives the wages agreed for is not injured. Observe here, that there were more than one labourer

who complained and murmured. The words are in the plural: "And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal with us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day." These murmurers seem to be so filled with fume and pet, that they quite forget themselves; for they call the Saviour by no title or character; neither Master, God, nor Lord; but only *thou*; "Thou hast made them equal with us." The character of the good man of the house comes not from the labourers, but from the Lord himself. "But he answered one of them." The Lord does not reply to all that complained; but to one of them, who, perhaps, was the ringleader, the most forward, and the most irritated. Had Jonah been among them, we might have cast the lot once more upon him. However, if this man had no appellation for the Lord, the Lord had one for him, which is that of *friend*: "Friend, I do thee no wrong." Now, are we to suppose that our Lord, when he calls this man *friend*, meant it in the same sense as he did to Judas, when he wished the Saviour all prosperity, and kissed him? Which kiss was to be the fatal sign by which Christ was to be distinguished to his murderers! to whom Christ replied, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" Not that Christ was ignorant of the heart of Judas; for he asked him if he betrayed the Son of man with a kiss! But Judas coming with Hail, Master! and kissing him, he wished to have concealed his secret intention, and to be considered as a friend, and therefore the Lord called him what he wished him to appear to be; but this was not the case here, these labourers had wrought hard for the Lord, and in the Lord's vineyard, which is what hypocrites, impostors, and *better* men cannot do. Such may get into churches; but then they are nothing but thieves, robbers, wolves, and *bears*, while they remain there; and can do nothing else but harden sinners, embolden hypocrites, and starve the saints, being impostors and deceitful workers. But these labourers differed widely from such: for we read that the wayside hearers, the thorny

ground, and the stony around, all apostatized; and those that stood the longest were scorched and withered away when the sun of persecution and temptation waxed hot: but this had not been the case with these labourers; they tell the Lord himself that they had borne the burden and heat of the day; they had endured persecution and temptation too, and were neither scorched nor withered. Besides, these men understood this sort of coin, the image of it, the superscription of it, and the real worth of it, which hypocrites and impostors know nothing of; nor was there any just ground for murmuring, seeing they all fared and shared alike; every one received a penny. All the offences took rise from a supposition; for when the one labourer received his penny, then they that came first to work supposed that they should receive more, which they did not. From all which, it appears that these men were the Lord's real friends. They had received the gospel of reconciliation; they were intrusted with the word of truth, the mysteries of the kingdom, and the grace of a God; and those that are intrusted with these treasures are not called *servants*, but *friends*; for bond-servants are neither acquainted nor intrusted with any such things as these. "Friend, I do thee no wrong." When the householder went out first to hire these labourers, the parable says, That when he had agreed with them for a penny a day, he sent them into the vineyard; and at pay-time, when this murmuring took place, he asks one of them, saying, "Didst thou not agree with me for a penny by which it appears that the agreement was mutual. The penny is promised to all the elect of God. "I will put my law in their minds, and as soon as they hear of me they shall obey me; and the isles shall wait for his law." This is the faith that is promised; and this is the penny in our Lord's parable. The image of this penny is promised also: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy 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." This is the image of the penny; for faith that worketh by love is sure to be sterling; but all other faith is doubtful coin. The

superscription of this penny is promised also. The superscription is "The Faith of God's Elect;" and Faith's hardest work is to fasten upon the true vine, and then to believe and embrace the love of God in Christ: then the promise is, That "mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands," Isaiah, lxxv. 22. These things are all set forth in the ministry of the word, by all who preach the faith of Christ Jesus. They insist upon it, that without faith, God cannot be pleased; and that all works, except the work of faith and labour of love are rejected; and their commission authorizes them to assert, that he that believes not shall be damned. Poor miserable sinners hear these tidings, and are convinced of the truth of them, and wait at Wisdom's gate for this law; and they soon find themselves strengthened and encouraged in waiting upon God. These encouragements bring them to acquiesce and heartily to approve of salvation by grace, through faith in Christ, having made trial of an arm of flesh, and being tired out with trusting to that poor withered stick. Now, such souls, heartily approving, do agree for this penny a day; and they esteem the least grain of faith to be a most precious jewel. These are the Lord's proposals, which are held forth in the gospel to all poor and needy sinners; and they, on the other hand, are not slack in mentioning their terms also; often saying, when feeling their bondage, and the power of unbelief, and the fears and torment which attend a guilty conscience, "O that I could but believe! O that God would give me faith! I would not care how hard I fared, or how much I suffered, if I could but see my interest clear in Christ Jesus! if I could but be fully persuaded that he loved me, and gave himself for me!" Such protestations often pass through the lips of self-lost and self-condemned sinners, who watch and wait at Wisdom's gate; and the Omniscient Householder is not unacquainted with these vows and promises, as appears by Jer. ii. 20. Here we see what I think to be the mutual agreement; and, as Death in all its meaning is the sinner's most formidable enemy, including the curse and

wrath of God and endless damnation in it, so life is the sinner's greatest blessing; and this life is in faith: it comes from the living saviour's fulness by the Spirit of life to us; and divine life is the quintessence of faith; for all sorts of faith, that has no works and motions in it, is dead, James, ii. 26. The life of faith, hope, and love, is the Holy Spirit; and the life of the Holy Spirit is in faith, in hope, and in love; and this is well expressed in the Common Prayer-Book, which calls genuine faith a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, attended with a thankful remembrance of his death, and living in charity with all men. This is the penny; and the Common Prayer-Book brings in charity also, which is the image of it; and, if we take in another passage from that book, we shall take in the superscription of this penny also. "I believe in God the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified me and all the elect people of God." All sanctification is by faith, and all glorification is by love. Christ sanctified the people with his own blood, and faith purifies the heart with it. The offering up of the Gentiles is accepted, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost; and we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Our glorification is chiefly in love: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," Eph. i. 4. This is our holiness and our glorification before God in heaven. Now, all believers have life, more or less, and the just shall live by his faith; and this is his daily pay; and I am well persuaded that this penny does bring in some sweet morsel or other, on which the soul feeds, at the eve of every day of trouble that the saints of God wade through; sometimes it is done in communion with the saints, sometimes under the word, sometimes in prayer, and at other times by obtaining, promises, by smiling providences, by support under trials, and by deliverances out of troubles; nor do I believe that any one of these labourers that murmured were destitute of faith, or of the life of faith; but it was the early and the fresh pay that provoked them; and, as each of these received a penny, that

is faith, and eternal life is already his portion that believes in Christ, it is plain that they had got all that the Lord promised, and all that their own protestations expressed, and by which they agreed; and therefore they could not be wronged; "Friend, I do thee no wrong:" but the murmuring was not about the penny, for every one received that: the image and superscription seem to me to be the chief cause of their murmuring; and, if I might publish or proclaim what I think, the following were the cause of their complaints: Some of these labourers were ministers, and such are often straitened in their spirit, and in the work of the Lord, and to see souls enlarged and brought out under their discourses, which have been delivered in chains. This has a tendency to provoke to jealousy, "lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway," 1 Cor. ix. 27.

When some have seen a poor soul delivered in a most glorious manner, and have thought that such an one appeared to bid fair to be useful in the ministry, or at least to be an ornamental pillar in the house of God, and, in the midst of all these pleasing hopes, such an one has been taken away by death, and, as it were, in his first love, this is no small trial to the saints and labourers, especially when persecutors abound; as was the case when Stephen was put to death, and died penny in hand; the Church knew the worth of him, and the loss of him was great; and devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

It is a truth contained in the word of God, that day-labouring men were to be paid every evening, when their day's work was done; and it is as true that all believers are to live by the faith of the Son of God every day, and all their days; but that the Lord's labourers receive their penny at the eve of natural days does not appear, according to experience, to be matter of fact. There are many mysteries in the Lord's vineyard, which are called "the mysteries of the kingdom:" the saints are

called to mysterious labour, and there is a mystery in their pay, and all the seven days of their week have also a mystery in them.

1. "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock, in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark days," Ezek. xxxiv. 12. These cloudy dismal days, are so called because of the many clouds that hang over the heads of poor self-lost sinners. "His sins as a cloud, and his transgressions as a thick cloud," Isa. xlv. 22, hang heavy over his head. "God holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it," Job, xxvi. 9; so that prayer seems not to pass through, which is a sore grief to the seeking soul; and such poor blind things often fall into bad hands, and, like the prodigal, join themselves to citizens of this country, which Peter calls "wells without water, and clouds without rain," and these help forward their calamity, There are but few of the Lord's people who are ignorant of this cloudy and dark day; nor are they insensible, nor is their soul-travail small, while this gathering work is going on. Souls must be made sick of the world, and of the men of it, sick of sin and of self too, before they be gathered to Christ, and united to him. Upon the close of this cloudy day comes the penny, Christ shines upon the soul, and makes "darkness light before him, and crooked things straight."

2. This brings on another day, and we may call it one of the best days we ever knew; but often it appears like the transport of the two disciples at Emmaus; and he was no sooner seen than gone. "And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it," Luke, xvii. 22. Here is a cloudy and dark day, and here is one of the days of the Son of

man: a day much to be desired, and yet this day is denied; it is not to be seen, though much longed for.

3. There is a day of adversity: "In the day of adversity consider," Eccl. vii. 14. This is a day of trouble, when Satan and Corruption seem to carry all before them, when no Sun of Righteousness appears, and the soul, having tasted the sweetness of Christ, is the more tortured at the loss of him; as the disciples after his resurrection, when he paid them so man transient visits, and before they could gaze at him he was gone: but when the day of Pentecost was come, it was not as before; and so in our day of adversity when it is over.

4. The fourth day comes on; and we may call it "the wedding day," when the soul has a clearer sight and a more joyful embrace: Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart," Cant. iii. 11. This account expresses the sinner's going forth from his prison of darkness, bondage, and infidelity; and of a clear view of Christ, and of the soul's espousals to him; which is our wedding day, and a joyful one it is: "In the day of prosperity be joyful," Eccl. vii. 14. "This glorious day is often mentioned in holy writ, attended with the voice of Joy and the voice of Gladness, the voice of the Bridegroom and the voice of the Bride: but let these joyful days last as long as they may, there will be an eclipse upon them: "Truly, the light is sweet, and a Pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: but if a man live many years and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many", Eccl. xi. 7, 8. Spiritual desertions are common to God's children: the Lord often hides his face, and withdraws the light of his countenance; at which times the saint finds his evidences obscured; he sees not his signs nor his love-tokens: but this day of darkness is not to abide for ever, it has its evening as well as other days: "The morning cometh, and also the night,"

Isa. xxi. 12. This dismal and gloomy time, strictly speaking, is "not day nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening it shall be light," Zech. xiv. 7. This mysterious time is not day with us; because our old veil has brought on an eclipse upon the Sun of Righteousness. Nor is it night in the worst sense; because we can see ourselves and our deformity, our corruptions and the vileness of them; and we can see that the Lord hath withdrawn himself, and is gone; and we can see our own wretchedness when we are left alone, though we see not the King's face; nor are we without our beacons in this cloudy day: Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God," Isaiah, 1. 10. We are not only to trust and stay ourselves upon God in these dark days; but to seek him earnestly by prayer, and by all other appointed means: "Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning," Amos, v. 8.

Now, according to these accounts, there are cloudy and dark days, there are times of spiritual desertion. These days are often to return. "Let the believer," says the wise man," remember these days of darkness, for they shall be many."

There are days of trouble. These often return also: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," Psalm 1. 15. To this day David alludes, when he says, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee, send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion," Psalm xx. 1, 2.

There are days of confinement, when the soul is shut up, and cannot come forth: "Bring my soul out of prison," says David, "that I may praise thy name."

And there are days of fasting also: "Can you make the children of the bridechamber fast while the bridegroom is with

them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast: but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days," Mark, ii, 19, 20. Now these are the days of hard labour, and these are days of heat and burden. Temptation, corruption, and the rage of enemies, are generally let loose on these days; and all these adversaries have got heat enough. With these the soul is burdened and bowed down, deserted of its best friend, and left to struggle with its own rebellion, enmity, and unbelief; and in these days no provision is allowed, the bridegroom is taken away, and the children of the bridechamber shall fast in those days; the Lord himself declares that they shall fast.

It appears to me that, at the close of these days, the steward is called to pay the labourers, and not at the eve of natural days; for we do not find our penny to come at such times. Furthermore, if we examine, we shall find that this penny, with its image and its superscription, is promised to those that labour and toil in these dark days, days of trouble, days of adversity, and fasting days; for so run the promises.

"He that followeth me shall not abide in darkness; but he shall have the light of life." There is the dark day; but he shall not abide in it, but shall have the light of life. There is the penny promised at the end of this dark day.

Again: "In the day of prosperity be joyful; but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other," Eccl. vii. 14. Here is the day of adversity, in which the heart knows its own bitterness; and this day has the penny at the end of it, which brings on a day of prosperity, in which no stranger intermeddleth with our joy. "God," says the wise man, "has set the one over against the other;" by which it appears that the day of adversity is sure, and so is the penny also.

Moreover, the day of trouble has got its penny at the end of it: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Now this deliverance is our salvation from that trouble: "Thus, saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee," Isa. xlix. 8. This salvation brings the penny with it; and receiving this we have something to spend: "I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," says God; but, without faith and love, God can receive no glory from us.

There are also mourning days; when the soul is not only dark, but dead, dry, barren, and lean, rickety and inactive, cold and careless, and yet sees that all is wrong, and the best work apparently going back; no fervour, life, nor power; no liberty of soul or of speech; nothing is left but moping and "mourning all the day long," Psalm xxxviii. 6. But there is the penny at the end of this day: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended," Isa. lx. 20. At the end of these mourning days, God, like the sun, brings on light and heat; and under this light and heat Faith and Love are all alive, and the soul is sweetly enriched with both.

Fasting days also have the promised penny at the end of them: Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." And again: "It shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come that were ready to perish," Isaiah, xxvii. 13.

My reader sees these days of labour, and what they are; and he sees the promised pay at the eve of these days; and, as these days are variously expressed, so is the pay likewise. Hence we read that at the end of darkness comes light; at the end of trouble, deliverance; at the end of mourning comes

comfort; at the end of adversity, prosperity; and at the end of fasting comes the feast: but still the penny is the same; for, let these days terminate in what way they may, whether in deliverance, in the light of God's countenance, in prosperity, in comfort, in feasting, in joy, or in fresh life, it is faith that brings all these things in; faith sees them, applies them, and feasts on them; for God fills us with joy and peace in believing. Moreover, all these deliverances, enlargements, comforts, revivals, renewings, and refreshings, are intended to feed, entertain, enrich, and banquet the soul: but without faith there can be no food or nourishment; for the just shall live by his faith, and that is the penny.

There is a day mentioned by Paul, the most perilous; the meaning of which seems more pregnant with sharpness and severity than any that I have hitherto taken notice of; we may call it "the day of the fiery trial." "According to the grace of God, which is given unto me (says Paul) as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon; for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is," I Cor. iii. 10-13. Here is a day that is to declare and make manifest every man's work; and in this day, whatever this day is, every man's work is to be revealed by fire; and this fire is to try every man's work, of what sort it is. The foundation is one, and no other can be laid: but the materials mentioned are diverse, and badly matched: gold and wood, silver and hay, precious stones and stubble! Some good men think that diverse doctrines are meant by these things: gold, silver, precious stones, are sound wholesome truths; but wood, hay, stubble, set forth the doctrines of men, called "diverse and strange

doctrines;" but the nominative leads us to the apostle's sense; for thus he begins the subject: "We are labourers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building," 1 Cor. iii. 9; which shows that the Church is meant by God's building, and not doctrines; and his saints are the materials, and not words. Besides, every doctrine, promise, or truth, are in Christ, the Foundation, both Yea and Amen: he is the sum and substance of all divine revelation, the scriptures testify of him: so that to preach Christ in all his fulness, offices, undertakings, and finished works, is to declare the whole counsel of God, for Christ is all and in all, Col. iii. 11.

God hath founded Zion; and the poor of his people shall trust in it, Isaiah, xiv. 32. The foundation is for sinners to trust in. "Upon this rock (says Christ) will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Now it is found to be matter of fact, that the days of fiery trial that come upon the saints, burn up or destroy false doctrines, which are supposed to be this hay and stubble; for there is not a lie, or damnable heresy, that the old serpent ever hatched, but the succeeding generation of vipers revise. Satan's posterity are sure to approve his sayings; and will till they go to the generation of their fathers, and find out in utter darkness what they never could see in the light. Hence it appears plain that different professors are meant by these different materials, and not doctrines.

There is nothing much more common in scripture than to call believers and their faith "gold:" "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich," Rev. iii. 18. "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth," 1 Pet. i. 7. Again: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir," Isaiah, xiii. 12. Again: "I will bring the third part through the fire: I will refine them as silver is refined, and

will try them as gold is tried," Zech. xiii. 9. The apostle's gold and silver materials are purified believers, and nothing else; and this is plain from another account of the same apostle, where he says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the masters use, and *prepared* unto every good work," 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21. These are Paul's choice materials of silver and gold, called vessels of honour;" and here are also a baser sort of vessels, called "wood" and "earth," which are vessels to dishonour. "Let a man," says Paul, "purge himself from these."

Another sort of choice materials that are proper for this foundation, are called "precious stones," which are dug out of the earth, and are cut and polished by the afflicting hand of God, and made transparent and brilliant by the Spirit of grace. These adorn the diadem of the Prince of Peace: "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, I xii. 3. Again: "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," Zech. ix. 16. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels," Mal. iii. 17. Here we have the apostle's precious materials of gold, silver, precious stones, which well befit such a choice and precious foundation as Christ is.

The other materials are hypocrites, plastered, daubed, and built up in the flesh, nursed in presumption, and swaddled in natural affections and dissembled love. These Paul calls "wood;" vessels of wood and vessels to dishonour being corrupt trees, called by the Lord "dry trees," Luke, xxiii, 31. The funeral pile of the city Jerusalem, when the wrath of God came upon the Jews to the uttermost, was made of these dry

trees: "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it," Isaiah, xxx. 33. This is the account of these wooden materials, called by Paul "vessels of wood" and "vessels to dishonour," being corrupt and dry trees, destitute of life and of fruit, and of course twice dead.

The trifling and vain materials which the apostle calls "hay," seems to be such as have had a verdant appearance in show; but whose profession was scorched and withered away, when persecution and temptation waxed hot, having no root in Christ to draw spiritual moisture from him. Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion! "Let them be as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom!" Psalm cxxix. 5, 6, 7. This is the end of the hay.

The next kind of base and sordid materials is called "stubble:" which is the refuse of the harvest field, after the wheat is reaped, bound up, shocked, and gathered into the barn. To this the Jews were compared when the disciples of Christ were gathered out from among them: "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; that it shall leave them neither root nor branch," Mal. iv. 1. These are Paul's vile materials, which the day of trial shall reveal and make manifest, and which the fire shall try and discover; and it is so obvious to common sense, that wood, hay, and stubble cannot stand the fire like gold, silver, or stones; nor is there any one thing in us, poor frail sinful creatures, that can endure the fiery trial; but if the incorruptable seed of divine grace, and the most mighty Spirit of God be in men, there is nothing too hard for the lord, nor for them that trust in the Lord. "Every

man's work (says Paul) shall be made manifest." The fruits of every minister's labours, and the work of every professor, his obedience and his fruits; and also the work within him, on which he rests; his heart work, his fear, his repentance, his love, his hope, and his faith, withers momentary, historical, miraculous, temporary, feigned, presumptuous, or genuine; and sure I am that every convert that had not the broad seal of Heaven upon him, and that is not sealed up to the day of redemption, must wither, fade, and consume in this time of making manifest, Rev. ix. 4. The day that is to declare man's works, signifies *the time when this trial is to come on*, which is known to God, but not to us; as the time of Jerusalem's destruction was not known to any of the apostles. The fire that is to try every man's work is not invariably one and the self same trial; but it is some furnace of affliction, which is intended to try and make manifest who are the Lord's people, and who are not. The affliction of Job was his fiery trial, out of which he prophesied he should come forth as gold, and so he did. Saul's persecution of David was a fiery trial to him; and out of which he came with the sure mercies of God in his heart, and a crown royal upon his head. The sore temptation of Satan that fell upon Peter, was his trial; and the propitious look of the Saviour fetched him out, with a faith more precious than gold. The offering up of Isaac was the trial of Abraham, which terminated in a double blessing to his soul and the encomiums of Heaven on his faith. Persecution and temptation were the scorching sun that withered the crop that sprang up so quick upon the stony and thorny ground-hearers. Sometimes this fiery trial is a resisting unto blood; a fallen by the sword, by flame, by captivity, and by spoil; but "when they fall (says the prophet) they shall be holpen with a little help; and some of them of understanding shall fail to try them, to purge, and to make them white," Dan. xi. 33-35.

The war in which we are engaged, and that God has proclaimed "springs," from the implacable enmity which God

has put between the two seeds which discovers itself by two opposite flames, which break out in each army, and which will burn to all eternity. This is foretold in ancient prophecy; "for every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire; for unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given " Isa. ix. 5. This fire raged in the days of old; of which David complains: "If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us," Psalm cxxiv. 2, 3; but this fire never raged with so much fury as it did about the holy child Jesus. It began to smoke in the days of his flesh, as he himself declares; "Suppose ye that I am come to send peace upon earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather divisions. I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" Luke, xii. 49. The wrath and rage of Satan flamed sadly in the Jewish rabbies against Christ and his disciples; and when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, a most holy flame was kindled up in them; and then the battle began to wax hot, or, as the prophet says, "The battle was with burning and fuel of fire." The fuel is sinners enflamed with wrath and rage, persecuting the saints. These God calls "smoking firebrands.", Isa. vii. 4. This is the fuel of fire, and these are the brands that, smoke against the Lord's heritage; and those that minister to God, are called "a flaming fire" also, Psalm civ. 4, because the spirit of Judgment and the spirit of Burning is in them; and these fires will never go out, the torments of hell will not destroy the wrath and rage of Christ's enemies, nor can many waters quench love, or any flood drown it, Song, viii. 7. We know that gold will endure the fire; and John tells us, that Faith is born of God, and that it overcomes the world; and that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus; and we are informed that the purpose of God, according to election, stands not of works, but of him that calleth, Rom. ix. 11; and if these be the true sayings of God, the penny, the

image of it, and the superscription also, are sure to all the seed; and it is promised, at the end of this day of trial, in which the saints are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, that "the trial of faith being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," 1 Peter, i. 7.

And whenever this penny is received, it is discovered by the life and lively exercise of it; and while Faith acts, the image and superscription are sure to shine with peculiar lustre; and as long as this lasts, better days are enjoyed; and we will call them *holy days*, for such they are in the best sense. The scriptures call them days of the Son of man; days of our espousals, or wedding days; days of prosperity; days of salvation; good days; feast days, or days of festivity, and jubilee days; and may God increase them, and lengthen them out, and let these days be neither few nor short, for in these days no menial drudgery nor dead works can be performed!

Having wriggled with much difficulty through these things, some poor self-lost sinner may wish to be informed which is the best way for one that is convinced of the sin of unbelief, and who labours under the bondage of it, to obtain this penny. To which I answer, Hear what the Lord says upon this head: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," Ezek. xxxvi. 24-27. Here God promises to sprinkle clean water upon us, which is the Holy Spirit and his grace; then we are to be

cleansed from all our filthiness and from all our idols, The atonement of Christ is our cleansing from sin, the Holy Spirit makes known the efficacy of it, testifies of Christ, and works faith in the soul to believe in him, which faith purifies the heart; and this is plain, for Christ declares, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," John, viii. 24.

2. Here is a promise of cleansing us from all our idols. This is called by Moses "circumcising our heart to love God with all the heart and with all the soul, that we may live;" and this circumcision is nothing else but purging the conscience from sin, called "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;" and shedding abroad God's love in the heart is called "putting on charity;" and these two things complete our circumcision; that, having much forgiven, we may love much, Luke, vii. 47; for nothing else but the pardoning love of God will ever cleanse us from our beloved idols; and this is called in Jer. xxxi. 33, putting the law in the mind, and writing it upon the heart, which is nothing else but faith and love. Here my reader sees what is promised to poor sensible sinners.

Now the way to obtain these you have in the same chapter; "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them," Ezek. xxxvi. 37. When the Spirit quickens a sinner, and makes him sensible of his need, he is to let his request be made known unto God; and he has the promise of God to encourage him to it: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me."

2. In order to obtain this penny, the labourers are ordered to go into the vineyard; that is, to quit the market-place, which is this world, and to attend places of worship, where the gospel is preached; for it was in the vineyard, and not in the market-place, that this penny was paid. It is not the mourners of the

world, but the mourners in Zion, that shall be comforted; nor is it the labourers of the world, but those in the vineyard, that receive the Lord's money. This penny must be prayed for, and waited for; for so it is written: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he hath set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law," Isa. xlii. 4. These two things the Lord declares: he will be inquired of, to do these things for them; and the isles shall wait for his law; and the sensible sinner that waits should attend to the word spoken; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. x. 17. This is the penny which is set before the attentive hearer; and the soul that feels its need, and eagerly watches and waits in hope and expectation, though he meets with many disappointments and discouragements which often increase his fears, and occasion faintings, yet God does not suffer him to give over, but sends him some relief, that he may take heart, and go at it again: "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength," Isa. xi. 29. But this is promised only to them that wait upon the Lord: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," Isa. xi. 31; and this the seeking soul often finds, for he is helped, strengthened, and encouraged, against his own misgivings and despondings, though the much needed penny be not come. What the poor sinner most dreads is, coming short, or failing of this heavenly hire; and that which promotes his fears is the sickness of his heart, which every disappointment increases. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," Prov. xiii. 12. and "a wounded spirit who can bear?" Prov. xviii. 14. But the promise of God stands sure; they shall not be disappointed, nor confounded, nor put to the blush, that obey his voice; for God himself declares That "they shall not be ashamed that wait for me," Isa. xlix. 23; and God sets the penny before none but them that wait upon him, and for him; and before the waiting soul it is set forth in all its worth, and with all the riches in it, both of grace and of glory, which shall attend the reception of it: "For since the beginning of the

world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him," Isa. lxiv. 4. All this, Paul tells us is revealed unto us by the Spirit; and we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, Gal. iii. 14. This heavenly treasure that God promises to the waiting soul, is the descent of the Holy Ghost upon us as a Comforter; and when he comes as such, the full assurance of faith, our election of God, and God's everlasting love to us, are all made plain and clear; and this is the full reception of this penny, containing its image and superscription, which comes with all these appendages, and with all its invaluable riches, as "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1.

The penny, abstractedly considered, may be felt working in the mind; and life, under the quickening influences of the Spirit, may be felt also, even by the soul that waits in hope and in expectation of this pay; but then he has no assurance, and of course no satisfaction. For instance, "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors," Prov. viii.34. Such a soul is represented as hearing Christ; and, if he does, he must be one that feels a divine power, for in no other way can a man distinguish Christ's voice from that of a stranger, the excellency of the power being of God, and not of man; and what can that power be but life? "My word is Spirit, my word is life." And again: "The time cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." And again: "My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life."

"Blessed is the man that heareth me." And what is this blessing? Why, it is life: "Upon mount Zion God commanded the blessing, even life, for evermore." But there is no blessing nor life without faith; for "they which be of faith are blessed

with faithful Abraham," and none else Gal. iii. 9; and "he that believeth on the Son hath life;" but no faith, no life; and, if no life, no blessing; but my reader must observe that it is one thing to hear a person speak, and another thing to see the person that speaks; so it is one thing to hear the voice of the Son of God alarming, awakening, quickening, and raising up a soul dead in trespasses and sins; and it is another thing to be so illuminated as to see the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing, in his wings. The former may give me a persuasion and life to feel my lost state, which will set me to labour, and keep me at work; yet I cannot believe my faith to be genuine till some degree of assurance, some love to God, and my election in Christ Jesus, appear; and when these come, the whole penny is received, and I am at the utmost certainty about the cash, the goodness of the coin, and of the life of glory which is promised to all that believe.

Thus have I offered a few thoughts upon these labourers, their work, and the steward also, the penny, the different days of labour that fall to the saints lot in the course of their pilgrimage, and the pay that is promised at the close of these days, the different evenings when this pay may be expected, the days of festivity, the holy-days, and the jubilee-days that succeed as long as this penny lasts; during which days of release no servile work can be done. I have also endeavoured to set forth the image and superscription of this holy coin, whereby it is distinguished from everything else that bears the name of Faith; and that this cash will not pass current in any country or kingdom but the heavenly country and in the kingdom of God. Having, moreover, endeavoured to shew the best way, or the means that God has appointed for us in order to obtain this penny.

There are but two things more remaining for me to touch upon. The first is, The best way to spend this money, or to lay it out to the best advantage; and

The best cabinet, coffer, or purse, to keep this penny in, in order to enjoy it for our own use and benefit. Some when they receive these blessed wages get negligent in their approaches to God; and in diligence, waiting, and watchfulness, they grow remiss; and, having had many friends in their times of need, some of whom have pitied them, while others have encouraged them; some have sympathized with and succoured them; others have prayed with them and for them; and some have travailed again and again in birth till Christ should be formed in them; while others have reproved them for their impatience, murmuring and rebellion. To these the labourer goes full in pocket, and round from house to house he travels; some rejoice and bless God for his happy deliverance; and glorify God in him; some are moved with envy, and murmur at the good man of the house, judging that their own penny never appeared with such a peculiar lustre as his; others have been so provoked to jealousy that the sight of it has appeared unbearable, and therefore, they (though Conscience condemns them for it) begin to strip him of the penny, or to pick his pocket, and make him as poor as themselves criticising upon every word, doubting and scrupling all that he says, calling in question the soundness of his faith, the reality of his love, and the genuineness of the work; telling him of the wayside and stony-ground hearers, how far they went; and suspecting the reality of his heavenly joys, which they call *levity, lightness, froth, and dangerous flights*; and urging the necessity of sobriety, solidity, gravity, solemnity, reverence, and perpetual fear: all which counsel is good (as Hushai said to Absalom); but not at this time, 2 Sam. xvii. 7. Our old friend the Doctor has been at all this work; and therefore he speaks "as one having authority, and not as the scribes." In this way the poor labourer's penny is often squandered away, and he is brought to beggary, and made sad, whom the Lord would not have made sad, Ezek. xiii. 22. Spending every penny as fast as it comes in, in this way, is not the best method of increasing the capital.

To tell others that fear God what he hath done for our souls is well; and to strengthen the weak hands by relating our own labour, and the perilous state that we were in, and to encourage them by our deliverance, is agreeable to Paul: "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, as a pattern to others who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting," I Tim. i. 16; but even in this, wisdom and prudence should be attended to; that is, we should not sing joyful songs to them of a heavy heart, nor rejoice with them that mourn, nor mourn with them that rejoice; but to "weep with them that weep," says the apostle, and to "rejoice with them that do rejoice," is right. But I will shew my reader a more excellent way; for it appears to me that at the soul's espousals to Christ the quintessence of the Bride's love, the best of her joys, the sweetest fruits of her lips, and the warmest of her heavenly affections, should be lavished away upon the Bridegroom; from whose fulness all life, grace, and goodness come. The Spouse, upon this occasion, says, "let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." "Call upon me in the time of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." And again: "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise." And again: "That they maybe called *trees of righteousness*, planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified;" and how unkind did the Lord take it in the nine lepers, who never returned to him! all the ten were healed; but only one returned to give thanks: Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? They are not found to return to give glory to God, save this stranger; and he said unto him "Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath saved thee." This poor soul, having received the penny, brought it back to the householder, whose cash it was, and presented himself to the Lord with the warmest love, gratitude, and thankfulness, for his deliverance and his cure; and these grateful acknowledgments were well accepted of the householder, and he was sent away with all his cash in hand: "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace."

I shall come now to shew my reader which is the best cabinet, coffer, or purse, to keep this money in. We are informed, by the apostle Paul, That "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Here we see the coffer at once; and that the seat of unfeigned faith is a good conscience: and charity, which is the image of this penny, requires a pure heart: this is the end of the commandment. Let my reader take notice of the following things:

1. That the Holy Ghost doth teach all the ambassadors of peace to commend themselves to this court; which, in my opinion, is the highest court, and the nearest to God of any court in all the world; and the court in which there is the least bribery, partiality or injustice done: "We commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," 2 Cor. iv. 2. Into this court the word of life first enters; he received the word in an honest and good heart, and kept it, and brought forth fruit, Luke, viii. 15. To Conscience the appeals from heaven are first made, as to the Chief Magistrate, of the first court, and as to the most impartial and unbiased Judge, and the most loyal to the King of kings, in all this lower world; and yet even Conscience, for want of divine revelations is not only free from mal-administrations, until he be endured with power from on high. However, so it really is, that the ambassadors of heaven commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; and that, when the Holy Spirit comes with the word of life, it is into this court, which is sometimes called "the conscience," Acts, xxiii. 1; and sometimes "the heart," read I John, iii. 21. Hence, such an heart or conscience is said to be good and honest: the conscience is *good*, having received the Holy Ghost; and *honest*, by a power from above enabling him to magnify his office; after this no dead works can bribe him, or make him partial or dishonest to the trust reposed in him.

The life of God is first manifested in this court, which, in the poor awakened sinner, makes strange work, and appears to be some strange thing that has happened unto him; but when he begins to perceive and believe that it is God's work in him, he then labours to cherish it, and often fears lest it should die away and leave him in a dead insensible state; for in that case he is sure that his latter end would be worse with him than his beginning; and it is to such poor sinners that our Lord speaks in the following words, "The humble shall see this and be glad; and your hearts shall live that seek God," Psalm lxi. 32. This promise is intended to encourage them who are convinced and convicted by the word and their own conscience, and who have many fears that their convictions will die away; and then they should conclude that "it had been better for them if they had not known the way of righteousness, than after they have known, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them knowing in themselves the strength of their corruptions, the weakness of their own resolutions, the power of Satan, and the certainty of going back again if their convictions should die away. This makes them cleave to their burden, it makes even their bitter things sweet, and the smarting rod is preferred to ease in Zion and to such souls are those words spoken: they are not meant to those who have found the pearl of great price, nor to them who have received the penny, but to the seeking soul: "Your heart shall live that seek God."

It is to conscience that the first voice of good tidings from heaven comes, called "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," Heb. xii. 24; because it purges the conscience, and speaks pardon, peace, reconciliation, and friendship with God; it speaks also redemption from sin, from among men, from the law, from wrath, from death, hell, and the grave; and all these are good things, and better things than the blood of Abel, or of any one else.

But again: The sentence of justification by the Holy Ghost is first passed in this court; and a divine witness is borne to the truth of that sentence, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself," 1 John, v. 10. The Spirit bears witness with our spirit. And again: "My conscience beareth me witness in the Holy Ghost," Rom. i. 9. Here is a conscience purged from sin, from dead works, from the curse of the law, from wrath, and from all the reproaches of Satan, and furnished with the voice of the Lord's atonement, with the sentence of justification by the Spirit, with the cry of "Abba, Father;" and with the witness of the Holy Ghost, bearing witness with our own conscience that we are the children of God. Now, consider how great this man Conscience is; how great in office! and what supremacy and excellent magistracy is added to him by all these things! "The Lord is ascended on high, and hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness."

But to return: As God has added this honour to this his chief magistrate upon earth, we must be subject to these higher powers; as Paul was when he said, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man," Acts, xxiv. 16. This was Job's labour also: "My heart shall not reproach me so long, as I live," Job, xxvii. 6. And this is what David means, when he says, "Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still," Psalm iv. 4. Listen to all the charges, censures, reproofs, checks, complaints, deficiencies, desires, disquietudes, short comings, and imperfections, that rise up in the mind, which all come from the court of Conscience. Carry all these things to God by humble confession and prayer, and be earnest in it; and Conscience will embrace every return of prayer, and requite us for praying, and spread the sweet and mild tranquillity of his government throughout the whole soul, when he has no evil thing to say of us. This is what David means by taking counsel in his soul, having sorrow in his heart, Psalm xiii. 2; and by communing with our own heart, is meant

listening to all the charges and complaints of Conscience. These we receive; and granting the request of this ruler by answers to our prayers, this is returning to Conscience our gains, and is communing with him, which is giving and receiving; and if these things be well attended to, we shall not incur the displeasure of this ruler; but by doing good we shall have praise of the same, for he is the minister of God for good, Rom. xiii. 3, 4, and attends on this very thing: "My rejoicing is this says Paul; "The testimony of my conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world," 2 Cor. i. 12; and we are informed that the appearance of the Judge himself will not affright us, if we have the credentials of this ruling Elder: "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God," 1 John, iii. 21. And again: "And now, little children, abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming," 1 John, ii. 28. The mystery of faith must be held in a pure conscience; and thus it appears that this court is the seat of divine mysteries: "Hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience and in this the voice of Father, Son, and Spirit, are all heard, felt, and enjoyed; and it is also the best coffer for the Lord's penny, the image of it, and the superscription of it; "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:" it may therefore be the best cabinet to keep this penny in. Nothing can stagger faith so bad a sin; nothing can sully the image of this penny but unpurged guilt; and, as the great Householder delights in the work of faith and in the labour of love, if we keep these things, deal in them, trade with them, and live by them, I have no doubt but that when he appears the second time, in order to reckon with the servants, that they will say "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; for I have received mine own with usury, and I will make thee ruler over many things."

The thoughts of unenlightened sinners are their own jury, and Conscience is God's deputy judge to all the heathen world; "for when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another," Rom. ii. 14, 15. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law," Rom. ii. 12. Now, consider what great work Conscience will have to do in the great day; and will not only be a witness against these, but will have a great hand in executing his own sentence. The worm that never dies, which you read of in Mark, ix. 44, and Isa. lxvi. 24, is nothing else but the rebukes of Conscience upon the perpetual reflections of sinners; and as sure as the sinner that transgresseth the law dies in his transgression, so sure will he rise under the sentence of the law; which sentence the Saviour will only repeat, saying, "Go, ye cursed;" and the sentence passed on a heathen by his own conscience will be approved and confirmed by the Judge of quick and dead. Conscience has been at times so highly approved and honoured in his office, even by the Lord the Judge, that he has been allowed to pass the decisive sentence when the Judge him-self has been standing by, and the sentence of Conscience has been immediately executed, even by the great Judge: "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxii. 12,13. Friend, how camest thou in hither, "not having a wedding-garment? This is all that the Judge said, which brought on the dreadful conviction; all the secret charges were proved, and the sentence passed by God's delegate within; and it is plain that the whole process was just, because the criminal was

immediately ordered for execution. I have here mentioned the high office that Conscience has in the heathen world, the honour that is conferred upon him by the Holy Spirit in all the saints, the heavenly things that are committed to him, and treasured up, under the care of Conscience, the necessity of communion and fellowship with him; that is, listening to all his charges, complaints, and deficiencies, &c.; and, by prayer, endeavouring to remove his charges, redress his grievances, and satisfy all his demands, and to keep up fellowship with him, as having joint interest in the treasures of Heaven. I have also endeavoured to shew that unfeigned faith and charity are both to appear in office and in exercise out of a pure heart and a good conscience, which are one and the same thing; and of course this penny and its image cannot have a better coffer to keep it in.

Once more: The Old Testament tells us that "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not," Eccl. vii 20; and the New Testament confirms the same: "In many things we offend all," James, iii. 2; but for this worst of all our evils there is provision made: a fountain is open for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Zech. xiii. 1; "And, if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," I John, ii. 1; and there is forgiveness with God through Christ, that he may be feared. The just man living interested in this provision, though he fall into temptation, trouble, trials, or into spiritual decays, yea, even seven times, he rises again, Prov. xxiv. 16; but the hypocrite and the impostor never fall but once; and the reason is, because they never stood but in their own opinion. If Conscience smite us, let it be a kindness; if he reprove us, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break our head; therefore our prayer shall be for him in his calamity. Faithful are the wounds of this friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

William Huntington

The Saints' Seed-Time And Harvest

Gal. 6:8

William Huntington
(1745 1813)

THE
SAINTS' SEED-TIME AND HARVEST;

and
THE EMBLEMS OF THE SPIRIT CONSIDERED

OR
SOWING AND REAPING CONSIDERED.

TO THE REV. J. JENKINS, LEWES, SUSSEX; AND THE
REV. W. J. BROOKE, BRIGHTON.

He that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. Gal. vi. 8.

BELOVED brethren in the household of faith, and fellow-labourers in the Lord's vineyard, the above text has often presented itself to my mind as pregnant with the most sublime mysteries; and, if considered in different points of light, as it should be, it takes in the minister of the Spirit; the whole work of the ministry; the willing, subjection of the penitent sinner to Christ; the daily exercise of every saint; the hospitality of the children of God to each other; and the liberality of the church in supporting the cause of God.

No minister that I have heard on the subject, nor any commentator that I have as yet read, has fully satisfied me with the definitions that they have given of it. It has remained obscure to me, and I was much in the dark about it till very lately.

Former experience has convinced me, and later experience has confirmed it, that there is no getting, at these things but by fervent prayer to God. By this I do not mean prayer in a general way, as asking for more light and knowledge of the whole word of God; but I mean to take any one passage, which appears dark and mysterious, and lay it before the Lord, and plead his promise of the holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, and others of the like import; and in this way we need not doubt of success.

Whilst the light and life of the gospel continue with us, whilst the door of hope and the gate of life stand displayed, whilst a throne of grace is accessible, it is our seed-time and harvest; and when this season is over and gone we may lament, as others have done, and say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," Jer. viii. 20. But I shall now come to the subject in hand, and consider,

First, Sowing to the Holy Spirit, as he was in God's prophets, in the apostles of Christ, and as he still is in every minister of the New Testament; for such are ministers of the Spirit, and not of the letter, 2 Cor. iii. 6. All prophecy in old time came by divine inspiration; holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Nor was it the apostles that spake, but the Spirit of God spake in them; they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. And all in succeeding ages, who have ever been instrumental in bringing souls to Christ, or any glory to God, have spoken by the same spirit; the promise of life and the spirit of life are both secured to Christ and to his seed for ever; for this is God's covenant both with the head and with

the members, Isaiah, lix. 21. It is vain for men to talk about preaching the gospel, and delivering their testimony, while destitute of divine inspiration; the gospel, Paul says, is the ministry of the Spirit; and we are informed by an angel from heaven, that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," Rev. xix. 10. So that there is no gospel, no testimony of Jesus, where the Spirit of God is not. If we consider the Spirit of God speaking in all God's messengers, such messengers must be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death; of life unto life to the obedient in faith, and of death unto death to the rebellious infidel. "He that believeth is not condemned [but justified], but he that believeth not is condemned already." And, as it is with the husbandman, he must sow before he can expect to reap; so it is with the godly, they must sow to the Spirit before they can reap the harvest of glory.

Sowing to the Spirit, as he is considered in God's messengers, is, from conviction, giving a hearty assent to the truth, Isa xiii. 9; submitting to it, hearing it, and following it, which is the first work of faith. The gospel is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith; and Christ prays for all that shall believe on him through the word of the apostles. Sowing is obeying; Sowing to the Spirit is obeying the voice of the Spirit. And this appears in God's complaint to the disobedient Jews; "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of Hosts hath sent by his Spirit in the former prophets," Zech. vii. 11, 12. These words the Lord of Hosts sent by his Spirit in the former prophets, namely, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others. To this message some were obedient, and are called by God himself wheat, good figs, and precious; when the disobedient are called chaff, naughty figs, and vile. And all that obeyed had their life for a prey; they lived under God's protection in Babylon, and found God a little sanctuary to them there; and

many of them returned to their own land, under a fresh supply of the Holy Spirit, which the prophet Ezekiel sets forth as a resurrection.

The gospel, preached by the Spirit is the judgment of this world; it brings men under their trial for eternity; it is for life or death, for salvation or damnation; and as the gospel leaves them so judgment finds them, either freed by the truth or bound by falsehood; justified by faith or condemned in unbelief.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. Righteousness at the bar of equity is a good conscience, purged with blood, and renewed by the Spirit. Righteousness at the bar of the law-is love to God, springing from God's love to us: righteousness in the spiritual court of the gospel is the obedience of Christ imputed to faith. And all these come to us by the holy Spirit of promise. Noah did not labour altogether in vain; there were some that sowed to the Spirit. We read of the Lord God of Shem, and of God's enlarging Japhet; yea, more, that God blessed Noah and his sons, Gen. ix. 1. And we have reason to conclude that the women which were in the ark with Noah, were the fruits of his ministry, there being nothing said against them, as there is against Ham and Canaan. These few, we hope, sowed to the Spirit, believed in the Lord, and in the warning given to Noah: they assisted in preparing the ark, and were ordered into it, and shut in and preserved in it when the flood came upon the world of the ungodly.

We are informed by Paul that all who came out of Egypt by Moses did not provoke. Joshua, Caleb, and others, obtained a good report through faith. To some the word comes in word only; it reaches the outward ear and goes no further; but to the elect it comes with power, sooner or later: and when an alarming and convincing power reaches the conscience the sinner stands in awe at the alarm; he trembles at the word, he

bows his will to the divine power, he yields his whole soul to the majesty that appears in the voice, he confesses God to be in the speaker, and, from a deep conviction by the power, believes the report. Such sow to the Spirit, and such also begin to reap; for he that believes hath everlasting life: it is already begun; for, as faith without works is dead, so faith that has works is alive.

But there are other sorts of seedsmen besides these that sow to the Spirit; for some sow to the flesh, and of the flesh shall reap corruption. Too, too many are satisfied with the religion of nature, Godliness in a dry form, and bodily exercise in the form prescribed, which is after the doctrines and ordinances of men: these despise the power; and such, as well as the openly profane, sow to the flesh, and not to the Spirit, and therefore must reap corruption and death: hence the apostolic caution, "Quench not the Spirit, despise not prophecies I Thess. v. 19, 20. Despisers of the word are those that quench the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is often set forth by the well-known emblem of fire: hence we read of the "spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning;" and of men being "baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The first of these signifies the illuminating operations of the Spirit; the fire is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit; and men thus furnished for the work of the ministry are called, as John was, burning and shining lights, John, v. 35; taking their title from their fiery baptism. He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire," Heb. i. 7. And I believe the seraphim, in the sixth chapter of Isaiah, to be nothing else but hieroglyphical of gospel ministers; for the name signifies "fiery, burning," or rather "inflaming." There is, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, such a burning love as no water can quench, nor flood drown, accompanied with a fiery zeal for God and his cause. And in the light of the Spirit there are such views of Christ's person, loveliness, and fulness, and such beauties in God, his word, and ways, as give heat and fervour to all our devotions; while

the promises which flow into the heart, come as live coals from the altar, and increase the ardour; and the joy that springs from love is, at times, the visible flames which on the altar ascend to God from the hallowed fire within, which is pent up in the heart till the flames of joy give it vent. Under this influence there is a thirst for the salvation of sinners, a watching for their souls, a longing after their welfare, hard labour in studying and preaching to them, many earnest prayers and tears to God for success in the work, an earnest desire after them as fellow sinners and fellow-creatures; all which are heightened by a true sight of their undone estate, a knowledge of the terrors of the Lord, and the certainty of their endless destruction out of Christ. And such labourers, having felt both the pains of hell and joys of heaven, they alarm and warn them to flee from the wrath to come, and labour to allure and win them to embrace the refuge and the hope that is set before them. What hard labour and soul travail, what earnest prayers and bitter cries, what holy longings and fervent hopes of success in this holy calling, I mean that of being fishers of men, do fall to the lot of those who are called of God to labour in the word and doctrine!

But It falls out with the servants as it did with the Master; they hated him without a cause," Psalm xxxv. 19; and so it is to be with the rulers of his household; they are hated of all men for his name sake; but he that despiseth whomsoever the Lord sends despiseth him, and he that despiseth him despiseth the Father that sent him, and even the Holy Ghost whom Christ sends, and the word of God itself, which is spoken by the Holy Spirit in the Lord's servants. And this despising of God, his dear Son, the Holy Spirit, and the word of God's grace, fixes the eternal destruction of the despiser. "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!" Acts, xiii. 41. And again, "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed," Prov. xiii. 13. These render evil for good, and hatred for love; you preach, and they despise; you warn, and they sneer, you weep, and they laugh;

you are in earnest, and they in jest; you charm, and they stop their ears; you invite, and they depart; you intreat, and they mock; you labour to instruct, and they harden their heart against it. Dead formalists and graceless professors rest-one in the form, and the other in the letter; and all that is got of such is the character of a deceiver, a false prophet, a mercenary, an enthusiastic, a fanatic, or a madman; and this despising of prophecies is to themselves a quenching of the spirit.

At this treatment the apostles shook their raiment, and even the dust of their cities from their feet; they owned their damnation to be just, left their blood upon their own head, turned to the Gentiles, and declared that the wrath of God was come upon them to the uttermost. Christ also had foretold them that it should be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, for Tyre and Sidon, yea, for Nineveh, than for the Jews of that generation. This cruel hatred, spite, and malice, that such exhibit the despite they do to the spirit of grace, their scorn and derision their desperation and impenitence, quench the ardour of the spirit; all love to their souls chills and waxes cold; zeal for their welfare abates all fervour towards them, in the ministry, damps; all joy, in hope of their conversion, withers; and the Spirit himself rises in judgment against them. They are rooted out of all godly affections, from all care and concern for their welfare, from all soul travail and earnestness for their salvation, and from any part or lot in the faith, hope, love, and prayers of the ambassadors of peace; and more than sure I am, that the fraternity of Cain shall see, and enter into, the kingdom of God as soon as such men, or such despisers of God, or empty professors as these. They forsake the living vine, and the first branches in the vine, and the assembly of the just; and such, being cast forth, soon wither: your natural affections to them die; the joy that arose in your breast, from a hope of them, withers away; their enmity to the just brings fresh guilt of a gospel kind upon them; envy slays

these silly ones, and is sure to take up its eternal abode, and for ever to rest, in the bosom of such fools. And this is the characteristic of the serpent's seed, and the infallible token of perdition. For, after the Spirit is once quenched, there is no more care or concern for them, nor desire after them, or prayer for them; but rather a wish that the foundation of Zion may become a snare, a trap, and a stumbling block to them; there is a watching over them for evil, a satisfaction at their calamity, and such a zeal for God, for the honour of divine justice and long-abused mercy, as to give them up to vengeance, that the day of judgment and the inquisition of heaven may effect what the labour of love and the lips of truth could not. And both heaven and earth finite and agree in approving and applauding the judgment, for "when the wicked perish there is shouting" among the just; and God himself allows of the triumph, for he laughs at their calamity, and mocks when their fear cometh. Noah shared deeply in this scorning, derision, and sport, till God himself complains of it, and resolves to put a stop to it; "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh," Gen. vi. 3. He remains still in his sin and sinful course, in the flesh, and in carnal ease; no submission to my will, no awe of my word or warnings, no reformation of manners, no seeking after God, no calling upon my name, no obedience sowed, no spiritual advantage reaped: he is still in the flesh, and my Spirit shall not always strive with him. The deluge put a final stop to this strife; the waters pursued them to the tops of the mountains, houses, and trees; and thus wrath convinced them, when preaching of righteousness and preparing the ark had no effect. However, Noah lost not his labour; he was a sweet savour unto God, as well as his sacrifice, both in them that were saved and in them that perished; "for he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith," Heb. xi. 7. And those whom Noah condemned God drowned with a flood, and then imprisoned in hell, as Peter asserts; "Christ hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust

(that he might bring us to God), being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. By which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing," 1 Pet. iii. 18-20. By these imprisoned spirits I understand the souls of the antediluvians; by the prison I understand hell, Isai. xxiv. 22; and by the preacher I understand Christ preaching by his spirit in the ministry of Noah. The time of this preaching was while the long-suffering of God waited in Noah's days, while the ark was building.

Israel of old are noted for quenching the Spirit in the ministry of Moses, of whose inspiration we read in the prophet's lamentation; Where is he that brought them up out of the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his holy spirit within him; that led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name," Isai. lxiii. 11, 12. But this inspiration of God, and display of miraculous power, met with no suitable returns; "for they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them," Isa. lxiii. 10. Their molten calf in Horeb; their mutineering on the banks of Jordan; the conspiracy of Korah, Abiram, and Dathan: their invading the office of mediator, and attempting to seize the priesthood; their murmuring at every turn, instead of praying; their tempting God, and their unparalleled infidelity, are notorious enough. It was these things that vexed his holy Spirit; "they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord: they angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes; because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips."

Nor did the Holy Spirit fare any better in the ministry of "the apostle and high priest of our profession;" they vexed him,

and blasphemed him in the ministry of Christ and his apostles, as appears by the piercing charge of Stephen, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom we have been now the betrayers and murderers," Acts, vii. 51, 52. Having offered a few thoughts upon sowing to the Spirit, as he speaks by God's servants in the ministry of the word; and also upon quenching the Holy Spirit, by despising both prophets and prophecies,

I shall now endeavour to show that there is such a thing as sowing to the Spirit, as he dwells in ourselves. "Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, and reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness among you," Hosea, x. 12. The persons here spoken of are such as seek the Lord and expect that he will come, and that a shower of righteousness will attend his coming: and they are to sow to themselves in righteousness until this heavenly shower descends, and then they are to reap the benefit of it; but not on the footing of worth, or for their own deservings, but as the fruits of God's sovereign mercy. A sincere seeker of the Lord, such I mean as are enlightened by the Spirit to see the depravity of their own nature, and the evil of their own way, and who come constantly to the light of the word shining in the ministry of the gospel, do sow to the Spirit in themselves: they come to the light, that their deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God; that the influence they are under, and the fruits springing from that influence, are by God's Spirit, and not of themselves. Such also as are convinced and convicted by the Spirit, and by a view of the spirituality of the law; and who comply with their convictions, acknowledge their

offences, and confess their sins; who commend the justice of God, and own their just deserts; who submit to God's will, and implore his mercy; such sow to the Spirit. "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it," Micah, vi. 9. God's rod is reproof and rebuke by the Spirit. "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slay the wicked." Moreover, it is the Spirit's work to search and try the heart. God searches Jerusalem as with candles, Zeph. i. 12. Now, when this searching work is going on, and the sinner's conscience is made honest, and honest conscience goes hand in hand with the Holy Spirit, and is willing to know the worst, and to be made sound at heart and sound in faith; crying out, "Search me and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting;" such in heart join themselves to the Lord, submit to his will, and coincide with the Spirit's work, which is sowing to the Spirit.

When cutting reproofs are given and applied by the Spirit, the Lord says, "Turn ye at my reproof;" as Paul did when the Spirit carried the reproving voice of Christ to his heart, who answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" and again, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? Go into the street called Straight, and there it shall be told thee what thou must do." Christ spake, the Spirit applied the voice, and Paul sowed obedience to it; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

When the Holy Spirit comes upon a sinner, it is to discriminate him from the world, that he may be no more of the world: for between light and darkness, Christ and Belial, a believer and an infidel, there can be no concord, no agreement. "Now we have received not the spirit or the world, but the spirit which is of God," I Cor. ii. 12. The Spirit's voice to such is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." And he that obeys and comes out sows to the Spirit. "Get thee out of thy country,

and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," said the Holy Spirit to Abraham: and he obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went.

Again, it is the Spirit's work to convince a man of his blindness and ignorance; for a person that is not convinced of this will never say, "Who will shew us any good?" And indeed to persons thus convinced is the promise made; I mean that of giving pastors after God's own heart, to feel them with knowledge and understanding. And sure I am that the soul which is convinced of this, and yields to the Spirit's will, "if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasure; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God," Prov. ii. 4, 5. Such sow to the Spirit; for they are actuated by his influence, and acquiesce in his mind and will.

Once more, the Holy Spirit is the spirit of grace and of supplication. He is the life, the power, and the dictator, of all prayer, and our intercessor in prayer, for he makes intercession for us according to the will of God. He it is that quickens the sinner to feel his wants, puts a cry in his heart for relief, and by his earnest cries and bitter groans makes intercession. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him?" Such breathe their spiritual sensations out to God; and, if they speak, it is as the Spirit gives them utterance: he creates the fruit of the lip, and what he dictates and teaches them to utter they speak. And this is sowing obedience to the Spirit's impulses, operations, and orders.

And I might further add, – that the Spirit often speaks to the heart, or suggests to the mind, his commands to the man in whom he dwells, respecting going here and there, as may be seen in his orders to Peter, when Cornelius had sent unto

him, and Peter had received a previous vision upon it. "And behold three men were already come to the house, where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting," Acts, xi. 12. "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the regions of Galatia, and were forbidden" of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, &c. many footsteps and loadings of Providence, many subsequent workings in the mind, many lookings out and expectations of fresh orders, many doors are opened, many pressing invitations are given as preludes to excite the man of God to prepare his stuff for moving, which the prepossessed mind expects, and which none but God and his own conscience know any thing of. "And thine ears shall bear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isa, xxx. 21.

Once more, a man sows to the Spirit when his pursuits, desires, prayers, and the whole bent of his soul, are after a fresh supply of grace, and for strengthening the things that are weak; for fresh Life or light, fortitude or power; for usefulness or fruitfulness; for an increase of knowledge and understanding, &c. for it is the Spirit that makes us know our wants, our weak parts, our insufficiency and short comings, and the things which are the most excellent; and he that covets what he feels he wants, and prays against his most besetting evils, and labours to strengthen what is weak, and earnestly craves the best gifts, most assuredly moves in concert with the Holy Spirit, works hand in hand with him, and sows his obedience to the Spirit's dictates and motions, and labours hard to fill the vacancies which the Spirit discovers to him.

We are to sow to ourselves in righteousness, not to shun the light, nor to be willingly ignorant, 2 Pet. iii. 5; not to require smooth things, nor prophecies of deceit; but with honesty and sincerity, with fervour and earnestness, with faith and

affection; and to reap in mercy, the sure mercies of David, which are now with Christ, and are promised to us in him; these sure mercies are displayed in us by regeneration, as Paul says, "Of his mercy he saved us, with the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus, iii. 5. In regeneration and renewing there is a heavenly crop sowed in the soul, which goes by different names in the scriptures: it is called "being born again of incorruptible seed," 1 Pet. i. 23; called also the fruits of the Spirit, Gal. v. 22. It goes by the name of grace; different graces, as faith, hope, love, &c. These fruits of the Spirit are also called mercies, which have God for their father: hence you read of "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," 2 Cor. i. 3. And these fruits are to be received as the free gifts of God in Christ Jesus; " Sow to yourselves in righteousness, and reap in mercy." And the believer who gets cold, indifferent, and sluggish; slothful, negligent, careless, and inattentive; worldly and earthly minded; sadly neglects this seed-time and harvest to his own cost and loss, and is often pierced with many sorrows on the account of it: with him I shall leave the apostolic caution, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," Ephes. iv. 30.

Having shewn that there is such a thing as sowing to the Spirit as he is in the ministers of the word; and, secondly, what it is for a believer to sow to the Spirit as he is in himself; so I shall now,

In the third place shew that there is such a thing as ministers of the gospel sowing to the Spirit as he is in the souls of the just; and this will appear from the following passage. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," Psalm xcvi. 11. From these words we may observe, first, the sower: he must be a child of light, for this is the seed that he sows. Secondly, the soil is described, which shews it to be a part of God's husbandry: they are called, first, righteous;

secondly, upright in heart. David himself describes the sower: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," Psalm cxxvi. 6. By the sower going forth I understand his going forth from the society of the world, from the prison of sin, from bondage under the law, from confidence in the flesh, with the tidings of peace, and with authority and commission from Christ. All going forth short of this is no better than the setting out of the foolish virgins, who would have been just as well off if they had staid at home. The sower's weeping as he goes sets forth the toil and labour attending his work, a deep sense of his insufficiency for the arduous task, the opposition from the world, sin, and Satan, that he meets with, the little success he has in it, and his manifold sufferings both from the power of enemies and weakness of friends; nevertheless he goes forth and sows, though it is with weeping, which shews him to be a real ambassador, for "the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly," Isa. xxxiii. 7. However, he is not without encouragement, he shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and his work is with his God, whether Israel be gathered or not. Yea, he is a sweet savour unto God in them that are saved, and in them that perish. The heart knows its own bitterness, and the Lord's labourers feel the burden and heat of the day: but these are counterpoised with a joy that the stranger intermeddleth not with; which arises from the pardon of sin, the testimony of conscience, from an imputed righteousness, from believing views of interest in Christ, from a good hope, from the love of God, from the witness of adoption, and from a full persuasion of future glory: and while he sows to others he often reaps these afresh to encourage him in his work; "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy," Ps. cxxvi. 5. There is another branch of joy, which is peculiar to such seedsman. There is a family in the world, whom God puts into our hearts to live and die with; and in the consciences of such he makes his solvers manifest: and there

is also, and will be, a fourfold presentation of the saints to Christ. Those who are owned and blessed in espousing souls to the Lord, do, in faith and prayer, present them "as a chaste virgin to Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 2. But I believe that text has a further and future meaning, being spoken in the future tense. The apostle had espoused the Corinthians to one husband, the presentation is something yet to take place: "that I may present you," &c. Such are to be our joy and the crown of our rejoicing in that day, as appears from what follows; "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" I Thess. ii. 19. The apostle here mentions some souls which are given for our hire; and tells us that they shall be our hope, our joy, and the crown of our rejoicing; and all this in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming; which looks as if there would be something like ministers presenting of souls, espoused by their ministry to the Lord, in that day; perhaps at the day of judgment, and in the thousand years' reign on the new earth. At which time Christ will receive them at their hands, and "present them to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle," neither a spot of sin, or wrinkle of old age, Eph. v. 27. Something like this the Psalmist had in view when he said, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." He is to return with joy, and he is to bring his sheaves with him, there is not a doubt of this. And the apostle tells us that such are to be our hope, our joy, and the crown of our rejoicing, in the presence of Christ at his coming, which must be either at the day of judgment, or in the thousand years' reign. Wisdom's handmaids, Prov. ix. 2, present the bride to the bridegroom; and he receives her at their hands, and presents her to himself; with joy and rejoicing shall they be brought to the king's palace; and in ultimate glory she will be presented to his father with a "behold I, and the children which God hath given me," Hebrews, ii. 13.

I come now to describe the seed of this sower: the name given to it is that of precious; he goes forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed.

1. Describe his seed
2. The name of it, which is light;
3. The persons in whose hearts it is sowed: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

There are four things included in the word "seed." First, Christ himself; he is called the woman's seed which bruised the serpent's head. And in his human nature he is called the seed of David 2 Tim. ii. 8. He is the precious seed in the highest sense, for to them "that believe he is precious," 1 Peter, ii. 7. "God (says Paul) revealed his Son in me, that I should preach him among the heathen," Gal. i. 16. And, indeed, if Christ be not in us, as a fountain opened, cleansing from sin; as a physician, healing the wounded spirit; as the life, quickening us; as the true light, shining in us; as our righteousness, maintaining our standing in our justification; as our prince, causing peace to rule in our hearts; and as our present help, aiding us, refreshing, renewing, furnishing, equipping, and fortifying us by his Spirit, his presence, and his grace; without these, and all these, sure I am that the devil will soon compel us to send an ambassage, and desire conditions of peace with the world. Such soldiers must fight till they die, or die for not fighting.

2. By this precious seed I understand the word of God in general; as appears by the parable of the sower and his seed; "The sower is the son of man, the seed is the word of God." But the doctrines of Christ, and the promises of God in Christ, seem chiefly to be intended, because the seed is called precious. And Peter applies the same phrase to the promises;

"Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises," 2 Pet. i. 4; exceeding great, because Christ, his Spirit, his grace, and his great salvation, together with life, light, and glory, are couched in these promises. But a minister of God is not only a minister of the covenant of promise,

But he is a "steward of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1. The mystery of the most holy Trinity, in the experience of it, and in the enjoyment of that experience, seems to be the first and grand mystery; I mean such as Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, and we enjoying in our own conscience the voice of his atonement, "speaking better things than that of Abel," Heb. xi. 24. Which voice is that of righteousness, mighty to save; the voice of pardon, and of access to God by it; the voice of peace, friendship, and reconciliation with God: and the voice of God in Christ to us is, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" and therefore with loving kindness he draws us to Christ, and accepts us in him, where we enjoy his love; for "he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him."

3. The voice of the Spirit also is in us, crying, "Abba, Father," and bearing, his witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God; and, if sons, then heirs.

The mysteries of the kingdom of God are, those of purging sin by the blood of Christ, of dethroning sin by the grace of Christ, of counteracting its power by the laws of Christ; I mean the law of faith and the law of love; and of justification from its condemning and destroying power by the righteousness of Christ, and of its final destruction at the resurrection, when our vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ, when grace will terminate in a reign of glory. Then will the works of the devil be completely destroyed out of all the saints, and the devil himself, the prime leader of all the apostacy, left to sink under the weight of all his crimes, and under the guilt and cry of every perishing sinner's blood,

in full possession of all his power, and yet chained by Omnipotence; filled with wrath, rage, and revenge, and under the curse and vengeance of the Almighty: and this will be the final and everlasting destruction of "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," Heb. ii. 14.

The fourth and great mystery of Godliness is the incarnation of Christ; "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh," &c. 1 Tim. iii . 16. The apostle here asserts the true and real divinity of Christ; that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham," Heb. ii. 16. The children being, partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," Heb. ii. 14. The apostle then tells us that it was from the royal line of David that our nature was taken; "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel," 2 Tim. ii. 8. Mary the mother of our Lord was of the house and lineage of David; hence he calls himself "the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star," Rev. xxii. 16. As God, he was David's root, who gave being to David and to all mankind; when as man he is David's offspring, a branch out of the root of Jesse. Paul says he was made of a woman, and was the seed of the woman; made of the substance of Mary's body; for woman is a substance, and so is her seed a substance also, as is well expressed in the common prayer book. Here is our elder brother, made like unto his brethren in all things, excepting sin. When we see our own nature thus holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sin and sinners, and made higher than the heavens with all the fulness of the Holy Ghost upon him, and all the fulness of grace in him; every promise yea and amen in his heart, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in him; and this our nature shining in endless glory, with all the fulness of the godhead, every attribute or perfection peculiar to deity dwelling in him bodily, and we blessed with every spiritual blessing in him; this is our glory, to

know Jesus Christ and him crucified; this is "the wisdom or God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew," I Cor. ii. 7. And this is confirmed by what follows; The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness but to them that are saved it is Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God," I Cor. i. 18. This is the wisdom that God ordained for our glory. And this is the mystery of godliness, "God manifested in the flesh, who was seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory," 1 Tim. iii. 16. And upon this mystery another depends, which is, our union with this mystery of godliness: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones: this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church," Eph. iv. 30, 32. And from his fulness the Holy Spirit descends upon us, enters into us as a comforter, and abides with us for ever; he is the power, producer, and promoter of all the real godliness that is in the world. His influence and operations are productive of all good fruits, faith, hope, and love; life, joy, rest, and peace, which are the principles of godliness; and of all real devotion: and without this all religion is but bodily exercise, a drawing near to God without the heart. A seedsman, that goes forth weeping and bearing precious seed, carries the seed of God's word, the precious promises of the covenant; he has the seed of David, the Saviour, formed in his heart; he is a steward of the mysteries of God, and of his manifold grace, which grace is the incorruptible seed, 1 Pet i 23. Such an one, as God enables him, sows to the Spirit, as he dwells in the household of faith. "Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart."

The righteous often lose the light of God's countenance; love waxes colder under sharp and long afflictions; and the corruptions of the heart seem to be more predominant than the oil of joy. These things obscure the believer's evidences,

eclipse the hearing beams of the sun, and bring on the gloomy days of adversity: but these days must not abide for ever, nor shall they ever blot out the saints' title, which is, children of light, and children of the day. The Sun of Righteousness may be eclipsed to our view, but never goes down: when we sit in darkness the Lord is a light unto us, he brings us forth to the light again, and we behold his righteousness. Every son of consolation, every one that is a fellow-helper of our joy, sows light for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart; and those who are so happy as to reap light, joy, or gladness, are sure to proclaim it.

But there is such a thing as sowing to the Spirit in temporal things. God created all the materials of the church at first, and in Christ Jesus we are all created anew; every lively stone in this temple is God's workmanship, and the whole building is of God's founding and framing; and it is "built for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The church is not her own, she is bought with a price, and is the Lord's own property, by purchase, by consecration, by dedication, and by inhabitation; hence every thing done to the church is done to the Lord.

The Jewish church at Jerusalem sent forth her ministers to us Gentiles; the law went forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem; and the church of Jerusalem bore their expenses whom she sent: "They went forth, taking, nothing of the Gentiles," 3 John, 7. But many of these saints among the Hebrews were excommunicated, and some of them spoiled of their goods, Heb. x. 34; while others of them, the poorer sort, were set to reaping the harvest of the rich, and being despised and outlawed for Christ's sake, they were allowed no wages for their work. "Do not rich men oppress you? Behold, the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabbath," James. v. 4. These things brought the mother

church to poverty, but the Gentiles sent her relief by the hand of Paul. "I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them, verily, and their debtors they are. For, if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in carnal things," Rom. xv. 25-27. We have a further account of this collecting for the saints' relief at Jerusalem in Paul's epistle to the church at Corinth. "Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your botinty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, but not as of covetousness. But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully," 2 Cor. ix. 5. 6. This sowing or distributing was to the poor saints, that is to those who were sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And the seedsmen were to be persons of the same cast; such, and only such, as had been partakers of the Jews' spiritual things. These spiritual Gentiles ministered to the Lord's people, which is the Lord's household, and they are his own property, and therefore he takes it as done to himself; "I was an hungry and ye gave me meat, thirsty and ye gave me drink, a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me." And he adds, "Forasmuch as ye have done it to these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. And, as the Holy Spirit of Christ dwells in the church, the Spirit styles it his own temple; as the apostle says, "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them." Therefore this ministering to the saints is called sowing to the Spirit; and it answereth many good purposes: first, God takes notice and approves of it; hence the caution, "not grudgingly, or of necessity," as there is no compulsion, "for God loveth a cheerful giver."

2. They that sow bountifully shall reap bountifully. "God is able to make all Grace abound toward you; that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work; as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever." The apostle sets forth the power of God, as engaged to make all grace abound; and his providence also in giving them a sufficiency in all things; and, being blessed with the abundance, of grace in the heart, and with the bounties of providence in their hand, that they might abound to every good work. And he calls this ministering, this dispersing abroad and giving to the poor, a righteousness which remaineth for ever, for love is the fulfilling of the law; and both love, and the labour of love; love in its root, and love in its fruit, will remain for evermore. Hence the apostle charges them that are rich "not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God. That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life," I Tim. vi. 17,18. This is bread cast upon the waters, which is to be found after many days, Eccles. xi. 1.

But our apostle goes on, wishing his blessing upon this sowing, and reaping. " Now he that ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness," 2 Cor. ix. 10. The apostle styles these liberal Gentiles sowers. He gives them to understand that it is God who ministers seed to the sower: the incorruptible seed of grace, and the blessing, of providence, all come from him. He prays God to minister bread for their food, both the bread of heaven and the staff of life; that they may have a plenty for themselves and others. Another part of his prayer is, that God would put his blessing upon their liberality, which is multiplying their seed sown; and that by the blessing of God upon them, and attending their liberality, the fruits of their righteousness might be increased.

The apostle proceeds to shew us that God himself reaps a harvest from this seed sown, "for it causes through us thanksgiving to God." And not only the apostles thanked God for this, but the Jewish church, which experienced the bounty of the Gentiles, joined in the same service; "for the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings to God," 2 Cor. ix. 12. And they not only sacrificed thanksgivings, "but they glorify God; for the Gentiles professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, and for their liberal distribution unto them, and to all men," 2 Cor. ix. 13. And then the apostle concludes by shewing us that the Spirit operates in such poor saints, in setting them to pray for their liberal brethren, and to long after the welfare of these their liberal benefactors: "And by their prayer for you, which long after you, for the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift," 2 Cor. ix. 14, 15. But there is no praying for others, nor longing after their souls, nor admiring the grace of God in them, unless they spring from the Holy Spirit and his grace. This is sowing to the Spirit, and such sowers are spiritual seedsmen: they reap spiritual things first, and under the Spirit's influence sow these their carnal things; for it is he that teaches the saints to love one another, and to love not in word, but in deed and in truth: and such, and only such, are objects of God's love, and come up to the character of cheerful givers. Others may sow to imitate the saints, but it is sparingly, having reaped no spiritual things, as may be seen in Ananias and Sapphira, who tried to imitate Barnabas; they sold their land, and brought a part, saying it was the whole price; by which they tempted the Spirit, and then lied unto him, for which he struck them both dead.

The fifth branch of this sowing to the Spirit is supporting the public ministry, endeavouring to spread the gospel, and to maintain them that preach it. The gospel is the ministry of the Spirit, and none but spiritual men can preach it, because it is

the power of God unto salvation. Such labourers are worthy of their hire, and such as rule well are to "be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine," 1 Tim.V.17. And this will be the case when Gods gives testimony to the word of his grace, and sets the broad seal of heaven upon the message, and upon the soul that receives it, and raises up such an one to be a living, witness that the seal of God is upon the messenger. "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be our plowmen and vine-dressers but ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God. Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves. For your shame you shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double, everlasting joy shall be unto them," Isa. lxi. 6, 7. The Almighty himself fixes our honourable title; "You shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God." And he himself appoints our maintenance, "You shall eat the riches of the Gentiles;" and the glorious salvation of their souls is to be our boast. And, although much shame and confusion may attend the ministry, through the malice of enemies, yet super abounding grace is to counteract this; and joy in God as our portion is promised is a cordial, to embolden and bear us up under this shame and confusion, all of which is to terminate in eternal joy; "everlasting joy shall be unto them."

Nor is the glorious salvation of the soul all the benefits which attend the ministers of God. When such are received into a man's house, to preach the word of God to the family, not only the man and his family are under the curse of God, but the curse is upon all the work of his hands, whether he be rich or poor, and upon all that he hath; the very ground is cursed, Gen. iii. 17. Yea even the Jewish priests, who lived on the tithes and offerings of Israel, though they called these offering

blessings, and they were blessed with a ceremonial blessing, yet the law made nothing perfect; it sanctified neither the man nor his property. God tells the Jewish priests that he had cursed their blessings because they laid not their sins to heart, Mal. ii. 2; and Paul declares that "unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled," Titus, i. 15. Adam by his sin forfeited all, and brought a curse upon his posterity, and upon all the world. The second Adam is now heir of all things: and all things are now put into the covenant of promise; we have the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," I Tim. iv. 8. But these blessings are to the heirs of promise; and this heirship is made manifest upon our believing: "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and heirs according to the promise," Gal. iii. 26, 29, Whosoever, therefore, receiveth them whom the Lord sends, receiveth Christ in them, Matt. x. 40. And those that thus receive the Lord in faith and love become heirs of God, heirs of promise, and heirs of the grace of life; and such are called to inherit God's blessing, I Pet. iii. 9. And this blessing brings a consecration upon the man, upon his house, and upon all that he hath; "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horns iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth," Micah, iv. 13. Christ's ministers are here called the daughters of Zion, as they are elsewhere called Wisdom's maidens; "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath furnished her table, she hath sent forth her maidens," Prov. ix. 1-3. Their horn sets forth the power of their anointing; their hoofs shew their firm standing, in the Lord by faith; their horns being iron, is to shew the destruction of their enemies, being a savour of death unto death to them; and trampling them with the hoof sets forth their victory over them, They are bid to arise and thresh, which is beating off the chaff

from the wheat, or separating the elect from the reprobate. Beating them to pieces is breaking the hearts and spirits of poor sinners; for God dwells with them that are of a broken spirit; while others are dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel, Rev. ii. 27; so that they are sure to be broken one way or other. Such as are broken and made contrite by the word are made temples of the living God; and the Holy Ghost says that he will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth, Micah. iv. 13. Thus God's servants bring God's blessing to these converts, and this blessing rests upon them, and upon their gain and substance, and is the only consecration that rests upon it and it is to be consecrated to the Lord God of the whole earth, which is Christ; "The God of the whole earth shall he be called," Isai. liv. 5. Now what is given to the Lord's servants as such is given to him, as may be seen in Paul's words to the Philippians; "But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God," Phil. iv. 18. And Christ himself will proclaim this at the general judgment; "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink." This gain had been consecrated; and no other property but that of believers has any divine consecration upon it; for God himself gives an awful description of the sinner's substance before his blessing and consecration comes upon it. "And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up: for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing," Isaiah, xxiii. 17, 18. Tyre was a noted city for idolatry; and her being famous, or rather infamous, for this brought much trade and wealth to her merchants. Her merchandise and hire is the hire of an harlot; the wages of her

fornication, the grains of idolatry, is the hire of a whore; and the stipend of an idolatrous priest is the price of a dog, Deut. xxiii. 18; both of which the ceremonial law forbids. But the merchandise and hire of the Tyrians is to be "holiness to the Lord." It is to be consecrated, and then to be called holiness to the Lord; it is not to be treasured nor laid up. "Her merchandise and her hire shall be for them that dwell before the Lord;" such as stand fast in Christ, who appears in the presence of God for us, and who stand before Christ, and minister in his name to his people. It is to supply them with food and raiment, and so it follows; for "her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing," There is a prophecy that went before upon this head, concerning the conversion of Tyre, and her coming to Zion; "And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour," Psalm xiv. 12. Nor do I believe that there is one minister of the Spirit in a thousand that reaps, even in this sense, one tenth of what he sows; I mean even in carnal things. The ark was a lively type of Christ; "And the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertained unto him, because of the ark of God," 2 Sam. vi. 12. But we have no account that he sent any thing away with it. Laban had but little when Jacob went to him; but God blessed him from the time of his first coming, and increased his cattle till it became a multitude; and, had not the God of Isaac been with Jacob, Jacob after all would have been sent empty away. Joseph's master in Egypt experienced the same blessing under the servitude of Joseph: and all that he got for his service was false imprisonment. It is true Pharaoh promoted Joseph, and made him ride in the second chariot; but then it should be considered that Joseph at last bought up all the land of Egypt for the crown, except the land of the priests, and saved the whole country from perishing by famine. Many were enriched both in spirituals and temporals by Paul, when he suffered hunger, cold, and nakedness himself; and he owns both, even

his own poverty and their wealth; "as poor, yet making many rich," 2 Cor. vi. 10. And there are several families in the world that I myself know, who were so blessed under the smiles of providence after they had received the gospel, that they themselves saw it, wondered at it, owned it, and confessed it; and in this God fulfils his promise; "The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the souls of men," Micah, v. 7. God makes his servants both a dew and a shower; and many blessings are distilled upon the people that receive them. "I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessings," Ezek. xxxiv. 26. And I believe that if all God's real children, who are led to confide in his providence, would carefully examine matters, they would set their seal to the truth of Christ's promise, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," Matt vi. 33; I mean that such souls would confess, that their seeking the kingdom of God went before, and that most of their temporal blessings came upon them afterwards. But I believe none of the Lord's seedsmen reap so bountifully as they sow. Paul complains of this; "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen, or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written; that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix. 7-11.

All professing people must and shall be seedsmen; they shall sow either to the Spirit or to the flesh; "and whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Riches and honour come of God; he maketh poor, and maketh rich; and, if they have no heart to further his cause, he will so entangle them, that they shall support his enemies. Paul observes some to whom Providence had been most bountiful, who thereupon grew proud, haughty, and covetous: "Charge them that are rich in this world not to be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches," I Timothy, vi. 17.

Others were so charmed with Providence, that divine grace grew quite out of favour; they set their whole heart upon their wealth, and supposed that gain was godliness. But in this they erred; "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows," I Timothy, vi. 10.

Others used their wealth in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; these fell "into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," 1 Timothy, vi. 9. Paul tells the church at Corinth that they had many instructors, but not many fathers, for he had begotten them: yet they seem to have been illiberal to Paul, but not so to the false apostles. Hence he asks them, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" I Cor. ix. 11, 12. Those that used this power over them were the ministers of Satan, who set themselves up to examine Paul: "My answer to them that examine me is this" - read I Corinthians, ix. 3. The apostle takes notice of this, and enforces the ordinance of God in the support of the ministry: "Even so hath God ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." But Paul, being a single man, and having, learned a trade, would not be beholden to them, but

made his hands minister to his necessities, as others have done who are engaged in the same work. And it is observable that many, who have appeared the most illiberal in the cause of God, have been so entangled in Satan's snares as to "consume it upon their lusts," James, iv. 3.

Others have been entangled with errors; and, in opposition to the truth, have been at great expense in supporting the same. And others, like the Corinthians, have been so zealously affected by wolves, that they have brought themselves low in circumstances by supporting the vilest impostors. But God ever has, and ever will raise up, some who shall be real and hearty friends to his servants, and to his own cause. Paul had his Onesiphorus, who often refreshed him, and was not ashamed of his chain, and in many things ministered to him at Ephesus, 2 Tim. 1. 16. The Philippians were so remarkably generous to him, that from the very beginning of the gospel among them they were careful of him; and this their care flourished again and again. "And even in Thessalonica they sent once and again unto his necessities, till he was full and abounded," as appears in the fourth chapter of his epistle to that church. Christ will have some that shall receive and abide by his servants. Some shall sow to the Spirit, and some shall sow to the flesh: but, let the seed be whatever it may, the crop and harvest shall be answerable. "Even as I have seen", says Job, "they that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same," chap. iv. 8. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting," Gal. vi. 8.

Eternal life lies in the purpose of God: we are ordained to it, it is given to us in Christ, and is hid with Christ in God. It is treasured up in the promise of the gospel, and secured in the covenant of grace. It is manifested in us by the operations of the Spirit quickening us. It is enjoyed by a sense of pardon and justification, which is unto life. The incorruptible seed of

life is in faith, in hope, and in love; and all are passed from death to life who love the brethren. But the general harvest is to be reaped at the resurrection; for a life of grace is reaped in this world. It is a life of glory that Paul speaks of when he says. "And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not," Gal. vi. 9.

Laying dead bodies in the ground is called sowing; "It is sown in corruption, it is sown in dishonour, it is sown in weakness, It is sown a natural body." And some of these will rise in corruption, in dishonour, and to shame and everlasting contempt, Dan. xii. 2. This our Lord calls "the resurrection unto damnation," John, v. 29.

But there are others that shall be raised "in incorruption, in glory, in power, and with a spiritual body." The Holy Ghost, to whom the saints have soared, shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto Christ's glorious body. In this the saints shall appear before their Judge; when he will own, acknowledge, and approve, all that received him in his members, and all that fed him, clothed him, and visited him, whether sick or in prison.

Christ is "ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things," Ephes. iv. 10; and by these things are chiefly meant his children, which, in allusion to the vessels of the temple, are called vessels, cups, bowls, and flagons, Isaiah, xxii. 24; Zech. ix. 15. The sanctuary and vessels of the ministry were purged by the blood of beasts; "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly thing themselves with better sacrifices than these," Heb. ix. 23. These heavenly things, which are purified by the blood of Christ, and in whom the atonement and the treasure of divine grace are hid, are to be filled. Every grace, though perfect in its kind, is, with respect to degrees, imperfect; something is still wanting, "and that

which is wanting cannot be numbered," Eccles. i. 15. But a fulness is promised; "I will cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures," Prov. viii. 21.

Our light is but the day-dawn or morning star at most, and is no more than a prelude to perfect day. Our knowledge is very shallow, and far from perfection, mixed with much darkness and confusion; but above it will be perfected. Our rest is often disturbed, and peace sadly interrupted, by the things which disquiet the mind. Love often waxes cold when the divine Lover stands aloof, and when love visits are not paid. Joy is not full; it is often counter balanced by bitterness and by days of adversity. In the best saint there is hungering and thirsting, desiring and longing, hoping, watching, and waiting. And this spiritual poverty must remain till the kingdom of heaven takes place; then mourning shall give way to comfort, weeping, shall give place to laughter, meekness shall yield to the thousand years' reign in the new earth; and all patience in waiting for the inheritance shall remain at the foot of the mount, when we ascend into the hill of the Lord, and stand in his holy place.

The Holy Spirit is not only the spirit of grace, but he is the spirit of glory also, I Peter, iv. 14. When Christ was crucified, God laid the foundations "of the earth," and at the resurrection of the just he will "plant the heavens," Isaiah, li. 16. The sure mercies of David are, the Holy Spirit and his grace; "Of his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus, iii. 5. By this regenerating and renewing a spiritual family is raised up for God; and when this family is settled in glory mercy will be built up for ever, and the faithfulness of God will be established in the very heavens," Psalm lxxxix. 2.

The ever blessed and ever adorable Spirit is the planter of all grace; every fruit of his is produced in the soul under his influence and operations; and they are his cheering breezes

which animate them, give them all their motion and exercise, and from his power they emit all their fragrance. The Saviour's sacrifice is of no use to us unless the Holy Spirit realizes the atonement to our conscience" and gives us by faith a participation of his saving benefits. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," John, vi. 56, 63. Hence the Holy Spirit in the church is called "a springing well, living water springing up," which makes the church a "fountain sealed," Cant. iv. 12. And every grace that appears in exercise, whether faith, hope, or love, joy, meekness, or humility, every confession or petition, all thanks, praises, or rejoicings, all sympathy with Christ in his sufferings, all pious concern for his honour, all fellowship with him, whether in his death or resurrection, all gratitude to him, zeal for him, or godly valour in his cause, are so many springs rising from this fountain, and playing the enlivening streams through the Mediator into the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. God seeketh such to worship him as shall worship him in spirit and in truth. It is the Holy Spirit that draws the image of God upon the soul; and it is this image that is "the beauty of the Lord our God upon us," Ps. xc. 17. And every soul renewed, and thus formed for God's praise, "worships the Lord in the beauty of holiness," 1 Chron xvi. 29, and none else.

Thus my dear friends, have I endeavoured to set before you and all others what little I understand of sowing to the Spirit, and of reaping eternal life from the same. I have also two more branches of the same heavenly mysteries, which I shall be glad to send you when God permits. One is upon "the emblems of the Spirit," and the other is upon the subject of "his divine anointing;" till then, farewell. I hear much of your great success; it confirms what I long since have written. God make you both the father and the nurse of thousands of millions, and let your seed possess the gate of those which hate them. Amen.

Ever yours in the best of bonds,
W. HUNTINGTON, S. S.

Moses Unveiled In The Face Of Christ

A SERMON BY WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

PREACHED AT MONKWELL STREET MEETING, AUGUST
12, 1794

"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."—LUKE, xxi. 15.

MOSES UNVEILED IN THE FACE OF CHRIST

"And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."—2 Cor. iii. 13.

Verse the first, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" This is a throw at the false apostles, who, when they had by their evil insinuation ingratiated themselves into the affections of the simple and unwary, obtained letters of commendation from them, to recommend themselves to other churches, that they might do more mischief; for they had nothing else to recommend them but their pride and their speech, which Paul paid no regard to.

"I do not want to know the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power." But of this they were destitute. They had not the power of God manifested in them, they had no power with God in prayer, nor did they ever communicate, by their instrumentality, the power of God is grace and Spirit to others. They were false apostles, and ministers of Satan; and Paul is commended by the Lord himself for proving them so to be. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."

These disciples of Moses, "who preached Christ out of envy," when they could not obtain letters of commendation from one church to another, would even dare to counterfeit letters in Paul's name; which induced him to sign every epistle of his in future with his own hand writing, as a token that they were not spurious. "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, &c. so I write." Yea, the apostle cautions his followers against this damnable quackery. "See that ye be not troubled, neither by word, nor by spirit, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand;" for we have written no such things unto you.

"But do we need these letters of commendation?" No; those whom God sends, God will recommend, and make them manifest in the consciences of all his people. It is not he who commends himself that is approved, but whom the Lord commends. Besides, if a minister be a good workman, one that needs not to be ashamed, his own work will recommend him; and the seals of his ministry will be forward enough to proclaim him to others; for "a gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it, and whithersoever it turneth it prospereth;" yea, "a man's gift shall make room for him, and bring him before great men:" and, therefore, we need no letters of commendation from you, nor letters of commendation to you.

"Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men." We are the pens that the Spirit of God uses to write his laws of faith, truth, love, and liberty on your minds; and we have heard a reason of your hope, and of your experience that worketh hope; and it agrees with ours, and with the written word; and therefore we know, dearly beloved, "your election of God; for our word came not unto you in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance:" and God has made you manifest in our hearts; you have a share in our affections; and thus, as our epistle, you are written in our hearts: and, as your conversion to God is manifested in our hearts, so all men may read you, in your external reformation, your turning from idols to the living God, your separation from the world, your light and knowledge, shining in the midst of a crooked generation, your honest life and humble walk, your singularity and chaste conversation, the persecution you endure for Christ and conscience sake, which are manifest to all, and may be read by all men. So that the very heathen may say, "God hath done great things for you."

"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us." What the Saviour himself taught in his ministry, he hath by his Spirit written upon your hearts; and, as the scriptures are a sealed book, so hath he sealed you, upon your believing, with the holy spirit of promise; and you shall, by and bye, as the Lord's secret treasure, be carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, as so many love letters and living epistles; and there be opened, and openly read and acknowledged, before all the celestial inhabitants.

"Ministered by us." You are the workmanship of us labourers, the seals of our mission and commission, the trophies of our victory, as good soldiers of Christ, and the crop and fruit of us ploughmen and vine-dressers; yea, the sheaves of the harvest in which we labour; which those that go forth weeping and bearing precious seed shall (at their return to God) bring

with them, as their joy and crown of rejoicing in that day. We shall present you to Christ at the beginning of the thousand years' reign upon the new earth, and Christ will present you to his Father in ultimate glory at the close of that period, when he delivers up, in full tale, all the subjects of his kingdom to the Father.

"Written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart" The word of truth in the scriptures is written with ink, but the impressions on your hearts is with humbling grace; the Bible was written by holy men with a pen, but your writing is by God himself, with the finger of his Spirit, and not in tables of stone, as the moral law was, but on the soft and fleshly tables of the heart; the stony heart being removed by a feeling sense of the pardoning love of God and a believing view of Christ; which lead men to contrition, meekness, humiliation, godly sorrow, and evangelical repentance; and make the impenitent, hard, and obdurate heart soft, and susceptible of every divine impression.

"And such trust have we through Christ to Godward." We trust that what we have here asserted of your happy state, and of our success among you, is true. And this discernment of men and things we obtain by Christ, from whom all our wisdom, knowledge, and discernment comes. And it is "to Godward." The acknowledgment of our success, and of our blessed state, is to the honour of God; for I will not boast of any thing that God has not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient either by word or deed.

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves." We are not sufficient to communicate the Spirit, truth, or grace, of God to men; nor sufficient to discern, read, think, or judge, aright of a work of grace upon the hearts of men.

"But our sufficiency is of God." Our light, knowledge, grace, that we have, are of God's free gift; and so is all the success that has attended our labours. And, as for our discernment into your hearts, and knowledge of the goodness of your state, they are of God also; which he gives us light to see; and knowledge to judge of, and a persuasion in our own hearts that our judgment of you is true. Moreover, he told me "to speak boldly at Corinth, for he had much people in that city." And it was by us that ye were called. God may use others, even men of *one talent*, graceless men, to cast a little light upon his word, and on your minds, and to furnish his spiritual *exchangers* with some sound expressions for prayer and conversation; but he never uses nor honours these in converting souls to himself; for, "if ye have ten thousand instructors, ye have not many fathers; I have begotten you," through the gospel; therefore our sufficiency is of God;

"Who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit." The New Testament is the covenant of grace, which was made between the Father and the Son. But, when Christ had performed the conditions of it, and it became sealed and ratified by his blood, and of force by the death of the testator, it then became a testament, valid and of force; and no man may disannul, add thereunto, or make it void. It is of force to every heir of promise, who may come and receive the legacies that are therein appointed by the Father, and bequeathed by the Son, to him.

"An able minister of the New Testament" is one that has received the spirit of promise, one that has felt and enjoyed the truths, blessings, and promises, of the gospel in his own heart, and so "tells to others what God has done for his soul." He has the Spirit, and is a minister of the Spirit; he is a partaker of grace, and a good steward of it; he is pardoned; and preaches, forgiveness; he is justified, and preaches righteousness; he believes, and therefore speaks; he is

quicken, and holds forth the word of life; he is free, and preaches liberty to others; he made his own calling and election sure, and therefore shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God. Christ is revealed in him; and he bears him and preaches him amongst the Gentiles. He has felt the savour of his name as an ointment poured forth, and therefore is instrumental in making manifest the savour of his name in every place; he has salt in himself, and his words are seasoned with salt, to season others; he is illuminated, and lets his light shine before men; he is a candle on the stick, and gives, light to all that are in the house. Such an one, in the hands of Christ, is an able minister of the New Testament.

"Not of the letter," which gives no life, no hope, no help; it brings nothing good to the sinner, but calls for every thing at his hands; it calls for love, for righteousness, for perfect and perpetual obedience; but gives no grace, mercy, nor salvation. A minister of the letter is a man dead to God, a miscarrying womb, and a dry breast to others; he is an instrument without life, giving uncertain sound; and a well without water, that refreshes none; he may furnish the head, but not manure the heart; he may nurse pride, but never nourish the soul; he may lead to presumption, but never can communicate faith, being but a minister of the letter.

"For the letter killeth." It threatens death temporal to every transgressor. The blasphemer was stoned without the camp; the worshippers of Baal-peor were killed on the spot, he that gathered sticks on the sabbath-day was killed at the command of God; the rebellious child, that dishonoured his parents, was to be stoned. It ministers spiritual death, cursing every transgressor who is under it, and already dead by it; and it ministers eternal death to both body and soul. It condemns the soul to eternal wrath, and the body to endless flames.

"But the Spirit giveth life." It quickens the dead soul, gives it life and feeling, and motion towards God. It removes the sting of death by the application of the atonement, and removes the sentence of death by bringing in the righteousness of Christ. It works faith in the heart, and presents the Lord and giver of life to it, and so enables the soul to live by the faith of the Son of God.

"But, if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious"—The law was given with much glorious majesty. God came down upon mount Sinai; his chariots were twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; thunder, lightnings, smoke, and darkness, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of Words. God wrote the law with his own finger, and gave it to the angels; and Moses received it by the disposition of them. The mediator had a ray of glory on his face when he delivered it, to give a sanction to it, and to put an honour upon the office of Moses: but, notwithstanding all this majestic glory, it is the ministration of death; and the glory itself was terrible to Israel.

"So that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away"—This last word *glory* is not in the original, but is supplied by the translators. This glory the children of Israel could not look to. The voice and terrible majesty of God brought them all in guilty before him, so that they could not endure the light; and the veil of ignorance was upon their hearts, that they could not see the meaning of it, and therefore darkness suited them best; And this is the case with every bond-child, to this day; he gropes at the old mount; amidst blackness and darkness; but bring him to Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which God shines, and he shuns the rays and hates the light; nor will he come to it, lest his deeds should be reproved; and this is his condemnation; and, as it is now, so it will be in the last day; he will call to the rocks

and mountains to hide him from the face of him that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; and, as he cannot endure the light, he shall be driven to outer darkness, to the generation of his fathers, and shall never see light. If all this glory attend the ministration of death,

"How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" The law reveals the holiness and justice of God, and his wrath and indignation at all sin: but the gospel reveals and promises the Holy Ghost to every soul that believes; who is the God of glory, and makes the saints' bodies his own temple; who reveals the Father's eternal love, grace, mercy, and good-will of purpose and of promise; who shines with a glorious light, works a glorious work of grace, is an earnest of future glory, and a pledge of it, and will at last put the soul in full possession of it.

"For, if the ministration of condemnation be glory"—if a dispensation, that brings in the whole world guilty before God; which makes the offence of Adam abound, and all sin become exceeding sinful; that curses, condemns, and assigns men over to future judgment, there to have the sentence passed and eternally executed—be glory,

"Much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." For the gospel reveals the righteousness of God fully satisfied by the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; and the perfect obedience of the Son of God is clearly revealed in the gospel, and imputed by God himself to the justification of all that believe; who likewise promises grace and strength to help in every time of need, that we may be thoroughly furnished for every good work. As much as the incorruptible seed, the word of God, exceeds the letter; as eternal life exceeds eternal death; as much as a blessing exceeds a curse; and as righteousness exceeds condemnation; so much the

everlasting gospel exceeds the moral law, engraven on tables of stone.

"For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." The law was but a *moon-light* at best; which rules over the night, and over the children of the night and of darkness, who have the old veil upon their heart, and are of the works of the law, under it, and under the curse of it. But, like the moon, there is no heat to warm the heart in it, nor does it cause any genuine fruitfulness in the barren soil that is under it. Bitter clusters of error, wild grapes of sin, and dead works, are all the fruits that can be found in bond-children; and you may as well expect grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles, as to look for any other from barren hearts, unrenewed by grace. But the gospel reveals God in all his glory and majesty; and Christ, the sun of righteousness, with all his reviving glorious light and heat, who turns the desert into a fruitful field, and the barren heart into a springing well: it brings life and immortality to light, and shews the way of life and the path of peace. As soon as the beams of light dart into the sinner's heart, and the glory of God rises upon him, this is the sun that shall never go down, but make the path of the just shine more and more, even to perfect day: and the child of light, however eclipsed, however obscure, hid, or unknown in this world, will at last shine forth as the sun in the glory of his Father's kingdom for ever and ever, When he comes to enjoy the inheritance with the saints in light. This is the glory that excelleth; the law had no glory in this respect, for it neither shews, discovers, nor gives, any of these things.

"For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." Paul here repeals his assertion, that the law is done away. The old covenant gives way to the new; the will of precept gives way to the will of purpose and of promise, which brings glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men. The new

covenant is not according to the old; it is not a killing command and a cursing sentence; but is attended with the Spirit of God, who writes his laws of faith, truth, and liberty, in the sinner's mind; takes the, stony heart away, and gives a heart of flesh; pardons iniquity, and remembers sins no more; cleanses the sinner from all his filthiness and from all his idols, and brings him to loathe himself under the soul-melting flames of everlasting love. And this ministry shall ever remain, though the other is waxed old and vanished away because of the weakness and unprofitableness of it; for it made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God; for Christ is not a priest after the law of a carnal commandment which ministers nothing but wrath and death to carnal men. For, though the law be spiritual, because it ministers spiritual and eternal death to the spirits and souls of men, yet its whole ministration is to *carnal* men; for it is not made for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient. But Christ is a priest after the power of an endless life, who lives in his office for ever, and has, by his one offering, perfected for ever all them that are sanctified in the purpose of God, and that he should give eternal life to all the chosen race.

"Seeing then that we have such hope"—that Christ is formed in our hearts the hope of glory; that we are brought to the God of hope; are happy partakers of the Spirit, and intrusted with the ministry of the Spirit of life and of righteousness, in which we hope—

"We use great plainness of speech." We do not muzzle the truth, nor cover the force or blunt the edge of it; we do not corrupt the word, nor frustrate the grace of God, by walking in craftiness and handling the word of God deceitfully; we are not afraid that the truth of God and his sovereign grace will lead people into licentiousness; nor do we shun to declare the whole counsel of God, for fear of losing our good name and

reputation. They call me an heretic, and my doctrine *heresy*; but, after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers. They charge me with saying, "Let us sin that grace may abound;" whose damnation is just. They call my preaching foolishness; but it pleases God to save all that believe in it: and call my gospel a lie; but it is plain that the truth of God abounds through my lie unto his glory; for his word runs, his grace is communicated, and God is glorified, in every soul that receives it. While these my traducers do no good, communicate no power, nor win one soul to Christ, they deceive themselves, and others too; and are nothing but false apostles, deceitful workers, and ministers of Satan; who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with divers sins, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Female followers suit them best; the weaker vessel is the soonest deceived. They are always in love, and cannot allure but only through the lust of the flesh and much wantonness. But we dare not compare ourselves with these. We are not of the number of preachers which men heap to themselves, who scratch itching ears and turn them from the truth to fables; nor a set of vain janglers, who desire to be teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say nor whereof they affirm: but we are ministers of God, not of men, nor by men, nor did we learn our gospel of men, nor were we taught it but by the revelation of Christ. God revealed his Son in us, that we should bear him and preach him among the Gentiles; and we are determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; for he is the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Knowing, therefore, of whom we learned these things, and in whom see have believed; and seeing the success that attends our labours, and how you are all partakers of our grace; and seeing how you shine as lights in the world, who have received the truth by us; we have made full proof of the ministry, and by a manifestation of it have appealed to your consciences in the sight of God, and have seen the power and blessed effects of it upon you; and,

therefore, without mincing the matter, and without fearing an ill name from man, we use great plainness of speech.

"And not as Moses, who put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."

In handling these words, I will,

1. Treat of the office of Moses.
2. Of the glory of his face.
3. Of the veil upon it.
4. Of the end which Israel could not see.
5. (and lastly). Of the abolition of the law

First, Moses was one of the children of Israel, of the stock of Abraham and tribe of Levi; a brother to the rest of the tribes; flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone; and, as such, was a type of that plant of renown, that Israelite indeed in whose mouth was no guile, who was the brother born for adversity; made flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone.

Secondly, He was raised up, appointed, commissioned, and sent, by God himself, to deliver the children of Israel from Pharaoh, that river dragon, and from their cruel task-masters. He delivered their necks from the yoke of bondage, their souls from the iron furnace, and their fingers from the pots. In all which he was a figure of the better Deliverer, who delivers us from that old dragon the devil, from the tyranny of oppressors and of reigning sins, the galling yoke of our transgressions, the yoke of legal bondage, from the furnace of divine wrath, and our fingers from the potsherds of the earth. He executed judgment upon Egypt, shewed the goodness and severity of God at the Red Sea, led them through the wilderness, and never left them until he brought them in sight of the promised land. In all which he was a type of Christ, but

came short of him in every thing. Christ came for judgment into this world, that they who see not might see, and those that see might be made blind. He executed vengeance on the Jewish nation, for their rejection of him and cruelty to his church. He shews his goodness to all that obey him, and his severity to all that hate him; leads his people through the wilderness of this world, and brings them into the promised land, which is very far off. Moses had a miraculous rod, with which he smote the waters and turned them into blood, by which he divided the sea, and under which Israel prevailed and Amalek was defeated: a faint emblem this of the Saviour's sceptre, with which he smites the earth and slays the wicked; by the sway of which righteous sceptre he doth in righteousness judge and make war; and by the same rod of his strength, sent out of Zion, He rules in the midst of Jerusalem; and under which we are enabled to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. Moreover,

Moses was invested with the high office of mediator, He found grace in the sight of the Lord; was indulged with access to him, and communion with him; he was God's mouth to the people, and the people's mouth to God; and was allowed to stand in the gap when the anger of the Almighty waxed hot against the rebels. In all which he represented the better Mediator of the better covenant; who found grace in the eyes of the Lord for all his members; who engaged his heart to draw near to God, and appears in his presence for us; by whom in these last days the Father hath spoken to us, and who in his intercession speaks to God for us; who, as our daysman, has laid his hand upon both, broken down the middle wall of partition, made peace by the blood of his cross, and stands in the gap for ever, to receive gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell amongst them. Furthermore,

"Moses was a prophet. He foretold a Messiah to come, and that all the saints should be in his hand; that they should all sit down at his feet, and be taught of him; and the vengeance that should fall on the rejectors of him. He pointed out the word of faith and imputed righteousness by him, which is witnessed both by the law and the prophets; shewed the vanity of all human righteousness, and foretold the calamities of those that should lightly esteem this Rock of salvation. In all which Christ is a prophet like unto him who has foretold the salvation of the Gentiles and the restoration of the Jews; the righteousness, life, peace, rest, and happiness, that all should enjoy who receive him; and the destruction of the Jewish nation for rejecting him; the desolation of all that are incensed against him, and the dreadful damnation of all that hear and despise his everlasting gospel. Again,

Moses was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the tribes were gathered together. And in this he was a figure of the King of righteousness and King of peace, who is set upon the holy hill of Zion; and of whose increase, government, and kingdom, there should be no end. This leads me to my second general head, which is to treat of

"The glory of Moses' face." The Lord, having appeared on the mount in thick darkness, and spoken to them in the secret place of thunder, and ordered bounds to be set all round the mount, that none might break through to gaze, left the following ways open. One was by having a name on the breast-plate of the high-priest, who was to approach through the veil to the mercy-seat; and the other was by Moses as the Mediator of the new covenant, the apostle and high-priest of our profession, and the only throne of grace, propitiation, and mercy-seat, There was a glory between the cherubim; Urim and Thummim in the breast-plate of judgment; and the glory of God on the face of Moses. But now he that dwelt between the cherubim has stirred up his strength and come among us;

light and perfection are found in the Holy One; and the glory of God is only to be seen in the face of Jesus, Here we are to look that we may be enlightened, for every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of light by and through Jesus Christ. If our language be, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us;" the answer is, "Have I been so long with you, and hast thou not seen me, Philip?" To Jesus we must look for the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory; and here we shall see him at once, for so it is written; "God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This is the light of the Lord's countenance, which lay hid in Israel's blessing, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; and the Lord give thee peace." The lifting up the light of the Lord's countenance brings favour and life; and the light and love that are reflected by it shew us the consecrated way through the veil, and sweetly attract the soul to God, until the heart is so inflamed, and our nearness so great, that "he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him:" and here we look as through a mirror, till "we are changed into the same image from glory to glory." And this was shewed to the three witnesses on mount Tabor, when Moses the mediator, and Elijah the prophet, appeared in glory, both to resign their offices to the only prophet of his church, and to the only mediator of the better testament. At which time the Lord Jesus appeared in his proper lustre, and through the veil of his flesh let his natural rays of infinite divinity, glory, and majesty shine forth; at which time Moses and Elijah resigned their offices; and in the glorious vision withdrew, and appeared no more; to let the witnesses see that the borrowed rays on Moses' face are no where to be seen but in the face of the Son of God, who is the fountain of glory; light, life, and love.

Again. The light of glory on the face of Moses was to shew the original of the law, to give a sanction to it, and to put an honour on the office of Moses; that the law was given by the God of glory, and was to be received as such, being attended with the glory, of God on the face of the mediator of it, who brought it to them. But, then all this was to lead the people to another Mediator, to a brighter glory, and another dispensation, which was to be written on the fleshly tables of sinners' hearts and to be attended with the glory of God by the coming of the Holy Ghost: the original of which is from God, the fountain of all grace; and which brings life and immortality to light in the sinner's soul, that the ever-blessed Mediator may be glorified; for God will have the Son honoured even as himself is honoured by all that believe, and will display "the riches of his grace in glory by Jesus Christ" for this very end and purpose, that all who are saved and glorified may ascribe their salvation equally to God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

And, lastly, This glory on the face of Moses, in the ultimate end of its signification, was to show, not only the glorious vision of faith in this militant state, but the glorious views of the Saviour in the world to come; when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known; awake in his likeness, and be for ever satisfied therewith. This is the mystery of Moses' rays. I come now,

Thirdly, to the veil upon his face. This veil sheweth, that the law then given was a *veil*, or *covering*, over the covenant of grace, which God made with Abraham; and that this covenant lay hid under it; that Moses himself, and his law on tables of stone, were swaddling bands over the law of faith, which ever was and ever will be written on the fleshly tables of the heart of God's elect when called by grace: and this veil was a covering over the better Mediator, "who stood behind this wall, and shewed himself through this lattice;" and that the better covenant was hid under the law, and only here and there

peeped out in an unconditional promise, here a little and there a little, in such passages as these; "The Lord will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love the Lord with all thine heart, that thou mayest live." "He shall raise you up a prophet like unto me; him shall ye hear." "He is thy life, and the length of thy days." "He is the rock, and his work is perfect." "Say not, who shall ascend into heaven, or descend." "That (says Paul) is the word of faith that we preach." "The word is nigh thee," &c. "Shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." "Pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and will not clear the guilty"—that is, not without satisfaction by a surety. All these, with all the shadows of the ceremonial law, were so many branches of the everlasting gospel, which shone through the veil of that dark dispensation, and which Israel could not see; but took the law as their rule of righteousness, by which they thought to obtain eternal life, when it only promised life in the land of Canaan. They sought righteousness by the works of it, and never attained to it; but stumbled at the Rock of ages. They called themselves Moses' disciples, who accuses them to the Father for rejecting the prophet he foretold should come; threatening them with destruction if they refused to obey his voice: hence, being dead, he yet speaketh in his testimony against them; but they clove to their accuser, and cursed and killed the only Advocate, who shewed himself to their fathers behind the skirt of Moses, and whose glorious gospel lay couched under his killing letter. This was the delusion of poor Paul: "he thought the law was ordained to life; but, when the commandment came, he found it to be unto death." And thus "their table" of the law "became a snare unto them, and that which should have been for their welfare" (properly viewed) "became a trap;" the way that seemed right unto them became, in the end, the way of death; "for the way of God is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.". The wise and learned scribe, and the self-righteous pharisee, who thought

themselves, and no others, at the portals of heaven, were displaced by the publicans and harlots; and they themselves were left to add sin to sin, by not entering heaven themselves, and by hindering others who were going; and thus became the deceivers of the sons of men, the murderers of the Son of God, and the awful heirs of the greater damnation.

And the church of God at the present day swarms with such as these; who have no holiness but a sheep's skin, an outward shew in the flesh, a voluntary humility, natural meekness, and the art of moving the passions of poor sinners, in order to counterfeit the operations of the Holy Ghost. And thus they who sit under them are deceived by the art of oratory, by having their feelings affected, their blood moved, and their natural and corrupt affections stirred up—by an audible voice, a hollow speech, whining art, and crocodile tears; when such are conscious to themselves that they are destitute of grace, and in a state of enmity to God; that they aim at nothing but a livelihood, and that the work of the pulpit is the hardest labour they grapple through. Being destitute of the well of living water, the whole of their matter is pressed from their library, committed to a treacherous memory, and brought forth as empty husks from the external surface of the letter, without any light into the matter, or life in the means, unctuous experience of it, or faith in it: it is the work of a blind watchman, who speaks a vision out of his own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord; having seen nothing, and known nothing, but what he knows naturally.

Secondly, This veil was to shew the Israelites that Christ, the light of God's Israel, and the co-eternal beam with God the Father, was then shining in the face of Moses, to lead their minds to the sinner's only and everlasting friend; and that after that *glory* and that divine *ray* they should seek, however it might be veiled or wrapped up—whether by the law then given, or the cloud that went before the camp, or by the

napkin that was before Moses' face, or by the veil which parted the holy place from the sanctum sanctorum, or by the lid of the ark; all these being types of the humanity of Christ. "The way into the holy of holies is now consecrated through the veil of his flesh," and within that veil "dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily;" and through which veil, on mount Tabor, in the sight of Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, and John, the light shone, to the astonishment of every witness: which vision was to be published to the world after his resurrection from the dead; and for the which testimony I have obtained the name of "a liar, a deceiver, an Antinomian, a dangerous man, a disturber of the churches, a sower of discord, and a smiter of my fellow-servants." But my work is with my God; nor do I call one preacher in five hundred my fellow-servant in the kingdom and patience of Christ, unless acquainted with the power of Christ, in which his kingdom stands; with that righteousness, peace, and joy, of which it consists; and of the patience of Christ, which is a grace of his, exercised towards him, in his cause, and in the defense of his truth. All other patience, however tried or exercised, is nothing but a being buffeted for their faults, and reprov'd for running unsent of God; for vitiating the minds of the people against the truth, for misleading the blind, and for corrupting the covenant of life and peace, which was with Levi. However, all who are real labourers in the Lord's vineyard—all that preach Christ crucified in sincerity and truth—such preachers, and only such, have my best wishes and hearty prayers. But I have no call to sound my own trumpet; God will bring this forth at the great day, when every heart will be open, every desire known, and every real petition in faith fully answered.

Secondly, This veil was to lead Israel to the incarnation of Christ, or to the long-predicted and promised seed, in human nature (as hath been already hinted). Moses, with this veil on his face, was to point them to the glorious mediator Christ Jesus; and to the fulness of grace and truth that was to shine

forth in him; as they have recorded, who saw his glory and spake of him. And this was shown with a witness, when they pierced his side on the cross; at which instant the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, as a proof that the shadow was then vanished, and that the real substance was then come; that he who dwelt between the cherubim was gone out through the veil; that he had quitted his holy habitation, broke up housekeeping, and left his house desolate, Christ now becoming the true tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, called by the prophet Ezekiel a sanctuary. "And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." Into which all the elect are to be gathered, in the unity of the faith, as to their Covenant Head and God of all grace and providence, who is to shelter all fowl of every wing.

But, thirdly, This veil was to convince Israel of their native guilt, enmity, and blindness of mind. Of their guilt—They could not see the light. Of enmity—"They could not endure that which was spoken." Of blindness—"They could not see to the end of that which is abolished." Hence to this day, when the Old Testament is read without the light of Christ, the veil of the law is all that is seen; and there is another veil upon their hearts, which is called "a covering cast over all nations." The god of this world still blinds the minds of them which believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine unto them. and they should be saved. And which "covering" can only be destroyed by the anointing, that is, by the eye-salve, or unction of the Holy Ghost, who teacheth us all things, and is no lie; and by turning the heart to the Lord Jesus: when this is done, "the veil shall be taken away;" that is, when the heart of the sinner shall be turned to the Lord; then he shall see Moses borrowed rays in Christ Jesus; the servant's glory in the Son's face; yea, the glory of God in the face of Jesus, and the law fulfilled and established in the everlasting gospel.

Fourthly, This veil was to shew them that the way into heaven by a better Mediator was then hid, and not made manifest: for the Holy Ghost, by Moses and by this veil, by the tabernacle and the veil of that, this signified—that the way into the holiest of all was not made manifest, while that worldly sanctuary, and the ministry of it, were then standing. But now the law is magnified, the better Mediator hath appeared, the better covenant is revealed, the way of life cast up, the door of hope opened; and free, full, and eternal salvation by grace proclaimed to every self-lost, self-condemned, and self-despairing sinner, whether Jew or Gentile.

Fifthly, This veil was to shew the superior privileges of the children of Israel to all the rest of the world. They had a veil to look through, but the Gentiles had none; the law encompassed them as a partition wall ("For you only," says God, "have I known of all the families of the earth"), while the poor Gentiles were in utter darkness, left to their own ways, given up to a reprobate mind, "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, without God, and having no hope in the world:" Which partition wall, veil of separation, and obscure covering, was to be removed when Christ came and the Holy Ghost was poured forth; then the holy waters of the sanctuary, which came under the threshold, from the fountain of the Fathers love, went forth, overflowing all the banks of separation, and ran into the sea of the Gentile world; causing all to die that touched them, and raising up trees of righteousness on each side of the banks, both of Jews and Gentiles; causing some, instrumentally, to be for meat, and others for medicine. This veil is now done away, and of twain Christ hath made one new man; there is one fold and one shepherd, "though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not."

Sixthly, This veil pointed to the remains of darkness that should remain in the best of men; that none would know but in

part, and prophesy in part; that they would see only through a glass darkly, and that mortality and her shrouds would be a heavy veil upon the hearts of the brightest saints and servants of the Lord, who would at times grope like the blind at noon day: but that the time would come when this sackcloth, in which we now prophesy, would be put off; when mortality would be swallowed up of life; when he who only hath immortality would appear, and burst the veil of corruption, and of the grave also, and raise the sleeping dust of the saints to a state of immortality, glory, power, and eternal felicity! Thus much for the veil of Moses; which leads me to the fourth general head, which is to shew the end that Israel could not look to:

"They could not look steadfastly to the end of that which is abolished." The end of which is the Lord Jesus Christ, personated by Moses; who was to be born of the children of Israel, made of a woman, made under the law: and who, as the sinners surety, was to discharge their infinite debts, "and restore that honour to the law which he took not away." And this is published by the Lord himself, in the proclamation of his ever-blessed and ever-adorable name, "The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgressions, and sin, and who will not clear the guilty," or at all acquit the wicked, "nor hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain." All which was to shew the need of. a surety, and. the certainty of one; that God never could clear the guilty without satisfaction, nor hold any guiltless without an atonement; nor shew mercy to any, much less to thousands, without a perfect obedience to the law which was then given. And this surety Moses then personated, his high office he then bore, of him he prophesied, and of his righteousness he witnessed; who was to be sent into the world, and should be a prophet like unto Moses, be circumcised, and so become a debtor, in the debtors law, place, to keep the whole law, and thereby fulfil all

righteousness; who, by holiness, by love, and in life, never deviated from one tittle of it; but could appeal to God his Father for the perfection of his obedience: "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do;" I have obeyed thy law perfectly; have magnified it, and made it honourable; and now I come to thee, holy Father, by the sacrifice of myself, in which I will endure the curse, appease thy wrath, satisfy justice, make an atonement for sins; and so, as a surety, be numbered with the transgressors, make my grave with the wicked and with the rich in my death, and arise to an immortal life, as the first fruits of all that sleep: by which I shall dethrone Satan, destroy death, be the plague of the grave, and bring life and immortality to light in the souls of my purchased inheritance.

It is needful to make a difference between the law of God, which was given by Moses, and the law of truth, which came by Jesus Christ, Mal. ii. 6. The Father says, "he shall magnify the law," which is the moral law; and then he was to publish his own law, which is the law of faith. "The isles shall wait for his law," which was to be sealed among his disciples. He kept his Father's commandments, and abode in his love; and we are to keep Christ's commandments, and abide in his love. Christ was a servant, whom the Father upheld; and, as such, obeyed the legal precepts; and the life-giving commandment is "made known to us for obedience to the faith," Rom. i. 5.

The moral law is a chastening rod in the hand of God the Father, which he uses upon all the elect children that he has given to Christ, who are all of them transgressors of his law, being by nature under it, and children of wrath even as others; and guilty before him: hence it is, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments: if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not make void from

him, nor suffer my faithfulness to lie," Psalm lxxxix. 30, 31,32. All the elect have broken this law—therefore God sends the commandment home, and reveals his wrath in the soul till the sinner becomes dead, and left without either hope or help, the Father then leads the soul to Christ, in whom he has chosen him, where loving kindness is to be had, and where faithfulness is not to fail.

"Thus God chastens the sinner upon his bed with pains, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain; so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat; his flesh is consumed, that it cannot be seen; and his bones, that were not seen, stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life unto the destroyers. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith. Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." Job, xxxiii. This is God the Fathers teaching. An "interpreter" is one that has passed under it, understands it, and can explain it to others; and these are like Solomon's "faithful men." "One among a thousand;" he is to shew the uprightness of God, in correcting the sinner for his folly, and then to point him to Christ, the ransom which God has provided, where he can be gracious unto him, and deliver him from going down into the pit.

When Moses passed under this discipline, he expected nothing but destruction; till Christ was exhibited to his faith, and God called him to the fellowship of him. "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men," Ps. xc. 3.

Those who never knew any thing of this severity of God, never rightly knew any thing of his goodness. God gave Israel the law first, and then ordered a mercy-seat to be made. He disciplined them with blackness and darkness, storm and

tempest, and spoke to them in the secret place of thunder; and after that pointed them to Christ by a sacrifice, and to the voice of mercy from off the mercy-seat; and he does the same now: "Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant," Ezek. xx. 36,37. God's pleading against the sinner in the law, is to teach him the need of an advocate; passing under the rod, is feeling the terrors of the law; and going into the bond of the covenant, is the enjoyment of Gods eternal love in Christ Jesus, which neither life nor death shall ever separate us from.

David, under this severe discipline, sunk into "the horrible pit" and into "the miry clay;" and would have sunk into the bottomless pit to all eternity, if God had not led him to Christ, which he calls "the rock higher than I," where God put a new song in his mouth, fixed his heart, and established his goings.

The generality of converts in our days escape all this teaching, of the Father; they get married to the second husband before the first is dead; they tell us they were drawn by love," they dwell on high, their place of defense is the munitions of rocks, they see the King in his beauty, and the land which is very far off," Isa. xxxiii. 16, 17. But God says, "thine heart shall meditate terror," Isaiah, xxxiii. 18. Such converts begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh: they are not Gods blessed ones. For, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, till the pit be digged up for the wicked," Psalm xciv. 12, 13. And why is the man blessed that is thus chastened with terrors, and taught to know the terrible majesty of God and his own sin and condemnation out of the law? Because, to such a weary and heavy laden sinner, God gives his soul rest by faith in Christ Jesus, till the pit be digged up for the wicked. Here he quits

his yoke and his burden, and in Christ finds rest, an easier yoke, and a lighter burden. Under his teaching David had fainted, unless faith had been wrought in his heart: "I had fainted unless I had believed."

This chastening of the Father is called our judgment: "When we are chastened we are judged of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world." We are judged by the law, and condemned to death; then led to Christ, to believe in him for righteousness; and so "pass from death to life, and never more come into condemnation." And thus our judgment by the law drives us from it, and from the wrath to come, revealed in it, to embrace the refuge set before us, which is Christ; where we find life for the dead, and righteousness for the ungodly; and thus, as David says, "Judgment shall return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it," Psalm xciv. 15.

But it may be asked, Why does God appear so terrible in his law? Because every sinner has broken it, and is cursed by it; and because God does not appear in Christ in this dispensation, but out of Christ as incarnate, and, as Paul says, "a consuming fire:" and he that drives the saint to this law, drives him into the fire, where Christ profits him nothing. The law, in the hand of God, is our schoolmaster until Christ is revealed; but, when faith in him comes, we are no longer under the schoolmaster. And to this agrees the Saviour: "Every one that hath learned of the Father cometh unto me, and him that cometh I will in nowise cast out." And his counsel to such is, "Abide in me"—for the reasons above mentioned.

Let us now see what poor sinners learn by this teaching. Job learned the need of a surety. He knew God would not, could not, hold him innocent, because he possessed the iniquities of his youth. He said God had sealed up his transgressions in a bag; and that God was so just and wise, that in judgment he

could not answer him one word in a thousand; and therefore begs him to put him in a *surety*, and to lead him to his *seal*, where he might "be delivered for ever from his judge."

David, under this teaching, "turned his feet to God's testimonies; he made haste, and delayed not, to keep the commandments;" but found that no flesh could be justified this way, and, therefore prayed God not to enter into judgment with him, in the great day, on the footing of the law: and entreated Christ to be surety for his servant for good. Here David learned the extent of the killing commandment; and, when he found Christ, he found the end that the law aimed at. "I have seen an end of all, perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." And, being pardoned and justified by faith in the surety, and in his righteousness, and so delivered from legal bondage, and upheld by a free spirit, he pronounces the blessedness of such a man. "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered: and blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit is no guile." Thus the psalmist learnt to sing both of mercy and of judgment; and Paul learnt the terrors of the Lord in the law, and his eternal love in Christ. Hence it appears that the moral law is found in the hand of God the Father; but the scripture never says it is in the hand of Christ, as too many assert; for I have already proved that it is no part of Christ's sceptre, which comes, not from Sinai, but out of Zion. But ministers, and their converts, in our days, have found out quite another way, and an easier method of salvation; for this is, in their esteem, the rant of an Antinomian: however, I know it is God's way, and the good old way.

Thus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness; the end that the law looked to for a perfect obedience; the end which the Father looked unto to have it magnified; the end that justice looked to for satisfaction; and the end that every self-

condemned sinner must look to for righteousness, if ever he be saved. Christ has obeyed the law perfectly, and "by the obedience of" that "one shall many be made righteous." he has appeased the wrath of God, and opened a way for his love to be "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us;" he gives us his Holy Spirit to make us holy, and teaches us by his grace to love one another: by which four things "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" And thus "the law was our schoolmaster until Christ" came to us: "but, after he is come, we are no longer under a school master, but are redeemed from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Yea, we are divorced from the law as a barren husband, that can produce no fruit or fruitfulness in us, that we should be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead (which Moses is not), that we should bring forth fruit unto God: and therefore are not adulteresses in the sight of God, though we quit the law of Moses, and be married to another; seeing that the first husband made us barren, and the second makes us fruitful; who marries the widow, raises up the name of the dead upon the inheritance, and does so worthily in Ephratah, and is so famous in Bethlehem; who has raised up an everlasting name, which shall not be cut off; who is such a father of the fatherless, and such a husband to the widow, in his holy habitation, as to make them forget the shame of their barrenness in the days off their youth, and remember the reproach of their widow bond no more: for He is our Maker who is our husband; "the Lord of hosts is his name, the God of the whole earth shall he be called." This is he who is eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame; who plucks the spoil out of the jaws of the oppressor, and makes the widows heart to sing for joy. And, as he is the fulfilling end of the moral law, to which justice looked for satisfaction, to which the law looked for honour; so he is the end to which we must look for wisdom, righteousness,

sanctification, and redemption, and for grace to perform every righteous act, if ever we would follow after righteousness, or be found in one that will stand us in any stead in the great day; for we are all taught and led to look for "the hope of righteousness" which is by faith. And thus this righteousness appears to be the perfect obedience of Christ to the law; which God accepts, which is imputed by God himself to all that believe; and therefore it is God that justifies. This obedience of Christ is brought to us, and applied by the Spirit of our God, and therefore we are said to be "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." It is received and put on by faith; therefore we are said to be "justified by faith" and the soul that has got it makes an honest confession of his lost estate, and of the free, justifying grace of God to him; on which account he is said to be "justified in his sayings, and clear when he is judged." And this righteousness justifies him before God: "for, if Abraham were justified, by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God:" and this righteousness, or justification before God, is attended with a sincerity of heart, a humble walk, a tender conscience, and an honest life; in which sense (and before men), "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only;" as Abraham was by offering up his son, which was done after the justification of his person; as Rahab was by receiving the spies in peace, and sending them out another way; and as every righteous man is, by letting his light of knowledge shine before men, and by letting others see his good works, his works of faith, his labours of love, and his patience of hope, in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I think treating the subject in this manner is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the ministry: it is fighting the good fight of faith, giving a certain sound by the gospel trumpet, and running the Christian race with certainty: without yea and nay, without "Lo here" and "Lo there," without, vain jangling, without beating the air, without pro and con, without a mixture of Hebrew and Ashdod, without daubing with untempered mortar, without

building again that which I destroyed, without beginning in the flesh and ending in the Spirit, and without ifs and buts and "I trust," &c.—which leave all at an uncertainty; when the effect of righteousness in our days is to be peace and assurance for ever, and quietness and confidence is to be our strength.

I come now, in the last place, to treat of the abolition of the law; which will probably *procure* and *secure* me all the malice and envy that devils can infuse or men ferment, and perhaps as many vilifying letters, and pence for postage, as I have hairs upon my head: but my good name is gone without any open scandal, and those that have watched for my halting are not as yet come to their banquet; they have coined a phrase of their own, have made me an offender for not acknowledging that word, and have lain in wait for me when reproving in the gate. They that have combined against me, in defense of the law, have called themselves an "evangelical association;" others, in the possession of *two wives*, have publicly reproached me as an *Antinomian* for seven years together, and contended for the law "as their only *rule*;" forgetting the seventh commandment, which forbids *adultery*, and the criterion of a bishop, which is to be "the husband of one wife;" others, who have traduced me worse than a devil, have blamed me for a *bad spirit*; others, in language too bad for Billingsgate, call upon me for charity; these can see a mote through a beam of timber; and some who have shut me out of their pulpits, have contended for a rule that tells them "to do as they would be done by;" and thus I have ten thousand instructors, but not one earthly father.

Some tell us that all the angels in heaven are under the moral law, forgetting that Gods voice in the law is "to the sons of men," not to angels; and that the law of angels is not the will of precept, which is the will of the master to the earthly servant; "for angels (as well as gospel ministers) are *evangelical*, and not *bond* servants; are elected and confirmed

in their standing in Christ Jesus; have the same rule as God's sons have; and, according to Christ's words, it is the good will of the Father, and not the will of the slaves master, which is the rule of angels—Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Hence it appears to be the *good will* of the Father's purpose, who elected them in Christ Jesus, which is the law of the elect angels, called the will of God done in heaven by angels, who are confirmed in Christ; of whom Moses never was the head, nor the lawgiver, but Christ, who is the head of all principalities and powers; and "into whose glorious gospel the angels desire to look, and "to whom, even now—unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places—is known, by the church," (not by the law) "the manifold wisdom of God."

I know "Moses hath in every city them that preach him;" who cry up the servant in order to exalt themselves, that they may have some room for boasting. But God tell us that Moses, his servant, is dead, and that the haughty shall be humbled, and the Lord of Hosts only shall be exalted in gospel days. And it is well known that "a minister, of the letter" can do nothing, nor cut any figure, but in the letter of the law; "for, as a thorn goeth up in the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools;" for he is so galled in his conscience while he is about it, that he appears only as a brier and a thorn, who is nigh unto cursing in the eyes of every experienced soul that hears him and, like Abraham's ram in the thicket, he can never get out of the entanglement either with truth or honour, because he is nothing but an impostor; and both God and conscience rebuke him for taking the covenant in his mouth.

Some tell us that "if the law is done away to the believer, the believer can never die, death being the sentence of the law." in one sense this is true, for "he that believes shall never die." But I think they have forgotten that "Christ to this end died,

rose again, and revived: that he might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living;" and that no saint liveth to himself, or dieth to himself; but, whether he live or die, he is the Lord's. Death, as the sentence of the law, is a penal evil; but death in Christ is a new covenant gift. "All things are yours, whether life or death." To the sinner it is a cursed end, to the believer a blessed one; "the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed;" but, "blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Death, armed with guilt and the curse of the law, is "the king of terrors;" but, disarmed of its sting, "a shadow." Death to the sinner is "the beginning of judgment," but to the believer "the end of his faith." Job longed for it, Jacob waited for it, and Simeon prayed for it; and no wonder, for "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Besides, Christ is the grand example, pattern, and forerunner, and the first fruits of them that slept; and it is needful that his followers should follow their Head, and be conformable unto his death. He was the first to whom the path of life was shewn; for, though the widows son, by Elijah; another by Elisha; Lazarus, and many more, by Christ, were raised from the dead; yet it was only to a mortal life; they died again; and, though Enoch and Elijah went to heaven without tasting death, yet they never went from the tomb: Christ was the first that ever trod the way to an immortal life from the grave. "Thou hast made known to me the way of life," &c. Furthermore, believers are to be "planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, and in the likeness of his resurrection. If one died for all, then were all dead when he died, and with my dead body shall they arise." Instead of believers never dying, it is plain they die twice, and some have died daily. Their first death is by the application of the law's sentence, when the law comes with power, when sin revived, and the sinner dies; and their first resurrection is under the operation of the Spirit of God: and there is a dying again. But we should make a distinction between dying in faith, and dying in sin; between dying in the flesh, and in the Lord; between the flesh resting in hope, and perishing in its

own corruption: and between falling asleep in Jesus, and going down to the grave with a lie in the right hand.

Others tell us, that "the law is the legal covenant, of grace:" which is as full of sense, and as pregnant with meaning, as to talk of *black snow*, or *white charcoal*; for it amounts to this; that Gods free grace is the just wages of the sinners dead works; which wages, or reward, if it be of grace, is no more of works; but, if of works, then it is no more of grace: one must give way to make room for the other; either works must be no more works, or grace must be no more grace. But we know that "God gave it to Abraham, and his seed, by promise."

Others, who are more learned, tell us that what is said in this chapter to be *done away* and *abolished*, is the glory of Moses face: but this glory was done away long before Christ came. We do not read of his face shining, but only at the giving of the law or while God abode upon the mount; for we can hardly think that Moses walked for eight and thirty years with a napkin on his face: and, could this be proved, we know that the rays of his face must be done away at death. The face of Moses had been buried in the country of Moab many hundred years before Christ came in the flesh: nor can we suppose that the Redeemers errand into this world was only to wipe off the rays from the face of Moses. This is not the *end* spoken of in my text, to which the children of Israel could not steadfastly look. Christ is not called "the end of Moses face," but "the end of the law;" the magnifying, the honour giving, the perfectly obeying, the punctually fulfilling, the doing away, and the abolishing "end of the moral law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and to none else; for such, and only such, "are justified freely from all things:" and if they are not justified from the galling yoke of the moral precept, which is, "Do, and live" (which precept never was altered by Christ, nor shall be); if they are still under the law as their rule of life, they are under the curse; for a precept without a sentence is no law;

therefore, if this is the cast, they are not "justified from all things," nor from the worst thing, nor from any thing; for there is no separating the precept of the law from the sentence: Christ never did this, and I know he never will. He came not to divide the law, nor to alter the law; there is not a hint of this in all the Bible. He fulfilled every precept of it in behalf of his own elect; which obedience God accepted, and to every believer he imputes it: but to the reprobate the law is still, in the hand of God the Father, what it ever was; a covenant of works. God reckons the reward of such to be of debt. It is a dreadful rod in the hand of God, even to his own children, when he lays it on; and this Paul found when his sin revived and he died: and he would have died for ever if Christ had not appeared; "but it pleased God to reveal his Son in him." And if it is a dreadful rod in the Fathers hand to the elect, what must it be in the hand of an angry God to the sinner? Why it is a fiery law still; and that they shall find who set themselves against him and his anointed. "Let us break their bands asunder, and east their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, he shall have them in derision; then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure: yet have I set my King upon my holy hill." Thus you see that God takes all those into his hand who reject his anointed, and in all the wrath of the law still speaks to them, and vexes them in his sore displeasure; yea, all that make a match with Christ, before their first husband be dead, God takes into his hands; every plant that he hath not planted he plucks up; and every branch in Christ that bears not fruit—all barren branches, apostates, and hypocrites—he takes away from Christ, who is the sinners only refuge and hiding place; and such fall under all the storms of his wrath; and in the law, not in Christ, God appears to them, and in that law he is a consuming fire; and a terrible thing it is to be taken from the living vine and only refuge, and then to fall into the hands of the living God. Such wretches see not a God in Christ, but a consuming fire and a slighted Saviour. Hence the awful cry, "Hide us from the face

of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." They, who talk of the believers being under the moral law in the hand of Christ, talk nonsense; the moral law is in the hand of an angry God to every sinner. Hence the Fathers counsel to his children, "Turn to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope;" and Christ's advice is, "Abide in me," for those that turn from me to their crooked ways, my Father will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; and those that depart from "the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead;" and, if you go over to the law, either for righteousness or perfection, I shall profit you nothing; therefore "abide in me, for he that abides in me, and I in him, brings forth much fruit," and "my Father purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Those that are making their boast of the law, and bringing the believer under it as his rule, little think what they are doing; they have no experience of these things, or has God revealed these to them, nor have they the Spirit to lead them, and therefore know not what they say nor whereof they affirm. And I know several, who have been for years labouring at the law; not fully, but against the gospel; who by their countenances shew what hands they are fallen into; they feel something of it, but do not understand it, and therefore call it temptation, the workings of unbelief, and the trial of faith; but the truth is, it is the bondage of the law, the wrath of God, and the fearfulness of hypocrites; for, "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Paul, in his explanation of this mystery in this chapter, doth not palm the glory upon Moses, but upon the law. The glory, which appeared upon the face of Moses, was to give a sanction to the law; and it was a miracle of the lawgiver to confirm the law to Israel, that it was of God, divine, and authentic. Paul takes the glory from the face of Moses, and puts it upon the tables of stone; "but if the ministration of death written and engraven upon stones was glorious." v. 7; "for if the ministration of condemnation be glory," v. 9. The law, which in the seventh verse is said to be *glorious*, is in the ninth verse emphatically

said to be "glory; but that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect," because it made nothing perfect, and "because of the glory that excelleth," which is the bringing in of a better hope; "for, if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious:" Hence it is plain that the glorious ministration of death engraven on stones—the glory called the ministration of condemnation—is excelled, done away, and abolished by the gospel. And, although in the last clause of the seventh verse it is written "which glory was to be done away," that word *glory*, is not in the original text, nor has it any business there; for Paul is not opposing the glory of the gospel to the glory on Moses face, for these glories in the mystery are one in Christ; but to the moral law he opposeth the gospel, and tells us that the one is done away and abolished, that the other, which excels, may remain. And certainly it is shaken, waxed old, decayed, and vanished away; that the kingdom which we have received may stand by itself, and which shall never, be shaken. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and many are pressing into it"

Not long since, at a friend's house, I got hold of the Bishops Bible; wherein it is twice declared, in the chapter out of which my text is taken, that the law is *abolished*. In the same house I saw a learned commentator on the Bible, who dropped many pretty things on this chapter, but skipped entirely over the words *done away* and *abolished*; to escape, as I suppose, the name of an Antinomian. But many are my godfathers and godmothers who have given me this name; and therefore as I have no good name to lose, I shall, with Paul, use great boldness and plainness of speech, and endeavour to shew mine opinion.

Some time ago, I borrowed the comments of the learned Dr. Gill. I found he was strenuous for the law as the saint's rule; and in the following extract he makes some very learned and

nice distinctions: "What is ceremonial, or purely relative to the Jews, whilst in their civil polity in the land of Canaan, is *done away*; but, as to what is purely moral, is, as to the matter of it, still obliging. Distinguish between the law as a covenant of works, and as a rule of walk and conversation; as a covenant of works it is done away, as a rule of walk and conversation it still continues. Distinguish between persons and persons. To them that are redeemed from it, it is done away; to them that are under it, it remains. And, lastly, distinguish between a right and wrong use of it," &c.&c.

God knows I have no learning but what he has taught me; and I must confess that I do not understand all these distinctions, nor do I find them supported by scripture proof: nevertheless, I shall not presume to contradict so great, so able, and so learned a man. I shall do as the apostle Peter bids me; that is, "minister as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." Nor do I believe that the moral law is any part of the rod of Christ's strength which came out of Zion, and by which he rules his saints in the midst of Jerusalem: if it is, David had no call to pray so earnestly for the coming of it, seeing it had been already in the world some hundreds of years.

Some say that "the law is in the hand of Christ," and that "we are under the law to Christ;" for the support of which this text is generally brought in, "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ," 1 Cor. ix. 21. But where the text stands that tells us the law is in the hand of Christ, I know not; for I believe the moral law is a rod in the hand of God the Father, as will appear in this piece, and no part of the sceptre of the Mediator by which he rules his saints. Dr. Gill, in his comment upon the above text, supports the notion of the law as a rule; "their being not without law to God, or the law of God, the moral law: for, though he was delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law, and as a covenant of

works, and the ministry of it by Moses, yet not from the matter of it, and obedience to it as a rule of walk and conversation." and upon the same text the Doctor says, "but as one that was under the law *to* Christ, or under the law *of* Christ; that is, the law of love."

It is true the believer is "not without, law to God," nor can he be, because God promises to make a *new* covenant with him, not according to the *old*; in which covenant forgiveness of sins is promised, a new heart, and a new spirit also; and this new covenant is to be written in the heart and put in the mind. Now what is this new covenant that promises all these things? The scripture says it is the covenant of grace, and of promise. And what is promised? Forgiveness of sins. How does pardon come? By faith; he that believes receives the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ. And how comes this new heart? By the regenerating operation of the Spirit. And does God minister the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? By the hearing of faith. And what laws are these that are to be written in their hearts, and put in their minds? What Isaiah speaks of when he says, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them." What is this law and this testimony? Not the moral law; for we are sure that those who are under that have the veil still on their heart, and never will have any *light* in them till their heart is turned to Christ. The above testimony is the gospel of Christ, and the above law is the law of faith, which the prophet calls the *word*, which word is the word of life. All which the prophet himself explains. He tells us that Christ shall be for a sanctuary to them that fear him, but "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel;" and that many among them "shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." But, though this would be the case with some, yet not with all; for, saith the prophet, "bind up the testimony, seal the law, among my disciples." Now what is this testimony? It is truth, which "came

by Jesus Christ," which Christ testified, and is his testimony; which truth is to make us free. But what is this bond that binds the testimony? Paul says it is receiving "the truth in the love of it," which love casts out fear and makes us free indeed. And what is the above law sealed among the disciples? Paul says the law of faith; "the day you believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." These are the laws that God promises to write in his people's hearts, and to put in their minds. One law God calls "the law of truth," which he himself explains to be the covenant of life and peace: and the other law, which is sealed, is called "the law of faith;" by which the just shall live, and which excludes all boasting. And of such God says, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Now what does Paul call a man with whom this new covenant is made, who has received his pardon, who is blessed with a new heart and a new spirit, and in whose heart and mind these laws are written? He calls them the manifest "epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart." And which ministration of the gospel, written on the fleshly tables of the heart by the Spirit, Paul opposes to the moral law throughout this whole chapter from whence my test is taken.

Now, as the Spirit works these laws on the believer's heart, it will be necessary to inquire where this Spirit and his laws are. Paul says they are all in Christ. God's word and his Spirit are never to depart from Christ and his seed; and therefore in Christ we must look for them, "for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death." Here is the law of faith and of truth, called the Spirit's law; which by Isaiah is called Christ's laws. "The isles shall wait for his law;" but by Ezekiel they are called God's laws—"I will write my laws in their heart." All which are plain enough. They are God's laws, being his good will of purpose and promise in

a covenant of grace in Christ Jesus to us. It is Christ's law, because "grace and truth came by him;" and is called "the law of the Spirit," because he writes them on the fleshly tables of our hearts. Now what did this "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." do for Paul? Why he says it made him "free from the law of sin and death." What is the law of sin? The law in our members. And what is the law of death? The moral law on tables of stone. And Paul was made free from both; free from the guilt, from the reigning and destroying power of the law of sin, and from the commanding and damning power of the moral law. And this is being made free indeed; not free to sin, but in the above sense free from it. All this is done in us by the Spirit—"Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. Stand first, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." Which moral law genders to bondage, and worketh wrath.

Now can we say that a man, in whom God has written these laws, and in whom he has done all these things, is an Antinomian? Surely he is "not without law to God, but under this law to Christ;" or, as Doctor Gill says, "under the law of Christ, which is the law of love." And so it is, for we are to "bear each others burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" for it was love constrained Christ to bear the burden of us all. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Under this law of love; call it grace, faith, truth, and liberty, or whatever you please—these are all in Christ; and the believer in Christ is under these, and under no other; nor did God ever by his Spirit write any other laws than these on the minds and hearts of his saints, who stand fast and complete in Christ since the world began; and I am sure he never will; for service in the oldness of the letter, and legal works, are both rejected. "The obedience of faith," and service "in the newness of the Spirit," is what God will have: "and he that in these things serves Christ is accepted of God, and

approved of men;" and "as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them, and peace upon the Israel of God."

The new covenant revealed to us, is sometimes in scripture, called *laws*, in the plural—" I will write my laws," &c.; and sometimes in the singular number *law*—"The isles shall wait for his law." Let this be observed, that "the law of truth," Mal. ii. 6, which is called "the covenant of life and peace," verse 6, includes the whole of the everlasting gospel, with all the grace of God held forth and promised therein; which grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; and, because the Spirit applies faith to the sinner's heart by hearing of it, it is called "the law of faith;" and, because love is promised and applied by it, it is called "the law of love;" and, as love by the Spirit casts out fear and torment, and enlightens the eyes and enlarges the heart, it is called a "looking into the perfect law of liberty;" and, because the Spirit comes to us and quickens us by this ministration, and no other, it is called "the law of the Spirit of life." This accounts for the plural and singular number of the word *law* being alternately used in scripture.

Hence I conclude that, as the believer, who is in Christ, is not under the moral law, it is plain that the moral law is a rod in the hand of God, and a schoolmaster, by which the Father teaches and corrects the sinner, that he may know his dreadful state, and then leads him from the law to Christ, where salvation may be had; which is called passing from death to life. So that we may safely conclude the moral law is no part of the rod of Christ's strength, by which he rules his saints.

Yea, and even Doctor Gill himself, notwithstanding all his distinctions (so close doth Paul press him), when commenting upon my text, is obliged to speak as follows; "Now this veil upon Moses's face had a mystery in it; it was an emblem of the gospel being veiled under the law, and of the darkness

and obscurity of the law in the business of life and salvation; and also of the future blindness of the Jews, when the glory of the gospel should break forth in the times of Christ and his apostles: and which was such, that the children of Israel, the Jews, as in the times of Moses, so in the times of Christ and his apostles, could not steadfastly look to; nor upon the face of Moses, whose face was veiled: not that they might not look, but because they could not bear to look upon him; but they could not look to the end of that which is abolished—that is, to Christ, who is the end of the law, which is abrogated by him: to him they could not look, nor could they see him to be the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; which, being fulfilled, is done away by him." And, in his comment on the 17th verse, speaking of liberty, he says, "A liberty from the *bondage* and *servitude* of it—a liberty from the laws rigorous exactions, curse, and condemnation." Which Peter calls an unbearable yoke; and which yoke differs much from that of a dear Redeemer, whose "yoke is easy" and whose "burden is light." In these quotations the Doctor has said as much as I ever did, only we differ in words. I say, "we are not under the law, nor under the commanding power of it." And the Doctor says, "we are delivered from the service of it; and from its rigorous exactions, curse, and condemnation." Thus far the Doctor speaks plainly. But how the moral law can be "abrogated, done away," and "abolished," In one sense, and the saints be under it as their rule of life in another, I know not; Christ never came to alter the law, nor divide it. And how the whole Mosaical dispensation can be *removed*, as the Doctor in another place confesses, and yet *remain* to the believer; and how it can be abrogated by Christ, and we under it in the hand of Christ—are mysterious things to me, and want scripture proof; for it is no part of the Saviour's rod by which he rules his saints, as I have already proved. However, I believe the difference between the Doctor and myself, on this point, consists more in learning and in words than in heart and judgment. I proceed again.

Paul, writing to the Colossians, says, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Now to whom was the apostle writing? To the Colossians, who are here called the uncircumcision: for the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul. Then what was "the hand writing," or *debt book*, that stood against these uncircumcised ones? If you say it was the ceremonial law; I reply, that was never given to them: but, if you add, that the Judaizing teachers were bringing them under their ceremonies and sacrifices; I answer, that the Jews held it unlawful to offer sacrifices any where but in their own land: in their Babylonish captivity, and in their present dispersion, they were, and still are, "without an ephod, without a sacrifice, and without a teraphim." If it be urged that the Gentiles used sacrifices as well as the Jews and therefore were under the ceremonial law; it may be answered God never gave that law to them, and, as he did not, they cannot be said to be under it; nay, they are said to "sacrifice to devils, and not to God." It remains, therefore, that this book debt, or "hand writing," is "the works of the moral law written upon their hearts, their thoughts and their conscience accusing or excusing one another." And whoever has felt a *wounded spirit*, or a guilty conscience, knows by sad experience what a restless creditor, wretched hand writing, and dreadful debt book, that is; and that it may well be said to be *against us*, and *contrary to us*: but, blessed be God, Christ took it out of the way, and nailed it to his cross. This same law upon tables of stone was the debt book, or hand writing, against the Jews, and not the ceremonial law; "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God," Jer. vii. 22, 23. The debt that God exacted of them

was perfect obedience to the moral law, which is here called his *voice*; and which law Paul calls "a voice of words." The debt book of the *Jews*, therefore, is the moral law on tables of stone; and that of the *Gentiles* is the same, which shews the work of the law written in their hearts; and by this *law* both Jews and Gentiles, yea, the whole world, are become guilty before God: and the hand writing is against us, because it works death and wrath in us, and curses us; because it is always finding fault with us, but affords no help to us; and therefore the Surety discharged the debt, and blotted out the hand writing, took it out of the way, and nailed it to his cross. And I am sure that no pardoned sinner, or real believer, will ever wish to pull one nail out of it; but rejoice, as I do, to see it where it is. If it be objected that the ceremonial law was the Jews debt book; I answer, the ceremonial law was a refuge for the transgressor of the moral law to fly to, where the sinners transgressions of the moral law were confessed over the head of the victim, and the brute died in the sinner's stead; which was their gospel, and pointed out the Surety, and how the debt book was to be cancelled by him. Furthermore, Paul couples himself with these Gentile debtors, and as one who had been under the same hand writing; "blotting out," says he, "the hand writing against us, and which was contrary to us." It remains, therefore, that this hand writing against both Jews and Gentiles was the moral law, for the other the Gentiles never had. Again,

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh *the enmity*, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby," Ephes. ii. 14, 15, 16. To the Jews were given the glory, the covenants, the service of God, and the promises; which distinguished them from all other

people. "You only," saith God, "have I known of all the families of the earth." This Paul calls "the middle wall of partition between us," which was broken down by Christ when he ordered his gospel to be preached to every creature. He "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments." Should any object that the law here *abolished* is the ceremonial law; then I ask, What comfort could that afford to the Ephesians, who were never under it? and I would further ask such an objector (if he knows by experience any thing of the terrors of the Lord), what *enmity* the ceremonial law worked in him when he was first awakened; or whether it was *that* law which condemned him; or whether he fell to work upon all the Jewish ceremonies as soon as his conscience troubled him, in order to work out a righteousness? I trow not; I take it for granted that he found matters as I did—that it was the moral law which brought him in guilty before God; yea, every precept of it; and to that he went to work, in order to appease an angry God and pacify his own conscience; he went to keeping the sabbath, to making concession to his offended neighbour, to giving alms, to fasting, to trying to love God and to keep the whole law; in order to counterbalance, or rub off, the long score which by the law was brought in against him—and all in vain. The commandment comes, and sin revives; the law works wrath, and sin takes occasion by it; it threatens with death and damnation, and all manner of concupiscence is stirred up. This is called the *enmity*. The precepts of this law Christ perfectly obeyed in his life, and our transgressions of it he bore in his own body on the tree. The wrath and curse of it he endured also, "being made a curse for us;" and by his death, he abolished it, and thereby slew the enmity. His obedience is our righteousness, which justifies us from the galling yoke of the precept; his death is our ransom, which justifies us from all the future demands of vindictive justice. Hence we are said to be made righteous by the obedience of one, and to be justified by his blood.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," 2 Tim. i. 7, 10.

Christ hath "abolished spiritual death" from the insensible sinner's soul by quickening him; he hath *abolished* the "sting of death" from the conscience by his own blood; he hath "abolished eternal death" by dying "the just for the unjust;" he hath "abolished the ministration of death" on tables of stone by slaying the enmity, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to his cross; and hath destroyed "him that had the power of death, that is the devil," by casting him out of every believer's heart, and spoiling his works. But now let us see to whom this law is abolished.

It is not abolished from the hand of justice with respect to the reprobate. "My sword shall be bathed in heaven, and come down on Idumea, and on the people of my curse to judgment."

Secondly, It will not be abolished, in the sentence of it, from the mouth of the Judge of quick and dead: he will bring in every soul that is under it a transgressor by the precepts of it; and will pass the awful sentence of it—"Go, ye cursed."

Thirdly, It is not abolished to any one that works for life and righteousness under it; "to him that worketh the reward is reckoned of debt;" the debt book stands open against him.

Fourthly, It is not abolished to the elect themselves, while they are in the ruins of the fall; such differ nothing from servants, though lords of all, but are under this schoolmaster and governor, Gal. iv. 1, 2, and are "by nature children of wrath, even as others," being under the law, which reveals and

works wrath. In Short, every soul is under it that is out of Christ.

I come now to describe the persons with respect to whom this law is abolished; and in doing this I shall contend for no liberty but "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And he is a pardoned, justified sinner, who is joined to the Lord, and one spirit with him; who stands by faith, and stands fast and complete, in Christ Jesus his covenant head. Paul says it is we that have such hope, we who have received the Spirit of the Lord, and are made free by him, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," not to sin; but liberty from the bondage of the law, the wrath of God, the guilt of sin, and the dread of damnation. To us, says Paul, it is abolished, who have our hearts turned to the Lord, and whose veil is taken away; We, who "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory"—We, who "know whom we have believed"—We, "who have fled from the wrath to come, and for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us"—We, who have found "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus making us free from the law of sin and death"—We, who do not "make void the law through faith," but "establish it," by asserting that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those who have received the Holy Ghost, the love of God, and the gift of righteousness; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"—We, who hold the law of truth, faith, love, and liberty, to God, and who are under the law of faith and the covenant of grace to Christ. It is we who see the law done away, the enmity slain, the hand writing nailed to the cross, and abolished; standing fast in Christ, who is the believers "strong hold, fortress," and "high tower," his "hiding place," his "refuge from the storm" of wrath, and "the shadow of a great rock" to the soul weary of the yoke of precept and his own sins.

This is the "cleft of the rock," the "secret place of the Most High," and the "munitions of rocks," where we so lose the veil as to "see the King in his beauty, and the land a very far off." Hence it is plain that the real believer is in Christ, as the Lord says, "Believe that I am in you, and you in me:" and those that are in him enjoy him, and stand fast in him, see the law abolished and done away, and feel nothing of the commanding, binding, terrifying, nor condemning power of the law; for in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit makes them free, and they are free indeed. The obedience which the law called for, and the satisfaction that justice exacted of us, are now both in the heart of Christ; and thus in the heart of Christ is the law magnified; "Thy law is within my heart." And in the heart of eternal love the believer feels his happy deliverance and glorious liberty. But, if he stands not fast in his liberty, if he is not aware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, if he suffers legal preachers to bring him into bondage, or if he sins against Christ, he will find that the law will again entangle such a foolish Galatian, and he may pray, as David did, "Restore me to joy, and uphold me with thy free spirit." This legal bondage communicated by legal preachers, I know by sad experience; but I take care now never to go nigh them, for fear of infection. None but those who are savingly in Christ can either see, feel, or enjoy, this mystery. All others, if they attempt to handle it, only darken counsel, and do mischief by it; for, as they have no inward testimony, experience, or enjoyment of it, no unction can attend what they say. They have not the Spirit's teaching to direct them, nor a mouth and wisdom given them, and therefore they cannot appeal to the experience of the just, nor properly guard what they say against the contempt of fools, and the craft of malicious critics. I had rather hear such thunder the law than meddle with the deep things of God. Yea, God tells them not to take his covenant in their mouth, because they are yet in their sins, and truth has no place but in their heads, and they have nothing to depend upon but a teacherous memory;

which God often baffles, which Satan often plunders, and which oftentimes refuses to give back one half of what is committed to it.

Furthermore, he who is not in the liberty of the gospel never knew, nor can he know, experimentally, these things of the law, nor the bondage and terrors of it. Christ's commission is "to preach deliverance to captives, to open the prison doors to them that are bound, and to set at liberty them that are bruised." He, who never felt himself a captive, who was never sensibly *bound* nor bruised, knows nothing of this abolition of the law, nor does he feel the need of it; he knows neither the wrath of the law, nor the love of the gospel; none shall enjoy the latter who never felt the former. Now in all this I have said no more than the scriptures do, which testify that to the believer the law is done away, that Christ is the fulfilling end of it for righteousness to all that believe, and by him it is abolished to every believer.

If it be objected that this leads to licentiousness, I shall answer, in the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good; for a tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. He that abides in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit; and my heavenly Father purgeth such, that they may bring forth more fruit; but he that abideth not in me is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; for without me you can do nothing." Therefore let the believer walk in the Spirit, and he shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh; for sin shall not have dominion over him who is under grace, because he is not under the law. If this be Antinomianism, I have no objection to the name, but hope to die in this nest.

But some may reply, "Do you make void the law through faith?" No; Paul says that preaching faith establishes the law, and that nothing else will or can do it. It establishes the

righteousness of the law, which is fulfilled in every believer, though not by him. It establishes the law in the hand of the Father to his own elect, as a rod of correction and a schoolmaster; and, in the hand of justice, to all the wicked; and as a killing commandment to all the reprobate and bond children. Those who preach the law in any other way are but vain janglers, and establish nothing; for they know not "what they say, nor whereof they affirm;" and the ignorance of fools is sin, and therefore cannot be called the establishment of the law. And bringing the believer from Christ to the law, as his rule of life, where Christ profits him nothing, is called destroying the path of the just, frustrating the grace of God, causing the righteous to err, subverting their souls, and preaching arrant lies, for God has given man no such commission or commandment; wherefore such preaching can never be called establishing the law.

Paul tells us that the law is dead, the enmity slain, and the debt book nailed to the cross, by the death of Christ, "that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Some, may reply, "If this be the case, that the law is dead, how came it to kill Paul, as it is written, 'when the commandment came sin revived, and I died?'" It is a hard matter to answer logicians, who are so wise and nervous; and yet this doctrine might be learned by seeing a murderer take his trial. The law brings him in guilty of death, and yet becomes dead to him; for it gives no life, nor will it let him enjoy even that natural life which he hath; and yet it kills him, for it will never let him go till it brings him to the gallows. So God's law is dead to the sinner; for it gives him no life, and yet kills him by working death in him by itself, which is good; and it will bind him over both to judgment and punishment too, for "the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory."

Some, who are more wise and learned, tell us that they shall take the spirit of the law to heaven with them, that is (I suppose) when they go there, who "are of the works of the law, and under the curse of it;" when those who are of the law are heirs, and faith is made void, and the promise of God made of none effect All these things must be done before such souls, with the spirit of the law, can get to heaven. Besides, the bond woman and her children are desolate, without a father and without a husband, saith the Lord of Hosts. She is not my wife, nor am I her husband. And surely none but the queen, the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall enter into the King's palace. Not only the bond woman and her family are excluded, who cleave to the law, but hypocrites in possession, who cleave to Christ, and lay claim to him before they are delivered from the law; even these foolish virgins are shut out of the marriage chamber.

It is to be feared that these men do not understand what the scriptures mean by the spirit of the law. By it they never mean the Holy Ghost. This I know by sad experience, for the Holy Spirit is not promised in the law, nor does he come from the law, nor by the law. "God ministers not the Spirit by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith." If the Spirit comes this way, then they are ministers of the Spirit, which Paul calls ministers of the letter; and those that are of the works of the law, and under the curse of it, must be the happiest men; whilst those who are redeemed and delivered from it must be "of all men the most miserable." As "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient," whatever the law works or ministers, it must be to them that are under the law. Paul says, God ministers not the Spirit by it; for the ministry of the Spirit is opposed to the ministry of the letter on tables of stone. The law gives no life, nor righteousness. "Had there been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have come by the law." But the Spirit that giveth life is opposed to the ministration of death, and the

ministration of righteousness opposed to the ministration of condemnation, throughout this whole chapter. Jerusalem, which rejected Christ and his gospel, is said to be "in bondage with her children." But this bondage cannot be the Holy Ghost, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," not bondage; and the mother of the saints, as well as themselves, are said to be free. "We are not children of the bond woman, but of the free." It remains then that the spirit of the law is bondage; it genders to bondage; it is the chain of a bond slave, called the spirit of bondage to fear, servile fear; it is temporal and spiritual death, and therefore called the ministration of death and condemnation. All which is neither more nor less than the wrath of God revealed in it against all unrighteousness of men. "The law worketh wrath." This is the spirit of the law. John calls it fear and torment; but there is nothing of this in the spirit of love; "there is no fear in love, for perfect love casteth out fear." Cain, Esau, Judas, with every desperate sinner that has been given up to a fearful looking for of judgment, have been filled with this spirit of bondage, till the sons of the bond Of woman have laid at the top of every street, "like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury of the Lord and the rebuke of our God." But this spirit in them is never called an earnest of heaven, but "an evident token of perdition." When the killing commandment came home to David, attended with an awful sense of the wrath of God, he calls the sentence of the law the snares of death, and the wrath of God the pains of hell; and, when bondage, fear, the sorrows of death, the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, got hold of the Saviour, he was so sorely amazed as to sweat blood, and never calls this spirit of bondage to fear the joy that was set before him, but hell itself. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," &c. Paul knew what the ministration of death and wrath was; and blessed Christ, who had delivered him from so great a death, and saved him from the wrath to come. Paul, and his companions, had felt the spirit of the law, and their deliverance from it. God hath not given us "the spirit of fear;

but of power, of love, and of a sound mind." And Paul stood fast in this liberty wherewith Christ had made him free, and was not entangled with the yoke of bondage a second time, having felt it severely before; for "we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the Spirit of adoption: whereby we cry, Abba Father." This is the Comforter that is to abide with the saints for ever; who shall quicken our mortal bodies in the great day, fashion them like the glorious body of Christ, and fill them with all his fulness for ever. "The law is a fiery law;" and, whenever the spirit of bondage to fear, and the wrath of God revealed therein, comes to be poured forth upon carnal professors, they will feel the effects of it as such. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" They shall find that the wrath of God revealed in the law is "a fire kindled in his anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell." So that, instead of the spirit of bondage going with these professors to heaven, it shall only serve to bind them hand and foot when they are cast into utter darkness. "The strength of sin is the law;" and they that now mock shall find their bands strong; for fear, death, torment, wrath, and damnation, is the spirit of the law, and all that the law works in men, or ministers to men; and as it "is not made for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient," it will go with the wicked, and work all its contents in their souls in hell to all eternity; and this they know who are in that dreadful place. They know what *bondage* is, by being *bound*; what the ministry of *death* is; by being in the *second death*; what the ministry of condemnation is, by being *damned*; and what the law that worketh wrath is, by being in the *dreadful furnace* of it. Thus the lawless and disobedient, with their violated law and broken covenant, with all its dreadful contents, shall go to hell together. For there is not one thing which the law works in men, or which it ministers to men; neither bondage, death, wrath, condemnation, nor damnation (and it works nothing else); I say, not one of all these things shall ever be found

among the saints in heaven. But grace and truth, which make us free, and the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, shall enter heaven with their law of truth in their hearts "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." And thus grace shall be displayed in glory, truth settled in heaven, mercy shall be built up forever, and faithfulness be established for evermore.

And, although some tell us that "they never expect to be delivered from a law which commands them to love God with all their heart," yet I know that if they are not redeemed from the law, and in *every sense* delivered from it, and not under it, but under grace, they never shall love God in this world, nor in the next. If a man love God, it must be because God first loved him: for "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and never can by nature be subject to the law, which commands love; nor does God love a sinner in the law, for the love of God is in Christ Jesus. He that is not delivered from the law is in bondage to fear, and hath torment; and nothing but the love of God in Christ can ever deliver him from it, or cast it out; and he that hath not this *charity* is "an instrument without life," under "the ministry of death," by which he cannot live; and, as the law worketh wrath, by the law he cannot love.

Ignorant, bold, presumptuous men may wanton, trifle, and sport, with these deep, momentous, and important things, of God, in order to raise a shout from fools, to harden graceless professors, and to embolden daring hypocrites to lampoon the servants of God, and to ridicule and vilify the gospel of a dear Redeemer; which I think is sinning against the Holy Ghost, or doing despite to the Spirit. But, as the Lord liveth, it will be found to be bitterness in the end; and this some feel already; though, being blinded by the old veil, they know not whence their bondage comes, whereas in truth it comes from that law for which they so strenuously contend, and from an angry God, for slighting his dear Son; for he will speak in his wrath

to all, and vex them in his sore displeasure, who set themselves against his Anointed; nor shall any enjoy his blessing who put not their trust in his King on Zion's hill. God's rejection of the Jews is to this day an awful proof of this truth.

They must be born again that enter God's kingdom; and a real spiritual birth terminates in the enjoyment of love, which casts out fear and torment; for "he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; but he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." If bond servants, under a spirit of bondage, go in all their fetters to heaven, the Father's promise of the Spirit is of little value; the Saviour's death, to procure the Spirit, no blessing; and redemption and salvation from the bondage of the law must be one of the greatest evils.

I have pushed this point a little home, because it seems to go into the very bowels of Arminianism, and of graceless professors, who discover such enmity to the grace of God. However, this I know by blessed experience, that the perfect obedience which the law required is now in the heart of our Surety the satisfaction that justice required is now in a dear Redeemer the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ all the fulness of the Spirit is in him; all the fulness of grace, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in him the law of the Spirit of life makes us free, and in him the believer is complete. Therefore, O believer, abide in him, and let neither Satan, ministers of Satan, justice, nor Moses, ever catch thee out of the cleft of the Rock, lest, like one of old, thou get entangled again, and pray to be restored to the joys of Christ's salvation, and again to be upheld by his free Spirit; for "the works of faith and labours of love" are a service that is perfect freedom. This thousands confess with their mouth, and this thousands have felt in their heart.

But, without giving any more attention to the croaking of frogs, or spending my arguments on dogs that bark at the moon,

One would be ready to wonder where this almost universally received notion, of the law being the believer's rule of life, could come from, seeing the believer (and no other) is said to be redeemed from the law, delivered from it, and not under it, but under grace; why it should be called his rule, when the scripture says that "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." If the law is made for the lawless (all of whom are out of Christ, under the law, and under the curse of it), one would have thought that they were the only men to whom the law is a rule of life, seeing Christ always sent the legalist to it with a "What is written in the law; how readest thou?" But always told the believer to abide in him.

I think the first that enforced and practiced this doctrine was Cain. Cain and Abel were brethren. They both came at one time to bring their offerings to God. One was a keeper of sheep, and the other a tiller of the ground; and their offerings were according to their occupations. One brought the first fruits of the ground, and the other the firstling of his flock. And we may warrantably conclude that the one was a lamb; a type of him that was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The other brought a sheaf of the harvest, which the scriptures allow to be a type of Jesus, the first fruits of them that slept. Now these two worshippers prefigured, the publican and the pharisee in the gospel. They had but two foundations to build on, or but two footings to go upon: the one was the law broken by Adam; the other the promised woman's seed, held forth in the first volume of the book, who was to bruise the serpent's head. Abel, who had been informed by his parents how a divine person had stripped them of their fig-leaved dress, and clothed them with the skins of the sacrifices, and made this promise to them, believed the report of his parents (like Jacob, the figure of him), and therefore took his lamb, in the faith of the same pardon and covering; and thus he ploughed in hope, and, looking to the throne of grace and the cherubim

placed in Eden's gate, he, in faith of the promised seed, offered his lamb, looking to him that was promised to bruise the serpent's head: and, as the serpent was to bruise Christ's heel by death, he judged that Satan would be destroyed; and, by the obedience of the promised seed, he expected all cleansing and covering, as well as his father. The Spirit, which wrought faith in Abel, taught him where to look; for his work is, and ever was, to testify of Christ. In this faith he approached, and offered his lamb or kid. This was Abel's rule of life and worship; and "to Abel and to his offering God had respect."

Cain, he comes with the sheaf of his first fruits, trusting in the law, which his parents had broken; and expecting a right, on the footing of works, to the tree of life, from which his parents had been banished. This was a daring approach without looking to the cherubim, or to the flaming sword of justice, which God himself had placed there to keep the tree of life, and teach them the way of mercy by the tree, and the need of the surety by the sword. But Cain went on, as Korah did after him, in the wilderness. The cherubim and mercy-seat there were no more than a repetition of what was done in Eden. However, Korah went on as Cain did; and God couples them together, Jude, xi. Cain paid no regard to the mercy-seat, or to the cherubim; but, like a horse in the battle, he broke through all bounds, and ventured upon the bottom of a broken law, which his parents had violated, and expected a "right to the tree of life" on the footing of works, without any view to, or faith in, the promised seed. And what was the consequence? Why "to Cain and to his offering God had not respect;" while the fire fell from heaven, and consumed Abel's burnt-offering, as it did at the decisive offering and humble prayer of Elijah, when Baal's prophets cried in vain for such an answer by fire. This Cain saw, he was wroth, and his countenance fell. This dead work, on the footing of a broken law, God rejects as a deviation from the rule given to Adam and Eve, and practiced by Abel; which he vindicates upon the rules of the everlasting

gospel, saying, "Why art thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and, if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." This was the first hint of that important truth; "without faith it is impossible to please God." And thus from the womb of the morning God revealed the beauties of holiness. About this point Cain and Abel disputed. The one made faith in the promise his rule of life, the other made the broken law his rule; and, the believer being too much in argument for the bond child, he (Cain) defended his rule with the fist of wickedness, and killed the believer (his brother, and the third part of the whole world) at one blow. And the New Testament tells us that it was "by faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, God testifying of his gifts;" and, as for Cain, he is said to be of that wicked one the devil, who slew his brother, because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous.

Those, who were next to Cain in vindication of this doctrine, seem to be those mongrel professors who were called the sons of God, but fell in love with the daughters of Cain. These held in their head the discriminating doctrines of their fathers, but paid no regard to the rule of faith, being destitute of God's power; and extended their charity to those that were cursed of God. And this mixture of law and gospel, and the mixed marriages of professors and reprobates, was productive of that wickedness which was great before the Lord. Against such wicked ones Enoch prophesied; who were determined to kill him, and sought after him for the slaughter; but they could not find him; he was not to be found, for God took him, and had translated him; "for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God;" but "without faith it is impossible to please him."

Against these Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, was sent; who preached imputed

righteousness, and a faith that overcomes the world, for upwards of an hundred years. But they rejected his doctrines, and resisted the Spirit which spoke by him, till God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," and soon after drowned them all.

The Israelites in the wilderness could see no rule to go by but the law; and when God asked, "How long will it be ere this people believe in me?" it appeared a strange thing to them; for, as they had no faith themselves, they hated those who had, and envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. The land of promise was expected as a reward of their partial obedience: but, when they came to understand that it was through faith they must subdue kingdoms, they in heart turned back to Egypt; and thus unbelief shut them out of the promised rest of God, "having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not."

In Ezekiel's days, the false prophets burdened the just with the law as their only rule, and encourage the wicked with the promise of life. They "made the hearts of the righteous sad, whom God had not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, by promising him life."

In the apostle's days, the rabbies and rulers opposed the gospel, till they got out of favour with the people, and almost out of office and out of bread. And what must they do then? Why they must turn hypocrites. "A great Company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Thou seest, brother Saul," (saith James) "how many there are that believe, and they are all zealous of the law of Moses. They made a tool of the Son of God to exalt his servant Moses. These Paul calls "false brethren, unawares brought in to spy out our liberty that we have in Christ, that they might bring us into bondage." And, having found out that the apostles preached up deliverance from the galling yoke of precept, they set off into the ministry,

intending to sap the very foundation of the gospel; and, to cover their villany, "they preached Christ, not out of good will, but out of strife and envy, to add affliction to Paul's bonds." The text and the tidings, which these *false apostles* carried to the saints, was, "except ye be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved." They did not handle the law lawfully, nor speak the language of it, saying, "This do, and thou shalt live:" but they tacked the word *salvation* to it, "except ye keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved;" which the law says nothing about; for, if a man can keep the law, he needs no salvation; and, if he does, the law cannot give it, "for there is salvation in no other name but in Christ"

First, This preaching up circumcision was in order to glory in their flesh; that is, that they might boast of having made proselytes.

Secondly, Circumcision was preached that the offence of the cross might cease, and the world and the church be reconciled together.

"Thirdly, It was to bring the Gentile believers in debtors to the whole law. And,

Fourthly, To set aside the whole suretyship engagements of Christ, and all the benefits of it: for, if I become a debtor to do the whole law, then the Saviour's debt of perfect obedience to the precept, and the penal sum of suffering, which he paid to divine justice, profits me nothing; and I am saddled with all my infinite debts. The everlasting righteousness that Christ brought in is set aside, and the whole satisfaction that he made to justice by his sacrifice is set aside also. Add to this, I give up the free promise of life for the law, turn my back upon grace, and go to work; and then God "reckons the reward to me of debt, not of grace." and under this debt book these false apostles laboured to bring the Gentile believers; for the Gentiles had no other hand-writing against them but this,

which is the "moral law," With these men Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation; but all in vain; therefore they must: go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question." And, when they were convened, "there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Here we see the devil had some agents, to spread the leaven at Antioch, and some at the council chamber at Jerusalem, to support the cause there.

But Peter tells them that God had purified their hearts by faith: "and now why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear?"

The sentence of James is, "that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God," Acts, xv. 2–19.

And now we come to the commission and character of these men. "Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment," Acts, xv. 24.

Their character is—that they troubled the churches, subverted their souls, preached lies, and went out without either commission or commandment from them.

In the next place, we have the judgment of the Holy Ghost, and of all the apostles and elders, upon this point. "For it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things—that ye abstain from meals offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves ye shall do well. Fare ye well," Acts, xv. 28, 29. How beautiful upon the mountains were the feet of those that

carried these good tidings! This is a confirmation of the Saviour's words, "My yoke is easy, and my burden light.". We now come to see how these tidings were received.

"So, when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and, when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle; which, when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation," Acts, xv. 30, 31. These false apostles, under the influence of Satan, had brought them into bondage, and fast closed up all the wombs in the king's palace at Antioch: but God restored unto them the joys of his salvation, and upheld them again with his free Spirit; for the Holy Ghost, who loves liberty and proclaims, it, who was "a spirit of judgment to them that sat in judgment" at Jerusalem, went with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, and applied the tidings to the hearts of all the believers there, and comforted their souls with love, joy, and peace, in believing; and "they rejoiced for the consolation:" and thus the apostles took heed, and were "aware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." For "to these," says Paul, "we gave not place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain."

I once read an old book, when I first came into the ministry, which said "the believer is under the law as a rule of life;" from which I embraced that notion, without ever consulting the scripture, or asking wisdom from God, about it: and this I have asserted in one of my first publications: which I intend to expunge whenever that book shall be reprinted; for it is no part of the gospel which I received, not did it ever come to me from God, but from man.

Then, say some, "if we are not under the law as a rule of life, we may live as we list." I answer, I wish I could: for I would then be filled with the Spirit of God, and be free from all sin;

and, if Paul could have lived as he listed, he would have been delivered from his "body of death;" and Jabez would have been kept "from sin, that it might not grieve him." However, God has promised to put his fear in our hearts, that we shall not depart from him; and that he will work in us to will and to do; direct our steps; uphold us by his right hand; keep us by his mighty power; purge us, that we may bring forth fruit; and that sin shall not have dominion over those that are under grace, only over those that are under the law, who are of the works of it, and under the curse of it, who are in unbelief, and cannot please God; who, being in sin, and under it, can do nothing but sin.

I have written these things to thee, believer, to furnish, to arm, and equip thee, "that thou mayest have somewhat to answer them who glory in appearance, but not in heart;" for "the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite."

This publication will, I expect, procure me many anonymous epistles, and not a few twopenny and threepenny pamphlets, by those who shoot in secret, and use sharpness; all which will only serve to convince me that my doctrines are the mysteries of the cross, because the offence is not ceased. As to their sharpness, it is neither for edification nor destruction; not for edification, because there is no savour of charity; nor for destruction, because there is no power.

But God says, "Look unto Abraham your father, and to Sarah that bare you, for God called him alone and blessed him." All the laws and rules that Abraham had, were written on the tables of his heart—tables of stone he had none. The first step that he took from his own country was in that faith which overcomes the world; which faith, working by love, took away all desire of returning back again. This is the same faith as ours. He was circumcised at the command of God, which was a seal in his flesh of the righteousness he had in his heart,

which was to be wrought out by a seed from his loins. And, when our hearts are circumcised to love God, it is a seal of the Spirit to us that imputed righteousness is ours. He was to walk before God, and be upright; and God was his shield and exceeding great reward. This was walking in the fear of God, in the faith of his protection, and in the expectation of an eternal enjoyment of him as his reward and portion. This rule he was to command to his household after him; and God says they shall keep the way of the Lord. Such was faithful Abraham the friend of God; who, although he had not the two tables of stone with him, yet "obtained a good report through faith." "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws," Genesis, xvi. 5. "In these last days," believer, "God hath spoken to us by his Son;" therefore he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. I have set my King upon my holy hill; blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Obey his voice, and stand fast in him, and thou shalt see and feel, to thy soul's comfort, that the moral law is abolished and done away in Christ Jesus to thee. But, if thou get from Christ, backsliding in heart, or sinning against him, thou must not wonder if God again and again speak to thee in the secret place of thunder, because thou dost not abide in him who is a hiding-place from that storm. For my part, was I going to the tribunal of God this night, and was to be asked of this matter now delivered, and sure of perishing if I spoke falsely, I would declare that, to the best of my knowledge and judgment, and agreeable to the testimony of my own conscience, I believe what I have now preached is (as far as I have gone) the pure, unadulterated truth of the everlasting gospel. Let us, therefore, hold fast the word of Christ's patience, and we shall be kept from the hour of temptation. And let us not be afraid of the name ANTINOMIAN, which in our days is given by graceless professors to those who are partakers of the Holy Ghost; for a bad name will never hurt a good man.

A real Antinomian, in the sight of God, is one who "holds the truth in unrighteousness;" who has gospel notions in his head, but no grace in his heart. He is one that makes a profession of Christ Jesus, but was never purged by his blood, renewed by his Spirit, nor saved by his power. With him carnal ease passes for gospel peace; a natural assent of the mind for faith; insensibility for liberty; and daring presumption for the grace of assurance. He is alive without the law, the sentence of the "moral law" having never been sent home to him. The "law of faith" was never sealed *on* him, the "law of truth" was never received *by* him, nor the "law of liberty" proclaimed to him. He was never arraigned at, nor taken from, the "throne of judgment." He was never justified at the "throne of grace," nor acquitted at the "bar of equity." The tremendous attribute of righteousness was never seen or felt by him. The righteousness of the law was never fulfilled *in* him; the righteousness of the law was never fulfilled *by* him; the righteousness of faith was never imputed to him; nor the fruits of righteousness brought forth by him. He is an enemy to the power of God, to the experience of the just, and to every minister of the Spirit; and is in union with none but hypocrites, whose uniting ties are "the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity." He is one that often changes his opinions, but was never changed in heart. He turns to many sects and parties, but never turns to God. In word he is false to Satan, in heart he is false to God; false to Satan by uttering truth, and false to God by a false profession. He is a false reprovor in the world, and in the household of faith a false brother. He is a child of Satan in the congregation of dissemblers, and a bastard in the congregation of the righteous. By mouth he contends for a covenant that cannot save him, and in heart he hates the covenant that can. His head is at Mount Calvary, his heart and soul at Mount Sinai. He is a Pharisee at Horeb, and a hypocrite in Zion. He is a transgressor of the law of works, and a rebel to the law of faith; a sinner by the ministry of the letter, and an unbeliever by the ministry of the Spirit. As a

wicked servant, he is cursed by the eternal law; and, as an infidel, he is damned by the everlasting gospel. And this is a REAL ANTINOMIAN in the sight of God.

The Believer's Rule Of Life

By

William Huntington

Condensed from

"The Rule and Riddle."

Published in 1811 by T. Bensley, London

Table Of Contents

Preface

Quotes From William Huntington

The Believer's Rule Of Life

Rule Of The Ancient Saints

Faith As A Rule Of Life

The Law Not Of Faith But Of Works

Look To Christ-Not The Law

The Letter Alone Not Sufficient To Life

Not Without Law To God

The Killing Letter-Not The Fountain Of Life

Why It Is Called The Law Of The Spirit

Do Not Make Void The Law Through Faith

Why It Is Called The Law Of Faith

Difference In The Two Mirrors

The Law Of Liberty

The Perfect Law Sets Free

Teachers Of Law Promise Liberty While They Are Servants Of Corruption

A Better Covenant

Whatsoever Is Not Of Faith Is Sin

Dead To The Law By The Body Of Christ

The Spirit And Grace Of God That Teaches

Now Serve In Newness Of Spirit

Not Without Direction And A Director

Bounds Of The Church Not Removed

Difference Between The Love Of God And The Law Of Wrath

Difference Between Covenant Of Law And Covenant Of Grace

Legal Bondage And Gospel Liberty Cannot Stand Together

Jumbling The Two Covenants

Grace - Not Law Makes The Believer What He Is

The Law Is Good But Justifies None
No Good Effects By Preaching Law
Evils Of Preaching Law
The Law Works Wrath And Judgment
The Saints All-Sufficient Rule
Seeking Perfection By The Law Is Foolish
The Law That Goes Forth Of Zion
The Two Ways Compared
The Word Law Defined
Conclusion

PREFACE

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON was born on February 2, 1745, near Cranbrook, Kent, England. He died on July 1, 1813, in his sixty-ninth year. Of Huntington's description of his sweet blessed deliverance into gospel liberty, J. C. Philpot says: "We have read some of the finest productions of human eloquence, in both ancient and modern languages, and therefore we know what we assert when we declare that, in our judgment, the decryption . . .; apart from the experience there described, as a mere piece of eloquence, is one of the grandest and most beautiful pieces of writing that has ever come under our eye." Well might our author say: "Oh happy year! happy day! blessed minute! Sacred spot! Yea, rather blessed be my Redeemer, who 'delivered my soul from death, and mine eyes from bears, and my feet from falling.'" "God raises up such men as John Bunyan and William Huntington but once in a century." -William Romaine. Dr. Henry Cole, translator of the Works of Luther and Calvin, after referring to Huntington as "that great and blessed servant of the Most High," says, "I believe he bore and left in Britain the greatest and most glorious testimony to the power of God's salvation that ever was borne or left therein." A. J. Baxter, editor of the Gospel Advocate, wrote: "There are hundreds who will both speak and write with respect of such men of God as Owen, Bunyan, Romaine, Barridge and Newton, who would recoil at the mention of the name of Huntington. And why? Because his conduct was less consistent than they? No, but because, in depth, closeness, and discrimination of vital realities he excelled them all; and was therefore the least comprehended, 1 Cor. 2:15. (Thomas Wright in Life of Huntington.) (-T. Rutt in Foreword to Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer, by William Huntington)

QUOTES OF WILLIAM HUNTINGTON

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" The liberty which Peter here alludes to is the liberty of the Holy Spirit, which God had given them, which Paul calls the law of the Spirit of life, which made him free from the law of sin and death; and "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," (2 Cor.3:17) for, as David says, the Spirit of God is a free Spirit. (Psa. 2:12) The rule that Peter gives them is faith, which purifies the heart. The unbearable yoke that they were going to tempt God with, by galling the neck of the disciples, was first, the needfulness of circumcision; Secondly, a command to keep the law of Moses; and it is called tempting God, because it was a reflection cast upon His work who had purified their hearts by faith, and sent His Spirit to govern and lead them into all truth; as if the Holy Spirit was not sufficient to make them obedient, nor God's purifying their hearts a sufficient purification, nor faith a sufficient rule, without yoking them with the killing letter as the only rule of life. The law obeyed, and disarmed of its curse, is in the heart of the Mediator, who is Judge of quick and dead, and therefore keeps the keys of hell and of death. The believer is under the law of faith to Christ; and they that are His have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; such are delivered from the law; and against such there is no law; and sin is not imputed where there is no law. I do insist upon it that, if a believer be brought to the law of Moses, to be under it in any other sense, sin stares him in the face, wrath works in his heart, his enmity is stirred up, bondage seizes him, and despondency or despair will sink him, unless the law of the Spirit of life makes him free from the law of sin and death.

William Huntington

THE BELIEVER'S RULE OF LIFE

By

William Huntington

(Condensed from "The Rule and Riddle." Published in 1811 by T. Bensley, London)

Dear Sir,

I received the packet which you directed to me, consisting of your very long epistle, of a circular in print, and of a sermon on the promises of God. I read your epistle without offense, as I believe you meant well, which I gather from your politeness, civil treatment, and cautious way of expressing yourself; such a letter I have never received from any person who has thought proper to expose or oppose me, as a maintainer of licentious doctrines. Their letters have generally been filled with the scurrility of Billingsgate, and without any truth fairly stated; which has only served to convince me that such persons are without Christ, and have no hope in the world.

Was it in my power, I would address you as a gentleman of sense and a scholar, for both appear in your affectionate epistle, but I have neither politeness nor learning, as it is now called, yet will give you the best answer I am capable of, in the language of Scripture.

If I know anything of my own heart, I can truly assert, that I wish all that fear God to know what He hath done for my soul; and, in declaring it, I desire to speak as the oracles of God; and to live up to what I preach, as far as grace shall enable me while in this body of death! and I wish some of our zealous

advocates for Moses would do the same, by letting their light shine before me that others might see as well as hear of their good works; seeing it is not the hearers nor the contenders for the law that are just before God; but the doers of the law shall be justified.

That the ten commandments are the believer's only rule of life, was insisted upon by the first person that I ever disputed with on that subject; which he endeavored to enforce and prove by Paul's quoting part of it in his epistle to the Romans, which church he supposed to consist of saints only, by Paul's addressing them as the beloved of God called to be saints, of considering that hypocrites, wise virgins and foolish ones, are to go and grow together as tares and wheat until harvest. And on the account of this mixture it is that the killing letter and the promise of life must go together, the promises are to the heirs of promise; and "we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." I asked a gentleman which of the commandments he meant? And he replied, "Those in the 20th chapter of Exodus." And if those ten commandments are the believer's rule, the other parts of Scripture, one would think, might be dispensed with by the believer; for, if that law be his only rule of life, what can he want more? Though, by and by, there is not the command to love God in that chapter.

RULE OF THE ANCIENT SAINTS

If the ten commandments in the letter be the believer's only rule, Abel, who obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, had no rule to go by, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, (Gen. 5:22) and "was translated

that he should not see death, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb 11:5); yet he had no rule of life. Noah the just, who took warning of God, prepared an ark, condemned the world, and became heir of an everlasting righteousness, was without rule. Abraham, the friend of God, and the father of the faithful, and heir of the world, must walk at an uncertainty also. Melchisedek, king of righteousness, and king of peace, priest of the Most High God; after whose order Christ is a priest forever and ever, had no rule for his order. Yea, all the antediluvian and post diluvian saints, down to the time of the children of Israel's compassing the Mount Sinai, must be left to walk and to worship at random; for, if the letter of the law, or the ten commandments delivered at Sinai, be the believer's only rule of life, it is clear they were without that rule. Yet they were not without law to God, for they feared Him, loved Him, and walked with Him; and saw Him at a distance and embraced Him, were united to Him, and became one spirit with Him.

I have sometimes wondered why these ancient saints should be set forth with the encomiums of being God's friends, walking with Him, obtaining witness that they were righteous, obtaining promises, obtaining good report, as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, of whom the world was not worthy, seeking an heavenly country, and a city that hath foundations, despising all worldly pleasure, self, and honor, leaving their own house, home, and country, without any desire to return thither; and why we should be commended to go forth by the footsteps of this flock, and be said to be compassed about with this cloud of witnesses, and be directed to follow those who through faith and practice now inherit the promises; when we know that if they were on earth, in this refined age, they would be ranked among the worst of Antinomians.

It is strange that the believer is not commanded to look to Moses the law giver, and to the bondwoman that is under the

law, instead of looking to Abraham our father, and to Sarah that bare us, whom God called alone, and blessed and increased. (Isaiah 51:2). Paul would have us tread in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to him, or to his seed, through the law, Rom. 4:12,13; and yet affirms, that as many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. And this promised blessing, and promised heirship, was given to Abraham, and to his seed, four hundred and thirty years before the law, or before our only rule of life was given.

What rule had those glorious pilgrims to walk by, who obtained so good a report, or so good a testimony from God? Paul tells us that Abel offered to God, and obtained witness that he was righteous by faith; then faith was his rule of walk; and Noah condemned the world by faith; then faith was his rule of judgment. "By faith Abraham, when he was called, went out not knowing whither he went," then faith was his rule, by which he took his journey, though he knew not whither, and his obedience was the obedience of faith. But if he had been favored with our only rule of life, he might have known whither he was going, and not have gone in ignorance, and his obedience would have been the obedience of the law instead of faith. But Paul will have it that all Abraham's children are in the same strait that their father was, for they walk by faith, not by sight. But if the letter of the law be the only rule that the believer is to walk and live by, then he walks by sight, not by faith; he looks at the things that are seen, not at the things that are not seen. If it is by faith that Moses saw Him who is invisible, then by faith we must look at the things that are not seen, which are eternal.

FAITH AS A RULE OF LIFE

Paul says, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him;" then faith must be the rule of his coming. "We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; then faith is the rule of our approach to God. "The just shall live by his faith;" then faith is the just man's rule of life. "We walk by faith, not by sight;" then faith is our rule of walk. "Thou standest by faith," says Paul; then faith is the rule of the believer's standing. "Whatever ye shall ask believing, ye shall receive," says Christ; then faith is the rule of that branch of worship. By faith Enoch had this testimony, that he pleased God; "but without faith it is impossible to please Him;" then faith is a rule that God approves of, and is pleased with. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" then faith is a perfect rule of holiness. "All that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses;" then faith is our rule of righteousness. It is by faith we overcome the world to lay hold on eternal life, is to fight the good fight of faith, according to Paul; "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" then faith was the rule of his warfare, and the rule of his race, and it was the grace of God that made Paul obedient to that rule. "We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith;" that is, by Christ we have received grace to save our souls, and apostleship to be of use to the church, not as a reward of our obedience, but to furnish us with power to make us obedient to the faith, among all nations for His name, Rom. 1:5; then faith is the rule of apostolic obedience; for it cannot be called receiving grace for obedience to the faith if faith be not the gracious man's rule of obedience.

Paul counts all things but dung that he may win Christ, and be found in Him; not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; and tells us to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing. You take this rule of Paul's to be his pressing forward, or any of his

attainments, it is answered, by faith he pressed forward, and by faith he attained; or else his pressing and attaining had been nothing but sin, for whatsoever is not of faith, according to Paul's doctrine, is sin.

By faith Christ dwells in our hearts, and by faith we dwell in Him; and "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," which is Christ formed within us: "and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Faith is the rule of life according to the revealed will of God in Christ Jesus; "and this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." (Jn. 5:40) Thus faith, appears to be the believer's rule of life. according to the will of God in Christ Jesus; and the letter of the law is the bond-childrens' rule of life; he that doth these things shall live in them. Let him do according to this rule and he shall live. The law is not the rule of believing, but of doing; the law is not of faith but of works, and the man that doth them shall live in them. (Gal. 3:12)

If to see the Son, and believe on Him, entitles us to everlasting life according to God's will, then faith must be the rule of that life; and one would think that if "he that liveth and believeth shall never die," faith must be a safe rule to live by.

THE LAW NOT OF FAITH BUT OF WORKS

I have sometimes thought that, if the letter of the law in the twentieth chapter of Exodus be the believer's only rule of life, he would be sorely put to his shifts when the devil sets a troop of Arians, Socinians, or Sabellians at him; he would find these

words, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." This rule would hardly set him right. It is by faith that we apprehend Christ; it is by faith we lay hold of Him, as the hope set before us. (Heb. 6:18) It is by Christ that we believe in God. 1 Pet. 1:21; and we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, (Gal. 3:14). By this rule we come to a saving knowledge of the Trinity; for the eye of faith is a light by which we see what is the fellowship of the mystery, Eph. 3:9. Without the assurance of understanding there will be no true acknowledgement of the mystery of God the Holy Ghost, and of the Father and of Christ, Col. 2:2. The ten commandments will never guide a man into this mystery, nor set him right if he errs in it.

In your epistle, Sir, you tell me that, if I do not enforce the law as the believer's rule of life, I must in some sense make it void. I think I have sufficiently proved that Paul's rule of life and walk was faith; and he asks, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Paul insists upon it that faith worketh by love, and tells us that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:10) If this doctrine be the fulfilling of the law, it cannot make it void.

The sermon that you were so kind to send me is pregnant with a deal of scholastic unscriptural logic, little better than nonsense, which may serve to display the worldly wisdom of the author, and excite the admiration of unenlightened people. But any spiritual person will easily perceive that he knows little or nothing of the killing letter of the law, or of the spiritual power of the gospel.

The law, as the believer's rule of life, he endeavors to enforce from the fitness of things, which are phrases that stand for anything or nothing, just as the author pleases. But he does

not satisfy me concerning the things that fit. God grant he may not go out of the world with this confusion in his heart! if he does, it is to be feared that he will find the ministration of death, and his carnal mind, when they come to grip one another in a dying hour, will not fit so easy as he imagines. Paul delighted in the law of God after the inward man, Rom. 7:22. And, according to Paul, the law of God and the inward man are things that will fit; a new heart and a new spirit are things that join well; a sense of God's love to us, and a pure love to Him, brings about an union that fits sweetly. "Believe," says the Savior, "that I am in you and you in me;" and when Christ crucified and a broken heart come together, they are things that fit exactly as the branch and the vine, or as the foundation with the super structure. And if the author of this sermon dies a stranger to the fitness of these things, as he seems to be at present, it had been good for him if he had never been born. Persons who are strangers to an union with Christ by the Spirit know nothing savingly of the spiritual fitness of things; they may make a noise about the law just to blind folks, but they bring forth no more fruit to God's glory than a branch that is not in the vine. (Jn. 15:4).

LOOK TO CHRIST-NOT THE LAW

A friend of mine once asked a certain divine in London what he thought of the law as the believer's only rule of life? He replied, "The believer must look with one eye to Christ, and with the other to the law." But he brought no more proof from the word of God than this author has, who attempts to prove it by the fitness of things. My friend replied, "Then every believer must squint." However, there is no call for squinting in this

matter; Christ says, "Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth;" and adds, "I will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me " and Paul tells us to "run the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Looking with one eye to the law, and with the other to Christ, is erring from wisdom's rule of direction; which is, "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

THE LETTER ALONE NOT SUFFICIENT TO LIFE

The printed letter that you sent me is a discord upon the same string I perceive; but the author will never be able to prove from the Scriptures of truth, that the ten commandments in the letter are called the rule of life. He tells us that it is implied; this brings to my mind an old woman, who had been long contending for this letter rule, being asked to give a reason of the hope that was in her; on suspicion of her having none, replied "You will find my experience in such a verse of Jeremiah's prophecy," hinting that it was implied there. Which served to convince the inquirer that she had no hope but what stood on the paper. I suppose all the experience of the devil is implied in four texts of Scripture: one says; he is cursed above all cattle; another, that he believes and trembles; another that he is cast down to hell and another, that he is "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." But the devil has another experience beside this; which will stick close to him, and be like a thousand hells within him, when every letter of Scripture text will be burnt up.

When the killing letter has slain the reprobate, it has done its office; the living Word that abides forever, which is in the hand of the Spirit, and which dwells in the saints of God, will be settled in heaven, and abide forever there.

The professor must have Christ in him the hope of glory if ever he arrives safe to the happy enjoyment of God in heaven. People, who have no hope but in the written letter of Scripture, will find that the flood of wrath and the final conflagration will leave them without an anchor in that storm; and I am persuaded that the believer's rule of life must be found in his heart also, if ever he lives with God in heaven.

If the believer's rule be implied in the ten commandments according to this gentleman, I believe it would be there long enough before he would find it out. To put on the Lord Jesus and walk in Him, to put off the old man daily, and to put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; to follow Christ in the Spirit; to deny self, and take up the cross daily to stand fast in gospel liberty, and not be entangled with the yoke of bondage; to renounce all confidence in the flesh, and rejoice in Christ Jesus; to hate one's own life, or be unworthy of the Savior; to walk in the Spirit, in order to escape the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh; to know that the strength of sin is the law, and that it is the ministration of death and condemnation; are things that, if they are implied in the ten commandments, would lay there, concealed from the believer, to all eternity, if the mystery of faith had not revealed them, or the gospel, that brings life and immortality to light, had not brought them to light also. "When Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." By the law is the knowledge of sin, but it brings not the path of life to light, that is the new and living way, (Heb. 10:20) and is revealed from another quarter; "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

NOT WITHOUT LAW TO GOD

I cannot find it in my heart to criticize the reasons that you assign; because you have not addressed me, as some have, with insolence and lies, but you seem as desirous of information as you are to inform me, or set me right; therefore without taking your letter to pieces, I will endeavor to make it appear, that the believer in his liberty is in no sense of the word an outlaw, nor yet without law; for he is in no wise excluded from any benefit that arises from the law, and yet he is not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14).

Paul says, "To them that are without law I became as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." Hence it appears that the believer is not without law to God. And, as long as I have made it my study to consider the believer's laws, I will endeavor to bring them forth, and set them in as fair a light as I am capable of, and see whether they amount to what is called Antinomianism, or whether they amount to real divinity; because Paul says, we do not make void the law through faith. Wisdom affirms, "Who so despises the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded;" and then tells us that "the law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death," Prov. 13:13,14. Let it be observed that Wisdom's wise man, who is always opposed to the fool is, in New Testament language, the believer, who is opposed to the infidel; and this law is emphatically called the law of the wise! which is the same as the household of faith, being their law in particular, as belonging to none else; and it is called a fountain of life.

THE KILLING LETTER-NOT THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

A fountain is supplied from its own spring, yields its contents to supply the poor and needy when they seek water and there is none elsewhere, and their tongue faileth for thirst, that they may drink and not famish, or die by famishing. So this law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Can this law of the wise be the ten commandments, which are affirmed by some to be the believer's only rule of life? I trow not. Paul tells us the letter killeth, 2 Cor. 3:6; that it is the law of death, Rom. 7:2; that the law worketh wrath, (Rom. 4:15); and is the ministration of death and condemnation, (2 Cor: 4:7,9) nor does our faith in Christ alter the nature of the law, or make it to us what it was not before. It is the yoke of bondage, and gendereth to bondage still; hence we are exhorted to stand fast in our liberty, and not be entangled again with that yoke of bondage, Gal. 5:1. It still retains its binding nature, even to the believer, and will entangle him again if he looks to it for help.

This rule of life, as some term it, is still a killing letter, hence God declares that, "we are delivered from the law, that being dead, wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rom. 7:6. If the law be a killing letter, and the law of death, it cannot be a fountain of life; by which the wise man departs from the snares of death. We know that sin is a transgression of the law, and that where there is no law there is no transgression; and that death is the sentence of the law; if so, the commandments are the snares that hold the sinner in the arms of death. The first snare that entangles a thief is the law; and if he is left to the mercy of that, it will serve him as the

spider does the fly in the web, never let him go till it has killed him; it is a killing letter, and so all will find it that weave the spider's web, no web can be woven that will cover the soul on that loom; the commandment is exceeding broad. Nor can we suppose that our calling the ministration of condemnation the rule of life will alter this matter, or turn a killing letter into a living fountain; for that law gives no life, therefore it can be no part of this law of the wise. "Had there been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have come by the law." This law of the wise, that is, a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death, is what Paul calls the ministration of the Spirit opposed to the ministration of death, 2 Cor. 3:9. Solomon's fountain of life is Paul's ministration of the Spirit; and what Solomon calls the snares of death is Paul's law of death. The wise man's law of life is the same as the living water that the Savior gives, that is in the believer as a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (Jn. 4:14)

Blessed be God forever, it is a fountain of life indeed by which the poor believing sinner departs from the snares of death, and that for ever more; or, to speak in the apostle's language, "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death;" that is, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has made me free from the law of sin that works in my members, and to the law of Moses, which is the ministration of death. We may call this law of the wise the believer's only rule of life, without talking nonsense.

WHY IT IS CALLED THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

But perhaps my unknown friend may ask why this dispensation of the Spirit is called a law? To which I answer,

first, because of its binding power; the cords of everlasting love, the bond of peace, and the girdle of truth, will hold the soul faster than all the lifeless commandments in the world, whether they be from heaven or of men. Secondly, it is called a law, because of its constraining power; "the love of Christ constrains me," says Paul; it is a powerful constraint from evil, and mightily influences the mind to that which is good. Thirdly, Because of the obedience it produces; the blessed Giver of this law circumcises our hearts, that we may love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul, that we may live, Deut. 30:6. It produces the fruits of the Spirit, which is evangelical obedience; we are taught of God to love one another by the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, which is attended with filial fear that keeps us from departing from God, Jer. 32:40. God directs our work in truth by it, Isa. 61:8; and works our works in us, Isa. 26:12; he works in us an inclining and moving power, "both to will and to do of his own good pleasure," Phil 2:13. Well may this be called the law of the Spirit, when it produces such spiritual obedience; well may the desire of the righteous when it comes be called a Tree of Life, Prov. 13:12; seeing it produces love, joy, peace, meekness, temperance, etc.

This law of the wise is called a fountain, because it plays all its productions high enough to reach the spring from whence it is supplied; evangelical obedience springing from the Spirit of life and love, directed to the glory of God as the believer's chief end, makes the assembly of the saints like a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, or a fountain sealed, S.O.S. 4:12. This law of the Spirit of life produces more real obedience to God in one hour than ever hath been produced by all the rules that have been drawn by human wisdom from killing snares. This law of the wise is Christ's yoke that is easy, and it is his burden that is light, Matt. 11:29,30. Those souls that are under this are "the circumcision that worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

God wrote this law on our hearts and in our minds does He put it, (Jer. 31:33).

This is the law that goes forth of Zion, not from Sinai, and is the word of the Lord that went from Jerusalem, (Micah 4:2); and those that receive it are the people "that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," Rev. 14:12. By this law are the servants of God warned, and in keeping this there is great reward, for charity abideth forever, Psa. 19:11. This is the holy commandment delivered unto us, from which legions have continually departed, 2 Pet. 2:21; because it was only delivered to them in the letter of it, not put into them as a fountain of life. Hence they begin in the Spirit, or with the dispensation of the gospel, and end in the flesh, or under the killing letter.

The law of the wise may be called a fountain of life, because it quickens the dead soul, and raises it to a lively hope; it produces that life which the law promised but could not give because we could give it no obedience; but this law enables a soul to live unto God, to live by the faith of the Son of God; it produces a lively motion toward God; it is attended with life and peace, and enables us to love God that we may live eternally with Him.

Thus, Sir, the believer is not without law to God, for God has written His law in his heart, and he is under this law to Christ as his eternal Head, King, and Ruler. And I think this is speaking as the oracles of God, and preaching it is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the ministry, much better than telling poor blind souls to look with one eye to Christ, who is our life, and the other to the law, which is death; and it is better than bringing rules of life from a law which is the strength of sin; or telling people that the rule of life is implied in the killing letter; or that it appears from the fitness of things; when we know that a living soul serving God

in the oldness of the letter are things that can fit in no better than has darkness and light; the eye of faith the blinding veil; perfect liberty and a yoke of bondage; real love and a gendering to fear; a display of mercy and a revelation of wrath; one working friendship and the other the motions of sin and vengeance. Are these the things that will fit; or what is the fitness that rises from them? I should like to hear the author again on this matter.

DO NOT MAKE VOID THE LAW THROUGH FAITH

In order to convince my friend further that we do not make void the law through faith, or represent the believer without law to God, I will fetch in another law, which is not properly distinct from, but a branch of this that has been considered; and it is a branch that debases the proud boaster, cuts up the self-righteous, discovers the fool, lays the legalist in the dust, exposes the blind guide, furnishes the spiritual soldier of Christ with weapons against him, and secures the whole glory of salvation to God, to whom it belongs, and to whom it must be given without reserve.

By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin; but now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare at this time His

righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law; of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." But what doth Paul mean by the law of faith? Does he mean the gospel, which is sometimes called faith, as Paul, who persecuted the saints in times past, is said now to preach the faith? No; for the gospel is the revelation and explanation of the covenant of promise; and all the blessings of it are the free gifts of God; Christ the covenant head, the Spirit of promise, everlasting righteousness, everlasting salvation, life, and glory, are all the gifts of God, held forth in unconditional promises, which are all yea and amen, to the glory of God, and our everlasting salvation.

As all these things come freely from God, from the, better covenant, a covenant of promise, made with Christ, and with His seed in Him and are purely free in their fountain, in their administration and bestowed on a God-honoring and hell-deserving people, irrespective of any work, worth, or worthiness in them, there can be nothing like a law in it, that is, there is nothing that binds with rigor to obedience or that threatens damnation for non-performance; there is nothing in it that sets a man to work for life, reckoning the reward to be of debt; for God gives grace to make us obedient to the faith, and by grace he preserveth and rewardeth the faithful. The Lord gives both grace and glory, and will display the riches of His grace in glory by Christ Jesus: yea, even the kingdom itself is given of God in His good pleasure. Therefore I presume that the word of faith dwelling richly in us, the spirit of faith working powerfully, and the grace of faith working by love, purifying the heart, holding an imputed righteousness, and giving Christ a residence within us, is Paul's law of faith. For it is not hearing the gospel, nor imbibing a speculative knowledge of it, that will exclude boasting; but the word, and grace of faith when powerfully applied to the heart, will stop the sinner's mouth, and forever silence him upon that head.

WHY IT IS CALLED THE LAW OF FAITH

If you ask why Paul calls this law the law of faith? answer, because faith works by love, which is the fulfilling of the law, which is the end of the commandment, and lays hold of Christ, who is the end of the law; and puts on an everlasting righteousness adequate to the law; because it is Christ's obedience thereto, and because he that believes hath everlasting life, which was the greatest thing that the law ever promised, and which that law could never give; and because the believer has the Spirit of holiness, as the law is holy; by faith he is a just man, as the law is just; a good man, as the law is good; a spiritual man, as the law is spiritual: and thus "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8:4. I will show my friend that I have yet to speak on the saints' behalf; on the subject of their being not without law to God.

DIFFERENCE IN THE TWO MIRRORS

As Paul divides the believer from the infidel, and divides the law between them also, applying the law of faith to the believer, and the law of works to the infidel, declaring "that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law;" and those that are under the law are under sin, and under the curse, Gal. 3:22; 10; so James divides the hearer from the doer. He tells us that "God of his own will begat us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures," and then he tells us to be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves. By doing

He means the works or fruits of faith; "Show me," saith he, "thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works;" and then adds: "For if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass, for he beholds himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

Here James compares the gospel preached to a glass, the light of which reflecting upon the sinner's conscience makes manifest the state of his soul; as Paul speaks: "but we all with open face beholding as in a glass;" so here the sinner hates the light, and goeth his way; he will come no more to it; this glass has shown, and the light of it has reproved his deeds, therefore, he hates it, and goeth his way into the world again, and so hardens his heart and sears his conscience, until all is forgotten, and then he sinks into a deeper security; or, as the text saith, "he straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Jas. 1:25. Here is a law of perfect liberty, or a perfect law of liberty, to be looked into, and to be continued in if a man will be blessed in his deed.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

If my friend asks what this law of liberty is, I will endeavor to show him. It is taken from the law of release, when the jubilee trumpet was to be sounded, and liberty to be proclaimed according to the tenor of the law. "If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh he shall go free for nothing. If he came in by himself he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him." Every poor elect sinner is like this Hebrew servant, he

has sold himself for nought (Isa. 42:3); and is the servant of sin, and under the dominion of the law - two hard masters indeed, who show no favor; he that is under the dominion of sin is also under the law of death; he that is delivered from the power of sin, is delivered from the law also, as the apostle intimates, "sin shall not have dominion over you;" but why? "because you are not under the law, (which is the strength of sin) but under grace," which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. In this state of servitude the sinner lies till the great trumpet is blown, Isa. 27:13; and the joyful sound reaches his ears, Psa. 89:15; by which Christ preached deliverance to captives, and sets at liberty those that are bruised with this yoke of hard service, (Luke 4:18).

THE PERFECT LAW SETS FREE

When the Hebrew servant's liberty was proclaimed, he was delivered from his master, from the command of his master, from the threatening of his master, and from the service of his master, he was a free man; he shall, says God, go out free; and yet this man, that went out at the year of jubilee, is, says God, my servant, Lev. 25:49. So the believing sinner is delivered from the law, that being dead, Rom. 7:6; from the command of the law, for the letter killeth; from the curse of the law, Gal. 3:13; and from the service of the law, for he shall "serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 7:6. He is a free man: "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;" and yet he that is this free man is Christ's servant, 1 Cor. 7:22; for though he is not under the law, yet he is not without law to God, but under this law of liberty to Christ, who has made him free indeed, and he that looks into this law of liberty, and continues in it shall be blessed in his deed.

No doubt but many of the mercenary Hebrew masters were grieved at this law of liberty; they were galled and chafed in their minds to see their slaves go out free. Hence we read that Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem to proclaim liberty to their servants unjustly detained: that every man should let his man servant or maid servant, being an Hebrew or Hebrewess, go free that they should not serve themselves of them. When the princes and people heard of this covenant of the kings, they obeyed it, and let their servants go free; "but afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids."

"I made a covenant with your fathers, says God, that when the servant had served six years ye shall let him go free, and you had now turned and done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty; and ye had made a covenant before me, in the house which is called by my name, but ye returned and polluted my name, by causing every man and maid servant whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure to return, and brought them into subjection. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, Ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty; - behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." (read Jeremiah 34)

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity," says John, Rev. 13:10; and so it was here, the masters hated the Lord's release; they refused to break the yoke, therefore God put their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, Jer. 27:8; and left them in his service three score and ten years, and then proclaimed a jubilee to them, which they were glad to hear of as their poor servants had been before; as it is written, "when the Lord turned the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream." But the deliverance that God

proclaimed to them was more than a dream, though that was better than they had formerly proclaimed to their servants. God's release of them was real, which filled their mouth with laughter, and their tongues with singing, insomuch, that the heathens said the Lord hath done great things for them (Psa. 127:1, 2)

These mercenary masters are lively figures of many of our preachers; and it is with allusion to them that the inspired penmen often speak of false apostles and deceitful workers, who under the veil of the law, and the influence of the devil transformed, call the everlasting gospel Anti-nomianism the preachers of it Anti-nomians, the powerful operations of the Spirit of it enthusiasm, and the liberty of it licentiousness; as if the word, Spirit, grace, and ministers of the Lord, were the only instruments of Satan; and graceless men the only infallible preachers of holiness, who under a false show of it tempt God; bring forth the old yoke; lead the saints into bondage; pervert their way; and set their hearts to fretting against the Lord, Prov. 19:3. Of this number are some; I may say legions, for there are many that go from our universities and academies, who have no other qualifications for the ministry, authority in it, credentials for it, right to live by it, or to claim the honor of it, than that which is of men; they are ministers of men and by men. And among all the mysteries that puzzle the wise this is none of the least, that men of worldly wisdom, which God calls foolishness. (1 Cor. 3:19); and wise and prudent men, from whom he has hid the mysteries of His kingdom, Matt. 11:25; should be able with the help of that wisdom that is earthly, sensual, and devilish. (Jas. 3 15); to turn carnal men into ministers of the Spirit, spiritual lords, divines, and doctors of divinity. But so it is, if we may credit all that we hear; but how it is done must remain a mystery, until he that has promised to reveal the mystery of iniquity reveal this also as a main branch of it.

TEACHERS OF LAW PROMISE LIBERTY WHILE THEY ARE SERVANTS OF CORRUPTION

And who set these men to keep to themselves teachers is also as great a mystery. I know Paul bids Timothy commit his doctrine to faithful men, that they might be able to teach others; but to turn infidels into faithful men and divines is another thing. Paul speaks of some in his days that acted as the Hebrew masters did by their servants, who proclaimed liberty to them, and subjected them to servitude again; and calls them "false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage to whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel, (or the freedom that Christ has promised to them that receive the truth (Jn. 8:32); might continue with you." (Gal. 2:4, 5). And what was the bondage that these spies, who came in privily, brought in unexpectedly, wanted to bring in? Why they wanted to subject them to the command of the law, which genders to bondage, by telling them that they were under the law as a rule of life. "There rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, (the believing Gentiles), and to command them to keep the law of Moses." (Act.15:15)

Here is the command to the believers, they were to keep the law of Moses; to which Peter answers, "God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" The liberty

which Peter here alludes to is the liberty of the Holy Ghost, which God had given them, which Paul calls the law of the Spirit of life, which made him free from the law of sin and death; and "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," 2 Cor. 3:17, for, as David says, the Spirit of God is a free Spirit, Psa. 51:12. The rule that Peter gives them is faith, which purifies the heart.

The unbearable yoke that they were going to tempt God with, by galling the neck of the disciples, was first, the needfulness of circumcision: Secondly, a command to keep the law of Moses; and it is called tempting God, because it was a reflection cast upon His work who had purified their hearts by faith, and sent His spirit to govern and lead them into all truth, as if the Holy Ghost was not sufficient to make them obedient, nor God's purifying their hearts a sufficient purification, nor faith a sufficient rule, without yoking them with the killing letter as the only rule of life. And as it was then, so it is now; every man that refuses to tempt God, and that will not bring forth this yoke, and that does not affirm that the killing letter is the living man's only rule of life, is an Antinomian, a licentious person, a man in errors, one that makes void the law; and is cried down by every blind watchman, though they cannot bring one text to prove that the believer is under the law as a rule of life nor one text that calls Moses' law the believer's rule of life; nor one text from God's book to overthrow this doctrine, this everlasting gospel: Paul says, they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

If it be urged that the command, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, is still a yoke upon the believer's neck; it is answered, the believer is not under the law, but under grace; not an heir of wrath, nor of the commandments, but an heir of promise and he is to take the commandment to the promise, which belongs to the better covenant; and he will find that God has promised to circumcise his heart, and that he

shall love the Lord that he may live. Paul makes a difference between the commandment and Christ, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee," is in a promise, and is better than a command: they shall love me is safer and better than do love me; it comes from the better covenant, established upon better promises than conditional ones, and is sure to all the chosen seed.

A BETTER COVENANT

I have considered Solomon's conclusion of the whole matter, "Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man," and have deliberately considered all that you have drawn from the text; and I have likewise considered Paul's comment on Solomon's words, which differs much from yours. "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," 1 Tim. 1:5-7. What Solomon calls the conclusion of the whole matter, Paul calls the end of the commandment, James calls the perfect law of liberty; Peter calls the gift of the Holy Ghost and of purifying faith; which is the Savior's easy yoke and springing well; which is Paul's law of the Spirit of life; Solomon's law of the wise; the prophets' law that went forth out of Zion; the apostles' law of faith; Peter's holy commandment delivered unto us; and that the end of the commandment, which is charity, out of an heart purified by faith, attended with a good conscience, which all turn from who end in the flesh, and give themselves up to vain jangling, or to talking about things which they understand not.

WHATSOEVER IS NOT OF FAITH IS SIN

If my friend objects, and enforces the commands of Christ on hearing the word, attending the Lord's supper, etc., it is answered, the Spirit shall lead them into all truth. And if the Spirit leads them not, it is serving in the oldness of the letter, contrary to the apostles doctrine, which he received not of men, nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, Gal. 1:12. And if purifying faith be not the rule of the believer's actions or obedience to the commands of Christ, and if he be not fully persuaded by the Spirit of faith in his own mind, his works are sin; "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" to the unbelieving there is nothing pure, their mind and conscience is defiled, (Titus 1:5); nor does their obedience spring from that charity which is the end of the commandment, out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; but is a swerving from it. This is gospel that can never be overthrown; gospel which God has and ever will set His seal to; gospel which no hypocrite ever knew in the power thereof; gospel that shall never pass away, even when heaven and earth are both removed.

It will be expected that my unknown friend will send me in his answer to this, from the word of God, an account of the bad effects, licentious practices and libertinism, that this doctrine has produced in the saints of God; and likewise an account from Scripture of the superior holiness, fruitfulness, or usefulness, that has demonstrated itself in those who have tempted God, putting the commanding yoke of the law upon the disciples' necks; or, as Paul says, swerved from this end of the commandment, which is charity out of a pure heart, to the study and practice of vain jangling, or desiring to be

teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.

It is not to be wondered at that men love or desire to be teachers of the law; the letter is more superficial, it lays nearer home, and is within the compass of nature. But as for this mystery, to an unenlightened, unquickened, uninspired, unrenewed minister of the letter, it is too profound a depth, the natural man receives it not, nor can he know it, because it is spiritually discerned, and by the saints powerfully felt; but it will ever be a parable in the mouth of fools, Prov. 26:7. These are the great things of God's law, and they are accounted a strange thing, Hos. 8:12. It contains the weighty matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, and teaches a man to do the lesser matters in faith, and under the constraining power of the Spirit of love and of a sound mind; sound in the faith, and inspired with love, which will make a man obedient unto death; "love is strong as death;" and so those saints found it who "loved not their lives unto the death," Rev. 12:11. I come now to another branch of this perfect law of liberty. which is to be continued in, if a man will be blessed in his deed.

DEAD TO THE LAW BY THE BODY OF CHRIST

"Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband, so then if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead she

is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Rom. 7:14).

If Paul has any meaning I think it amounts to this, that the law has the same dominion over the sinner, that expects life or help from it by his own obedience to the rules of it, as the husband has over his wife by the law of marriage; and the law communicates bondage to the soul; which the soul naturally genders to, until the soul be pregnant with horror, despair, and misery, just as a man communicates seed to a wife, who brings forth a still-born or dead child, which is the worst of labors without any heir to satisfy the husband, as Paul aims to prove. "For, when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which: were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, Rom. 7:5. But when God tells the poor sinner, who is so fond of being Moses' disciple, that "Moses my servant is dead;" and the soul is quickened to feel and enlightened to see that the law is a killing letter, the law of death, and ministration of condemnation; and that the soul can bring forth no fruit to God under its gendering bondage, no fruit but fruit unto death or dead works; the soul seeing a dead husband, and a dead law, that cannot give life, the soul is loosed from that law; nor is it an adulteress, nor an Antinomian, though it be married to another man. For that law has no more power over such a soul than the corpse of Anna's husband had over her, who had been a widow upwards of forty years, and had lived with an husband but seven years from her virginity, and was then waiting to be married to the consolation of Israel. (Luke 2:36)

The way that the soul gets released from that law is by the body of Christ. The soul that sees that the law cursed the

Savior as well as the sinner, and that the Lord died under the law; that it was the law of death to the Savior as well as to the sinner; and, finding Christ raised from the dead, it goes after him and unites with Him, and is begotten to a lively hope by His resurrection from the dead; and Christ formed in the soul the hope of glory is an incorruptible seed indeed, a precious fruit. Such are no adulteresses though they be married to another man. Nor do they deserve the name of licentious Antinomians, seeing the Holy Ghost affirmeth that this is done that they may bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7:4; namely, the fruits of the Spirit. If the rigorous husband of a poor simple woman be dead, according to Paul's doctrine, one would think that he could command her person, and beat her back no more; and that the other man whom she had married had got the sole and whole command of her; I am sure he has by the laws of God, and by the covenant of wedlock, or else I know not who would marry a widow to have her hunted with the commands of a ghost.

However, if the killing commandments of the dead husband be the believer's rule of life, who is espoused to Christ by faith, this is the case; Moses, the Lord's servant, has still the command and dominion over the bride the Lamb's wife, Rev. 21:3. And notwithstanding his being dead, as God affirms, yet he must manage the household of faith, and give the only rule of life to the queen, although she be exalted to stand at the right hand of the king in gold of Ophir, Psa. 45:9. If she be at the right hand of the king, they do her much wrong who place her at the foot of a servant; one would think that, as he was not permitted to go into the promised land, though he fain would, which was but a faith type of heaven, he could never have such power over the house or church of Christ, which is so often emphatically called heaven.

We are under the law as the rule of life, say some; then the law of liberty is far from being perfect. One would think that

souls espoused to Christ, and married to Him, that they should bring forth fruit unto God, were under no law but that of the husband; or, as Paul says, under the law to Christ. And I am sure it is so with souls wedded to Moses, he has the whole command of them, for they are without the spiritual law of life altogether: and surely the second husband has as much right as the first; if we allow this man to be worthy of as much, Paul says, he is counted worthy of more glory than Moses. inasmuch as he who hath builded the house, as Jacob built the house of Israel by Rachel and Leah, Ruth 4:11, is worthy of more honor than the house. (Heb. 3:3)

It is clear that all the fruit brought forth under Moses was but dead works, or fruit unto death; therefore he built no house or household but that of the bond woman, who is affirmed to be desolate; and with respect to God, she is said to have no husband, Gal. 4:27; and therefore all her offspring are a bastard race of dead children, dead in trespasses and sins, which are sunk into the synagogue of Satan instead of a righteous nation, called the living, that are to rise up and praise Christ. (Isa. 38:19) Hence we learn that souls under the law wedded to Moses are not God's wife; they bring forth fruit unto death, not unto God; they are free from righteousness. God says, I am not their husband; Moses has full command of them, though he accuses them day and night; and Christ Himself always sends such souls to the law, that they may not marry another while the first husband lives. But when an accusing Moses, and his killing law, have executed their sentence of death on the soul, it is then dead; and if Christ quickens it and enlightens it, and it flies, as Ruth did, to His skirt, if He spreads His skirt over it, it is a time of love, and if He enters into a marriage covenant with such a soul, it becomes His own, Ezek. 16:8. He has the whole command of such, and the full possession of them; He has married the soul that was in a state of widowhood, and says thy Maker is thy Husband; thou shalt remember the reproach of thy

widowhood no more. Thus He marries the widow, discharges her debts, redeems the mortgaged inheritance, raises up the name of the dead upon it and does worthily in Ephratah, and is famous in Bethlehem, Ruth 4:11.

Paul tells us that he was dead to the law; "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." He tells us that when the commandment came sin revived, and he dies; that sin took occasion by the commandment, deceived him, and by it slew him, Rom 7:11. One would think that, when a law has apprehended a transgressor, arraigned him, tried him, cast him, condemned him, executed him, and buried him, he was got out of the reach of that rule of life. Paul says the law came to him, it apprehended him, sin revived, he would be found guilty; it took an occasion by the law to expose him to death, deceived him, with respect to all hopes in it, and slew him by the sentence of it; that he was dead and buried with Christ, or planted together with Him in the likeness of His death. If so, one would have thought that it had done with him.

But according to some, this killing letter, or moral law, has never done with the believer; they would make it like the Popish law, which makes a believer in Christ a heretic; condemns him, curses him with bell, book, and candle, and burns him to ashes, and yet pursues him still; if he goes to purgatory, it follows him; if to heaven, it holds the keys of that; and at the judgment day there can be no favor or mercy without Popish absolution. So some handle the law of Moses; though it kills a man and he is crucified, dead, buried, and risen again through the operation of God; yet the commandment that came, which deceived and slew him is still his only rule of life; it is still binding, and if he goes into heaven itself it pursues him, for the very angels round the throne are governed by it, as some affirm which is strange, as God's voice, whether in the law or in the gospel, is declared to be to the sons of men. (Prov. 8:4)

It has been a puzzling matter to me to find out what this is that appears in Moses' ministry, with respect to success, that makes people so eager to copy after him. "He fed the people forty years in the wilderness it is true, but he was so far from exceeding the apostles and evangelists in success, with respect to conversion work, that he declares "the Lord has not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day," Deut. 29:4; and calls them a perverse generation, a nation void of counsel, and children in whom is no faith, Deut. 32:20. And we know that their carcasses fell in unbelief twenty thousand together. Yea, and the Jews for rejecting of Christ and cleaving to Moses were destroyed by infinite numbers, and with an infinite destruction; and a Pharisee, who is the greatest advocate for the law, is farther from the kingdom of God than publicans and harlots; and if Moses be but read the veil is upon their hearts, nor can it be taken away till they turn to the Lord. No fruits are brought forth under the law but wild grapes, wild figs, untimely fruits, dead works, mercenary and eye service, and fruits unto death; and all spring from the base principles of slavish fear; done to get a name or to be seen of men, to merit heaven, and bring God in debt to them; their works spring from the fear of a condemned criminal, which is the worst of roots, and are directed to self, the worst of ends; hence Israel is said to be an empty vine, not united to Christ the true Vine, therefore He brings forth fruit to himself (Hos. 10:8); and instead of bringing forth fruit to himself he must deny himself daily.

THE SPIRIT AND GRACE OF GOD THAT TEACHES

With respect to its usefulness to instruct the children of God, it may be answered, believers are not without teachers; the Lord their God teaches them to profit, Isa. 48:7; to love Him, Deut. 30:6. Yea, and they are taught of God to love one another, 1 Thess. 4:9. Christ, the great prophet of the church, teaches them also. It is not now, remember the law of Moses my servant, but it is "this is my beloved Son, hear ye Him." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The Spirit of God, "the anointing which ye have received of Him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you (if he be a minister of the letter, or one that brings rules of life from the snares of death; - but, as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him," 1 Jn. 2:27.

The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Titus 2:11,12. The believer's own reins, when God tries him, instruct him in the night season, Psa. 16:7. "The heart of the wise, (being a new heart, which contains a new spirit), teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips." Thus the children of God are not without teachers, nor yet without divine and infallible teachers. And I would to God that the saints would attend a little more to their divine teaching, they would not stumble upon the dark mountains, be tossed about with every blind guide and wind of doctrine, and go hood-winked, groping for the wall at noonday, as numbers of them do. But alas! instead of searching the Scriptures, as they are commanded to do, which are able to make them wise to salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus, they load their shelves, and stuff their heads with the notions of what are called the fathers; when, if they would try them by God's standard, they would find that not one half of their notions would stand the touchstone of God's word. If believers were to go to the great infallible Head

and Prophet of the church by humble prayer, they would find their judgment better informed, their thoughts more established, and their hearts more firmly fixed, than ever they will be by reading a thousand folio volumes of such mongrel divinity, dashed with whole bowls of popery; where you may hunt for seven years and never find one page that can, in the strictest sense, be called the everlasting gospel.

There are libraries, consisting chiefly of ancient books that cost fifty thousand pounds, and I would not go fifty steps to call them all my own if stripped of that despised book called the Bible, and a few more that I could name, which were written by our own divines. I am fully persuaded that every believer may get divinity more pure from adulteration, more powerful, more satisfactory, more establishing, by humble prayer to Christ Jesus, in one hour, than ever he will get from all those authors that are called the fathers, who were as blind as bats, and their writings as full of confusion as a gentleman's garret is full of lumber. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

It is when men get cold to God, dead to study, powerless and faithless in prayer; shy of the Lord; at a distance from His throne, and beneath heavenly mindedness, and void of heavenly meditation; that they fly to these fathers instead of flying to the Father of eternity, where wisdom, mercy, and comfort may be got; for He is "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort;" and I know that he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, Psa. 84:11.

NOW SERVE IN NEWNESS OF SPIRIT

As to the letter of the commandments being an infallible rule of direction, is answered thus; they lead to the unity of God; that law prohibits idol worship and all covetousness, and commands love to the neighbor; but we are neither to serve God nor worship God in the oldness of the letter; He will be worshiped in Spirit and in truth, and served in the newness of the Spirit also; it is He that caused the light to shine out of darkness, that shines into our hearts, and gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God's worship, and God's service, are to be performed under the Spirit's influence; "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Although the law forbids covetousness, the power of it will never make any man hate it; "the law is weak through the flesh;" the law of unfeigned faith, that works by love out of a pure conscience, will make a man hate covetousness. "Pray for us," says Paul, "for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly."

NOT WITHOUT DIRECTION AND A DIRECTOR

God has not left His people without sufficient directions nor yet without a director. "In all thy ways acknowledge God, and He shall direct thy paths." Wisdom is profitable to direct; "I will direct their work in truth, says God; "and I will make an everlasting covenant with them," Isa. 61:8. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding," Psa. 32:8,9. "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not

known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them and not forsake them."

Sending the citizens of Zion to Sinai for rules of life and direction, is a contempt of Mount Zion, and of the heavenly Jerusalem, to which the Spirit of God leads all believers, (Heb. 12:22) and is no less a contempt of the King of saints, whom God hath set on that most holy hill. Making the letter the only rule of life, is sending the saints wrong, for as much as the Lord hath said unto them, they shall henceforth return no more that way, Deut. 17:16. They have compassed that mount long enough, Deut. 2:2,3. Moses is dead and buried, Josh. 1:2. Joshua is to take the lead. It is bewitching the people; (Gal. 3:1) it is sending them to the old yoke of bondage, Gal. 5:1; which is a contempt of the Savior's yoke. (Matt. 11:29) It is turning back upon grace; it is abusing their liberty; it is making Christ of none effect to them, Gal. 5:4; and that should profit them nothing. (Gal. 5:2)

Elijah, who traveled forty days into the wilderness in order to go to Horeb, instead of going to Mount Zion, was asked twice, by way of reproof, first in a storm, and then by a still voice, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" 1 Kings 19:9,13; which was attended with an earthquake, whirlwind, and a fire; God would not take him to heaven from that mount, though he requested to die there; that is not the new and living way, Heb. 10:20; he must go back to the Holy Land, over the river Jordan again, and into the plains of Jericho, where Joshua, typical of our Captain, first took the lead, before the fiery chariot appeared to take him to heaven, 2 Kings 2:11.

Nor can sending living souls to a killing letter for rules of life be any way promotive of fruitfulness. There can be no fruit brought forth to God's glory without an union, by the Spirit of love, to Christ the living Vine: the branch cannot bear fruit of

itself. No good fruit till the corrupt tree be made good by grace; "make the tree good and his fruit will be good; a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." No good works without faith; "whatsoever is not of faith is sin:" no honest labors without love: no spiritual fruits without the Spirit of God produce them; no works done acceptable to God, unless He works in us both to will and to do them.

BOUNDS OF THE CHURCH NOT REMOVED

Nor does this doctrine remove the bounds of the church, nor leave her without her enclosures, unless it can be proved that God's putting His laws in their hearts, and writing them in their minds giving them a new heart and a new spirit; putting His fear within them, and promising they shall not depart from Him; holding them in His hand so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them; causing them to walk in His statutes, to keep His judgments and do them; being a wall of fire round about them, placing salvation for walls and bulwarks, and keeping them by His mighty power through faith, can be called removing the bounds and taking away the enclosures of the church; and I think it is a pity that such a dispensation of superabounding grace, the ministration of God's eternal Spirit, should find no more favor in the eyes of poor miserable sinners, nor any better name than that of Antinomianism. For my part, I believe it will go by another name at the restitution of all things; for, if Christ restores all things, He will doubtless restore His own gospel to its proper name.

As for correcting unruly Christians by the law, I believe the saints' law written on the fleshly tables of every believing heart by the Spirit of God; and that Christ dwells in them by faith;

and that He keeps His royal court in Mount Zion for all His friends, as He is crowned King there; but, as for Sinai, it is His court of judicature; He appears there as the Judge of all. We are to apprehend the unruly, and keep them to the royal court, and to the bar of equity; and appeal, as Paul did, to God and to conscience in God's sight: and when the unruly feels the force of faithful reproof, backed with the Scriptures of truth, and seconded by his own conscience, it will be more mortifying and humbling to him than flogging him with the scourges that can be brought from the ministration of death. This never brought a sinner to Christ, nor restored a backslider; it is with the cords of love that God leads a soul to the Savior; and by the same is the backslider restored. "I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely."

Your enforcing the command to love God, calling it the believer's rule, that must ever remain binding, is not speaking as the oracles of God. We know that the law commands us to love God; and we have received favors enough to bring us in debtors so to do; but the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to that law, nor can be. There is nothing that the law demands but what the gospel gives; and there is nothing that the law commands that it helps us to perform, nor does it afford strength, life, love, holiness, mercy, inclination or power to enable us to give it its due.

I know we are commanded to walk in love as Christ has loved us; but we must settle things on their own proper basis. The end of the commandment is charity; but where do we get this charity or love? Why it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. It is given, is from the covenant of promise, not from the covenant of works; if salvation be of grace in every part, it is no more of works in any part. Love is the basis of a covenant of grace; "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" the gift of Christ is the wonderful effect of it; "God so loved the world that He gave

His only begotten Son." It is with lovingkindness that God draws us to Christ; "no man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Love is the bond of the everlasting covenant; "My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor suffer My faithfulness to fail." Love is the bond of eternal union between Christ and His church: Thou, O Father, hast loved them as thou hast loved Me, Jn. 17:23. Love is the bond of heartfelt union between the Lord and us; "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him: " and it is called the love of God perfected in us, not our love, which is of the law; for it is said not that we loved God, but that He loved us.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LOVE OF GOD AND THE LAW OF WRATH

Who ever sent men to preach, who can make no difference between the law that worketh wrath, and love which casteth out fear; which the law genders; no difference between the killing letter and the bond of the everlasting covenant? Let love stand upon its own bottom, fix it not on the letter of the law. The law reveals the wrath to come; it is God's magazine which contains all the treasures of hail reserved against the day of battle and war, Job. 38:22. And who could ever have thought that the only rule of life for believers could be brought from the ministration of condemnation, (2 Cor. 8:93) the snares of death (Prov. 13:14), the voice of words (Heb. 12:19); the law that worketh wrath, Rom. 4:15; the killing letter 2 Cor. 3:6; the law that is against us. (Col. 2:14) The adversary that delivers us to the judge to be cast into prison; (Matt. 5:26) a law that furnishes the sinner with an accuser before God Jn. 5 45; that is contrary to us Col. 2:14; that cursed the Savior Himself, though innocent Gal. 3:13;

because He undertook for His friends. A fiery law (Deut. 33:2); a fire kindled in God's anger; Deut. 32:29; seven thunders that are to utter their voices Rev. 10:3; a shower of snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest Psa. 11:6; a fire that shall burn to the lowest hell (Deut. 32 22). But so it is; and every preacher that does not bind this grievous yoke upon men's shoulders; that does not turn aside to vain jangling; that refuses to tempt God by putting this yoke upon the disciples' necks, which none are able to bear; is an erroneous man; a man of a bad spirit: one that makes void the law; and is, as I have been often called a stinking Antinomian. God be merciful to such men! I have no other glass to view them in but the Scriptures of truth and my own experience. And as God liveth, I do believe if fifteen out of twenty of our present ministers were to see themselves as I see them in the light of God's word, that they would wish they had never been born; curse the day in which they took upon them the office of the ministry, and wish it to be blotted out from the number of the months (Job 3:6). But alas! ALAS! there are none who think themselves sufficient for these things but those of no understanding! A blind man knows not how to go to the city (Eccl. 19:15). A blind man beholdeth not the way of the vineyards. (Job. 24:18)

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COVENANT OF LAW AND COVENANT OF GRACE

My friends may well ask, What is my sin? What have I done? Seeing some cry one thing and some another, the assemblies are confused, and no account given of the cause of this concourse; and I can give none, unless it be for this one voice that I cried among them; touching the law, I said it is not the

believer's rule of life. And this I do insist upon, that bondage, hardness of heart, revealed wrath, enmity against God, desperation, curses of hell and damnation, are the best things that men can fetch from the killing letter of the law of Moses; whether the man be a believer or an infidel it matters not. The law will pursue the believer if he goes there, Christ alone is his Refuge; it will entangle the believer, and yoke him again if he looks for help there. The law is not of faith, but of works; it is not of believing, but of doing: "he that doth these things shall live in them," is the language to the end of the chapter. Works are works. and grace is grace, the one is a covenant of works, the other a covenant of grace; one was given by Moses, the other came by Jesus Christ.

The covenant of works was made with man; it belongs to Adam, and all his children in the flesh that bear his image; the covenant of grace was made with Christ, and all His seed in Him. The one is established upon unconditional promises, the other upon the conditions of dead man's performances; and who would call this law the believer's only rule of life? he is to walk and live by faith; he is to worship and serve God in the newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter; he is to walk in love as Christ hath loved him. And it is pain that faith worketh by love, and is attended with divine life, which are all the gifts of God in Christ Jesus; they are received from His fullness, and wrought in us, and are no less than the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which make us free from the law of sin and death.

If faith, life, holiness, and love, come from the law of the Spirit, why are they ingrafted upon the killing letter? and why is the believer sent forth to fetch his rule of life from that law which was once his death warrant? why this confusion: why this turning things upside down? The man that has got the law of the Spirit of life in him is the man to whom the Lord speaks by His Son. He speaks not to the believer out of the cloudy pillar,

nor out of thick darkness. He has spoken to us in these last days by His Son; and it is to the believer that He thus speaks: "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law." A believer is a righteous man, made so by imputation; and the law is not made for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient, (1 Tim. 1:9). God speaks to the children of the flesh in the law. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." But the saints are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6:14. The law is a yoke of bondage for bond children, a covenant of works for proud work mongers, and a ministration of condemnation, to curse them for their pride and evil works.

As to what David says of the law being perfect, converting the soul, and of its being a light to his feet and a lamp to his path, it is soon answered. The killing letter never turning a soul from darkness to light, from the love of sin to love God with all his heart; which is attended with faith, repentance, and godly sorrow, which flows from a sense of God's love to him in Christ Jesus; all which come from the covenant of grace. Faith is a coming to Christ, and the love that faith works by draws his heart as he goes; and both these are the free gift of God. Christ did not furnish Saul with these spiritual weapons, which are mighty through God to pull down strong holds from the killing letter. I send thee Paul to turn sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Me, Acts 26:10. The brightest light that shines in the law comes from the eye of offended Justice; it was the flames of wrath that the law was given at first; it was added because of transgression, and it is in that awful light that sinners see their own condemnation, as Saul and Balaam saw their own future destruction; and it is in that light that sinners will see their endless misery, who are said to lift up their eyes in hell; but that light discovers not the path of life, which is called the path

of the just. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the true Light, and the everlasting light of all His people; he that believeth in Me, says the Savior, shall not abide in darkness. David was not without the law of faith; he tells you he believed, therefore hath he spoken; nor was he without the law of the Spirit of life, as appears by his prayer; "Take not thy Spirit from me." It was in this law that he saw wonders; as for the ten commandments, he prayed that God would not enter into judgment with his servant under them, for he knew the commandments were exceeding broad. If the commandments afford such a deal of light to our feet, how comes it that our present advocates for them are so exceeding blind? by them it appears that Paul's assertions are true, that the veil remains untaken away in reading the Old Testament, I am bold therefore to affirm, sir, that David and you have two different meanings.

With respect to what you have heard about my speaking lightly of the law, I believe you will find, in this my answer to yours, all that I have ever said about it; and you must judge for yourself whether I have spoken the language of Scripture or not. If I have to lay the blame where it ought to be laid; "if any man consent not to the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is proud knowing nothing.

However, as I am determined to publish this answer to yours, my accusers will have a fair opportunity to attack the doctrine. I have advanced on the ground of truth: I have fled to none of those poor shifts called implications and the fitness of things; I have used no weapons but those that I believe to be spiritual. They cannot have a fairer opportunity, nor a fairer field to meet me on, nor a smaller number to engage. If this be Antinomianism, let them muster all their forces against it, prove it to be so, and overthrow it. I am open to conviction; my conscience is not seared, nor am I past feeling; and, if I cannot defend it by God's word, I will fly to no other shifts; and

therefore I hope my opponents will not puzzle my brains with St. Basil, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, Herman Witsius, and saint nobody knows who. Jesus I know; but who are these? For my part, I have not a single doubt but God will enable me to defend this doctrine; for I know it is the doctrine that He applied to me, and set my soul at liberty by. And as I am the Antinomian, according to their accusations, it lies with them to overthrow it, and prove their charge; and, if upon trial it be found to be the everlasting gospel, then "let them hear and say, it is truth," Isa. 43 9; and acknowledge that for the truth's sake I have suffered reproach.

LEGAL BONDAGE AND GOSPEL LIBERTY CANNOT STAND TOGETHER

If the law of works be binding to the saints as some affirm, then James' law of liberty is not perfect, nor can we be blessed in our deeds by continuing in that. If the law of works be binding, then the law of the Spirit of life did not make Paul free from the law of death, unless it can be proved, that legal bondage and gospel liberty can stand together. If the believer be under the law as a rule of life, then he is under the law and under grace both at once; which Paul says he is not; he is not under the law, but under grace. If he be under the law as a rule of life, he has got Peter's unbearable yoke and Christ's easy yoke both on his neck at one time.

The man that makes the killing letter his rule walks by sight, not by faith, he looks at the things that are seen, not at the things which are not seen. He serves in the oldness of the letter, not in the newness of the Spirit; he worships God in the letter, not in Spirit and in truth; nor is he free indeed. I know

the law will bring a man into bondage notwithstanding his grace, if he stands not fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free; nor does the law of the wise, as a fountain of life, cause a man to depart from the snares of death; or, as the Savior says, pass from death to life by faith, because the believer, according to them, is still under the snares of death; he is still under the law of death as his only rule of life.

This is called preaching the gospel, doing the work of an evangelist, being a minister of the Spirit, making full proof of the ministry; and every man that cannot turn the law that worketh wrath into a law of love; that cannot bring the living fruits of the Spirit out of the killing letter; that cannot turn the snares of death into rules of life, is an erroneous man and an Antinomian. Welcome reproach! welcome names! welcome Antinomian! These names bring no guilt on the conscience; they stop not up the new and living way between God and the soul; they seal not up God's book, nor bind the spirit-of liberty.

JUMBLING THE TWO COVENANTS

Election secures every minister in his station, and all the success that shall attend his labors. It has been observed that those, who have been the most forward at lampooning me for an Antinomian, have been the greatest novices in divinity; and, while they have been contending for the law as the only rule of life, they have preached the greatest confusion, discovered the greatest ignorance of the nature of the law, and have evidently appeared in the strongest bondage: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity;" he that binds grievous burdens on other men's shoulders goes a sure way to load his own back.

No wonder that legions are flocking back to Sinai; it is a proof that the law is not dead to them, nor they to it; they begun in

the Spirit before they had been killed by the letter. Their first husband, it is to be feared, is not dead, therefore they are not loosed from that law: and being adulteresses, the first husband has taken them up and brought them back, not being loosed from their old bond of wedlock, nor favored with a writing of divorcement; therefore, as a wife of the first covenant, the eloped Lo-ruhamah is brought back, Hos. 1:6; Hos. 2-1,2; but Hephzibah, the Lord's delight, whom He has espoused to Himself, if she goes back, will return again to her first husband, saying, It was better with me then than it is now.

Consider, Sir, and see if there be anything that you want to make you holy or happy that does not come from the law of the Spirit of life; and whether any of these things come from the law of works; whether mercy, grace, hope, or help comes from that quarter: and take heed that you do not jumble these two covenants together. One is a covenant of works, the other of grace; one is the law of death, the other the law of life; bond children are under the law; free children are under grace; they that are under grace are under the blessing, those under the law are under the curse; one are the heirs of promise, the other heirs of wrath; one are children of God, the other are children of the devil. The free-born children receive the inheritance freely, the bond children work to earn it. "The gift of God is eternal life," "the wages of sin is death." And in order to clear the doctrine from the charge of Antinomianism, I will inquire what this law of the Spirit of life produces, for we are told that the gospel brings forth fruit, Col. 1:6. Paul says, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law."

Now let us see what the law of the wise, which Solomon calls a fountain of life, produces. I think we shall find the same things springing from this fountain as comes from Paul's law of the Spirit: Solomon says wisdom loves them that love her;

and that love is better than a house full of sacrifices; and that, "if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned." Here is what Paul calls the first fruit of the Spirit, the next is joy; "the heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." Peace; "wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Longsuffering; "the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit." Gentleness; "be not hasty to go out of his sight; stand not in the evil thing." Goodness; "the upright shall have good things in possession." Faith; "in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and His children shall have a place of refuge." Meekness; "Surely he scorneth the scorners, but he giveth grace to the lowly." Temperance; "the righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul." Thus the fruits of Paul's law of the Spirit are the same as those that spring from Solomon's law of the wise, which he calls a fountain of life: and remember the gospel is called the ministration of the Spirit, and the law is the ministration of the letter; "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Solomon's fountain of life is supplied from God in covenant, who tells us that all his springs are in Zion; therefore it is vain to expect help from Sinai. The law of the Spirit will remain what it is, notwithstanding men's legality; and the ministration of the letter will remain what it is, notwithstanding man's faith and love, one will ever give life, and the other will ever give death: the one will ever produce freedom, and the other will ever gender to bondage.

GRACE - NOT LAW MAKES THE BELIEVER WHAT HE IS

Those that have felt the bondage, wrath, terrors, and death, that the law works, will prize their liberty, and take heed how

they approach that blackness and darkness again; but those that never felt its power can play with it as with a bird, for they are alive without it. It is vain that ministers send men to Sinai in order to promote holiness: "the works of the flesh are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness." And will sending men to the law destroy these? Nay, says Paul, these are the motions of sin, which are by the law that works in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, Rom. 7:5. Nor was the law manifested to destroy these works of the devil, but to make them appear exceeding sinful; nor does the law weaken sin but aggravate it; for "the strength of sin is the law."

It is grace that makes the believer what he is, nor will the law ever make him better. Those that came privily in to spy out the apostles' liberty that they might bring them into bondage, (Gal. 2:4) agree exactly with you in sentiment; for if the law be binding to the believer, and he be under it as a rule of life, it is the same as what they enforced; namely, "it was needful to circumcise them, and command them to keep the law of Moses." They said this was needful; you say the believer is under this necessity: they called it keeping the law of Moses; and you call the law of Moses the believer's rule of life.

There is no more difference between your assertions and theirs than there is between my two eyes. If you object that it is circumcision only that is called the yoke that was unbearable; it is answered they were circumcised at eight days old, therefore the fathers could give very little account of the unbearable pain of it. The yoke consisted in this; "he that is circumcised is a debtor to do the whole law:" "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" is what is meant. Submitting to circumcision is rejecting Christ, who was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises

made unto the fathers. And submitting to the yoke of keeping the law of Moses is rejecting Christ's yoke, which consists of faith and love in the Spirit. The yoke therefore is this, it is needful to circumcise the believers, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. (Acts 15:5) And you say the law is binding, and that the believer is under the law as his rule of life; you might just as well have stuck to the old text, for it amounts exactly to the same, nor doth your different way of expression alter the matter. Their need of keeping the law of Moses is your binding law as a rule of life; it is the spirit of legal bondage that obliges and binds you; and it was the same that influenced those who made it needful; different names make no alteration in the things.

Those men tempted God by putting that yoke on the saints, and subverted their souls by saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, to whom God gave no such commandment, Acts 15:10-24; and they do no less than tempt God and subvert the souls of believers, who tell them the law is binding, and that they are under it as a rule of life, for God has given them no such commandment. Nor can men expect that the broad seal of heaven should attend a ministry that tempts God and subverts the souls of His saints, when it is expressly said that it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to the apostles, to lay on them no such burden. However, this is the way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death, Prov. 14:12; it is turning people from grace to works; from the liberty of the Spirit to the bondage of the law; from the law of the Spirit of life to the law of death. Liberty and bondage, grace and works, Christ's yoke and the yoke of Moses, the true light and the old veil, death and life, can never stand together, one must give way; grace shall reign, and Moses must be subject.

If a believer be a new creature, has a new heart, a new spirit, walks in the new and living way, and must serve God in the

newness of the Spirit, and walk in newness of life, old things must be done away: and if old things are done away, the yoke of bondage is included among them, which Paul calls the law of death, or else the apostle's assertion, cannot stand good; "therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;" and he that sits upon the throne says, behold I create all things new. God has granted us "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated (or new made) for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh." Take heed, sir, that you despise not this new and living way; it is the old way that you contend for at present, which is stopped up; it is hedged about with thorns, namely, the curses of the law; and so poor sinners will find it, when like Balaam, they fall before that terrible sword of God that turns every way to keep the way of the tree of life, Gen. 3:24; none will ever get to God that old way; the sword that keeps the way of life destroys all thieves and robbers that climb up any other way, or dare to look through, or gaze, where God has fixed his bounds, Exod. 19:21-23.

THE LAW IS GOOD BUT JUSTIFIES NONE

I know the law is holy, just, and good, because it defends a holy, just, and good God, and will certainly cut off and destroy forever every adversary that is found under it; but though the law is holy, yet it sanctifies none; it is just, but it justifies none; it is good but it imparts no goodness to men; God is our Justifier and Sanctifier, and Christ is our righteousness and sanctification. God's goodness to us comes by grace; severity comes by the law; "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity, but towards thee,

goodness, if thou continue in His goodness; otherwise thou also shall be cut off," with the sword furbished at that armory. It is the fiery law that gives the sword of justice its flaming edge; "where there is no law, there is no transgression;" sin is the transgression of the law, and the law is the transgressor's adversary that makes his crimes appear exceeding sinful, and delivers him to the judge: here lies its power; "the strength of sin is the law." But with respect to our obedience, its lending us any help, pardoning of us, justifying of us, it is weak through the flesh, Rom. 8:3.

I would to God, Sir, that you would pray a little more over your Bible, or ask wisdom of God. When Paul says, "the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin," he does not mean thereby that spiritual life, spiritual health, spiritual help, or strength, is communicated from thence. The law gives neither righteousness, life, hope, help, nor strength. The law is strong to destroy, but never was mighty to save, nor is help laid upon that. It is called spiritual, because it reaches to the thoughts of men's hearts, and curses them for a lascivious look as being adultery itself, (Matt. 5:28); for anger is murder in the abstract, 1 Jn. 3:15; yea, if a man break one command, he is guilty of all, James 2:10. It casts him for every idle word; for all that is more than yea, or nay; it brings him into judgment; and both heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of that law shall fail, Luke 16:17.

It is called spiritual, because it reached to spirits; yea, to the wicked souls of men and devils also, for they are under one curse; it reveals wrath, spiritual death, damnation, and everlasting destruction, both to the bodies and souls of all them who die under it; and it will hold all rebellious spirits, whether men or devils, in the prison of hell till they can pay the very last mite, Luke 12:59; which will be effected when lying in gaol can be called paying of debts. God says, this fiery law, which is a revelation of wrath kindled in His anger, shall burn

to the lowest hell. Christ, our Passover, was roasted in that fire, and it made His heart like wax, it melted in the midst of His bowels, Psa. 22:14; therefore take heed that thou attempt not to turn that ministration of death into rules of life. Cleave close to Him that is a hiding place from that north wind, and a covert from that tempest, Isa. 32:2. In Christ Jesus thou shalt find refuge when God makes the wicked as a fiery wheel, and persecutes them with all these storms, Psa. 73:13-15; but no where else.

If this handling the law lawfully, and holding forth the word of life, as a faithful steward of the manifold grace of God; if this be rightly dividing the word of truth: if it be giving to each his portion in due season, a portion to seven and also to eight; if it be doing the work of an evangelist; if it be preaching the gospel according to Christ's command; if it be handling the word faithfully, as a minister of the Spirit; if it be acting like a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, being approved of God; in short, if this be preaching the mystery of faith, then where are legions of our present preachers got? and if this be the pure, unmixed, unadulterated gospel of Christ, what are nine parts of ten of the doctrine that is delivered in our days under that name? And if this is error and antinomianism, then what is gospel?

I understand your hint, Sir, those speak it more plain who call me in public a stinking Antinomian; and this doctrine antinomianism which leads to licentiousness. And I wish they would speak it plainer still; then they would appear in their proper colors, and be less capable of deceiving the simple. They must either prove this doctrine to be error, instead of truth, licentious antinomianism, instead of gospel, or else acknowledge that calumny amounts to this in the sight of God; that, instead of walking in the Spirit, and delivering people from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, it leads them into it; that, instead of the grace of God teaching men to deny ungodliness

and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, it encourages ungodliness, and a licentious way of living; and instead of the law of the Spirit making men free from the law of sin and death, that it leads them into sin, the wages of which is death.

This is their reproach, and this is the meaning of it in the sight of God; and it is plain to a spiritual mind where this reproach falls; namely, on that God who is gracious and merciful; on that Savior by whom grace and truth came, as if He was the minister of sin; and upon the Spirit of grace, who gives the law of faith, and who is the real Giver of the law of life, it being emphatically called by the apostle his law, or the law of the Spirit of life. This, Sir, borders upon the unpardonable sin, it is trifling with the fold of infinite wisdom, (Eph. 3:10) and with the greatest dispensation that ever heaven revealed to men, 2 Cor. 3:8. It is making free with the spiritual court, from which there is no appeal; it is sinning against the last condescending lawgiver that ever appeared in this lower world. The Holy Ghost gives that law of the wise that is the fountain of life; He gives the law of faith that excludes all boasting. The Holy Ghost is the Giver of the law of life, that takes men from the law of sin and the snares of death. It is this Lawgiver that brings every blessing from heaven, testifies of Christ, and glorifies Him on His throne; whose kingdom stands not in word, or in rules of life drawn from the letter of Moses' law, but in power, "in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." To do despite to the Spirit of grace is treading under foot of the Son of God whom the Spirit testifies of. Heb. 10:29. Sin against Him, the Savior that saves to the uttermost, says, it shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come, Matt. 12:31, 32.

O Sir, keep your distance, drop no such hints here; "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because

they said He hath an unclean spirit;" and those that declare the law of the Spirit of life leads to licentiousness say little better; for they charge Him with the devil's works though they do not call Him in express terms an unclean spirit. It is a bold, daring, presumptuous, perilous step; it is spiritual wickedness in the worst sense; it is leaving sin at the foot of a Lawgiver that shed no blood; it is committing rebellion against Him that will by no means clear the guilty, Exod. 34:7; it is doing despite on the bounds of the most sacred enclosure; it is venturing on the most dangerous spot of ground in all the holy land. Sins against God the Father in the law are pardoned; he that speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him; but he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness. He will by no means, no not by the blood of Christ, pardon those that are guilty of the sin unto death, 1 Jn. 5:16.

NO GOOD EFFECTS BY PREACHING LAW

I have watched narrowly to see what good effects this doctrine of yours produces among those where it is perpetually enforced, and I can see nothing produced to make me fall in love with it, unless it be blindness, confusion, feigned humility, and struggling under bondage; being influenced with malice against the gospel; calling everything that tends to make poor sinners free and happy, Antinomianism, not knowing what they say, but taking it from their teachers. The saints are a people that God has formed for Himself to show forth His praise. If he has created them anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. It is therefore their new creation in Christ Jesus, and their abiding in Him, as the branch doth in the vine, that produces these good works which they are to walk in. As they

received Christ Jesus the Lord, so they are to walk in Him Every saint must acknowledge as Paul, that, "by the grace of God I am what I am."

If grace makes them what they are, sending them to the law will never mend this work, nor make the subjects of this workmanship better; God's work is perfect, nothing can be added to it by the wisdom of men nor by the law of Moses; "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." The church is subject to Christ; subject to the civil power where they live; and subject to one another: but not subject to Moses, nor to his law; they are no longer under a schoolmaster, Gal. 3:25; no longer under tutors and governors, (Gal. 4:2) they are not under the law but under grace. When the false brethren came in to spy out the apostles' liberty, that they might bring them into bondage; telling them that they must keep the law of Moses, we gave place to them by subjection, no, not for an hour, says Paul; nor did we reject the truth and admit their yoke of bondage, no, we gave place not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. (Gal. 2:4,5)

My friend will be ready to say, the way to heaven is a difficult way to find; and I answer it is so, because there is a ditch so close to it, which many fall into, being led by false preachers, deceitful workers, and blind guides, who turn from the truth that came by Jesus Christ, and get groping about Mount Sinai for help, till the old veil and the god of this world blind their eyes; and when they have lost sight of the puzzling mystery of the gospel, for such it is to unconverted men, then they think they see everything in the letter of the law and in themselves, and so become vain in their imaginations, their foolish hearts being darkened, they then follow vain jangling, and make shipwreck of faith, lampoon the power of religion, become haters of those that are good, deceiving themselves and deceiving others, till they get desperate against the truth, and

it becomes a vexation only to understand the report of the gospel, but the path of the just hath the light of God's countenance upon it; he that walks and lives by faith is in the narrow way that leadeth unto life, Matt. 7:14; for the just man shall live by his faith, and he shall walk in newness of life. This is wisdom's way, "a path which no fowler knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Christ is the way as well as the truth and the life; to live and walk by the faith of Him is to walk safely indeed. "In this way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death." Though this way appears narrow and difficult, yet the poor believing sinner, who is nothing in himself, but looks to his Savior for all, though he be a fool, he shall not err in this way: the Lord has promised to guide him and uphold him; and I will, says God, lead them "in a straight way Wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My firstborn." (Jer. 31:9)

The bad use that ungodly men may make of the truth of the Christian's liberty in the Spirit is not to silence spiritual ministers, Christ's yoke must be brought forth; the children of God must be fed; the gospel must be preached; the saints' liberty must be shewed, and they cautioned not to abuse it, and counseled to stand fast in it; notwithstanding the villainy of those that come in privily to spy it out. Ungodly men will abuse the most High God, and even the Bible itself; therefore no wonder if they abuse the sermons or writings of His servants. The impenitent infidel, whose mind and conscience both are defiled; to whom there is nothing clean; who are condemned already, and under the wrath of God. will turn everything to bane.

But are we to muzzle the truth, yoke the saints of God with Moses' law, and call the snares of death rules of life, to please them? No, this is putting stumbling blocks before the eyes of

the blind, and making men stumble at the law, Mal. 2:8; this is not declaring the whole counsel of God; this is not leaving the work with the Lord, who has power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to as many as are ordained to it. We are not to make such men as these the objects of our fear in the pulpit, nor keep back God's word from His people on account of their abusing it: they call the Master Himself Beelzebub; and what can be expected from such men but sin? Ministers are a savor of death unto death to them, and are sent to preach the gospel for a witness against them; and their desperate wickedness against the gospel serves to shew us that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation, Jude 4.

I have considered the text you refer me to, "if ye love Me, keep My commandments" and I find His commandments are joyous, not grievous for the commands are that we should believe on Him and love one another. But those that call the law the believer's rule of life, and me an Antinomian, show but very little of this love. He keeps the Savior's commandments who receives the word in an honest and good heart, and keeps it, such receive the word with power in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance such and only such keep the word of Christ's promise, and He will keep them from the hour of temptation, Rev. 3:10. He that keeps the Lord's commandments is united to Him by the bond of love in the Spirit; he that keepeth His commandment dwelleth in Him and he in Him. He that is a stranger to this union alive without the law, alive to sin and dead to God for "hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."

I have had a world of legal duties formerly pressed upon me, and I know what effect such preaching had and I see the same in others that fear God. It serves to nurse the pride of those that know nothing of the power of godliness. I have heard misers, persecutors, and hypocrites, applaud and admire the doctrine, but they have been dreadfully

exasperated at some who are called Antinomians, if they have happened to enforce the necessity of the Spirit's assistance in the performing of these things, and of their being done in faith. Men may lead people as much as they please with moral, relative, and church duties but if they spring not from union with the true vine; if not performed with the influence of the Spirit of God; if they are not done in faith, and with an eye to God's glory they amount to nothing more than the works of the flesh, or dead works while the legal performer is as proud as Satan himself and, by resting in these things, is further from God's kingdom than publicans or harlots.

A devil transformed into an angel of light is more dangerous than when he comes in character that is, as an accuser, a thief, or a robber, nor does Satan do the seeking sinner so much hurt when he throws him down and rends him, Mark 9:20, as he does when he points us to legal preachers, or ministers of the letter, crying out "these men are the servants of the most high God, that shew unto us the way of salvation," Acts 16:17. He was as much a devil when he promised this world and the glory of it to Christ as he was when he wished him to throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, Luke 4:9.

Satan sometimes turns reformer in times of danger when the gospel makes a stir in his territories; then is the time that he fires the zeal and increases the numbers of moral preachers; he knows what the law can do. . . . "The law worketh wrath, for where no law is there is no transgression." consequently no transgressors. He knows that "the strength of sin is the law," better than we do and he knows that those who are under the law of death are under the law of sin, hence it is that he never stirs men up to reproach, revile, belie, scandalize, or persecute, a graceless preacher of moral duties; for it is by the instrumentality of such men that he has brought thousands to his dark dominions: by such preachers as these

the devil keeps both the pulpit and the pew; he stirs up the preacher to blind the people, and the people to applaud their blind guide and thus the god of this world holds both the leader and the led. When he stirred up the Jewish priests to reject Christ, and cast out His disciples, he became head ranger both of the temple and the synagogue.

The doctrine that routs the devil consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost telling Zion that the King is come. When the disciples preached this the Savior saw "Satan as lightning fall from heaven." He cast abroad the rage of his wrath and set the world in a blaze. This sort of preachers are the only adversaries that the devil has got, he gains ground by the others. He was very high bringing over the whole church of Galatia by the instrumentality of moral preaching. If God does not uphold His people with His free Spirit, Psa. 51:12, I much question if any other yoke will do when trials come on. For my part, I never found any doctrine that would beget souls to God, keep them alive, make their minds heavenly, their conversation pure, keep their consciences tender, or make their lives exemplary, but that of enforcing regeneration, or a spiritual birth, justification by faith, union and fellowship with Christ by love; and a walk in the testimony and liberty of the Holy Ghost.

However, this I can say, that the religion that God has taught me has been sufficient to make me industrious and willing to live honestly and I must declare, and will with my dying breath, that I never knew what happiness and peace, rest, quietude, comfort, joy, or pleasure, meant until Jesus Christ appeared to my soul: in Him I have seen the perfection of all beauty: I have felt Him to be the foundation of all real happiness: the light of His countenance, and the anticipation of His love, is the quintessence of all that is called pleasure and to have Him is to be possessed of an immortal, incorruptible, undefiled, and never-fading inheritance which

has so crucified me to this world, and the pleasures of it, that I have just as much desire to return to it again as Abraham had to return to Ur of the Chaldees, when God had promised to be his shield and everlasting reward in the land of Canaan. Whatever the law of God enforces the Spirit of God impresses the mind with, and leaves the impression as legible upon the fleshly tables of the believer's heart, as ever He did on the two tables of stone, 2 Cor. 3:3. The devil is never more to be suspected than when he appears in a pulpit in a large wig and long bands, with a grave countenance, an audible voice, ambiguous speech, zeal mixed with candor, enforcing moral virtue, and bringing in Christ as an example, but not as the root of the matter, nor yet enforcing the need of His Spirit, nor of union with Him.

EVILS OF PREACHING LAW

These things, and a few zealous strokes at the power of religion, under the name of enthusiasm, and a candid application of those blind and bond children who cannot see through their mask, have been of very great use to the devil, because it has served to stumble the faithful and establish the Pharisee. Such as these have sent my soul bleeding home many a time swaddled with the spirit of bondage and sin has taken occasion by the commandment, until the corruption of my heart and carnal enmity have been stirred up against God, my mind begloomed with horror, and terrors have driven my feet; wrath then seemed to pursue me, Christ and comfort were gone, my sins, that had been long pardoned, came afresh to my remembrance and my heart was filled with hard thoughts of the Savior, the devil suggesting that Christ had left me, and was become my enemy, as a proof of which, he was now pursuing me with fire and sword. But, when the Lord again appeared and delivered me, I saw the bondage was

from the law, not from the Savior, and that it was the devil pursuing me, not the Lord. I could then see the difference between the tempter and my great Deliverer. And all this was communicated to my soul from the pulpit, and that by the devil himself in a large wig and a long band.

THE LAW WORKS WRATH AND JUDGMENT

Christ calls the scribes, notwithstanding their long robes, a generation of vipers and says they were of their father the devil, and his works they did, in binding grievous burdens on men's shoulders, which they never touched, though others labored hard under them. If Satan can get preachers to obscure the gospel and enforce the law, he knows the old veil will gather on the minds of the people and when a man is blinded you may lead him anywhere and he shall never know the want of a leader while Satan can furnish the world with blind guides: for it is by these men that he leads them into the ditch.

Such preaching drives many poor distressed souls from all religion; they hear of nothing but wrath and duty and the more they labor the worse they get, and then they shake off all, and are glad to get out so, and such become the greatest enemies to religion afterwards: and the instruments of all this mischief are legal preachers for without Christ man can do nothing, Jn. 15:5. It is looking to Jesus that enlightens us, abiding in the cleft of the rock that shelters us from Satan's rage. Souls flying here are compared to doves flying to their windows, where they are sure of light but going to the law is going to blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the burning fire, Heb 12:18; which pursues the sinner. Satan is not

displeased at man's dressing up the law, calling it the believer's rule of life, the law of love, the law of kindness, etc. He knows the law is the snare of death, that has entangled all the prey which that artful fowler has caught. This law is the sinner's adversary that entangles him in his sin, and delivers him to the judge; and the just judge delivers him by the law to the tormentors. (Matt. 18:34) Are there souls in hell? it was the law that cast them, condemned them, and fixed them there. Are they holden with the cords of their sin? the strength of those cords is the law, 1 Cor. 15:55. Are they under the curse? then they are under the law. (Gal. 3:10) Are they under the dominion of eternal death? They received it from the law, which is the ministration of death, 2 Cor. 3:7.

Are their souls boiling with desperate indignation against God? The motions of sin are by the law. Are they under the wrath of God? the law worketh wrath, Rom. 4:15. Are they in utter darkness? it came from the law, which is blackness and darkness, Heb. 12:18. Are they in hell fire? they received it from the fiery law, Deut. 33:2. Can they never come out of the bottomless pit? the immutable sentence of the law is the gulf fixed; let the law be repealed, and nothing can detain the prisoner; but not a jot or tittle of the law can fail, therefore no jail delivery can ever take place; what God doth, it is done forever. The devil has not a greater friend in this world than a blind legal preacher; nor the children of God a greater enemy. I have sorely felt the effects of such a ministry; and I know where such ministers are, better than they do themselves. Those that are spiritual, says Paul, judge all things, but themselves are judges of no man. (1 Cor. 2:15)

THE SAINTS' ALL-SUFFICIENT RULE

If the covenant of grace does not afford the believer a rule of life, it must be very deficient; however, Paul could bring a rule from thence sufficient for the believer to live by, walk by, worship by, and converse by. God's sovereign will is man's rule; and to the saints God makes known the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which runs thus: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." This mystery is called by way of distinction from the law, God's good will toward men which brings peace upon earth, and glory to God in the highest, Luke 2:14; and it is the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. Deut. 33:16. When this is revealed to men's hearts by the Holy Ghost it is called the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, 1 Tim. 3:9; and this is the saints' All sufficient rule; by faith the just man is to live; by faith, and not by sight, is the just man to walk; in the Spirit, not in the letter, is the just man to serve; in Spirit and in truth to worship; he that is faithful unto death shall have a crown of life; the end of faith is salvation of the soul.

Let the law be what it may, and aim at what it please, "the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;" he that swerves from this turns aside to vain jangling; knows not what he says, nor whereof he affirms. God tells us to hold faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made ship wreck, 1 Tim. 1:16,19. Let men bring what rules they please from the law; let them drive their flocks with that storm as much as they can; I know the real believer, though he be not to make haste, in one sense, will hasten his escape from that stormy wind and tempest, for he knows that whatsoever is not a fruit of the Spirit is a work of the flesh; whatever service be performed, if not done under the influence of the Spirit of life, it is a dead work; and if not done in faith it is sin; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin:" for

"without faith it is impossible to please God." We read of ministers of the Spirit and ministers of the letter; and if there be any such things as ministers, and a ministration of the Spirit, I think these things belong to that ministration, and to preach them is doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of the gospel ministry.

No man ever heard me say or hint a syllable against the goodness of the law; the law is good, and it works death in us by that which is good, Rom. 7:13. I suppose no nation hath more wholesome laws than this; and I believe no nation under heaven of its size sends more criminals out of the world by a halter. There are heathen nations destitute of such wholesome laws that do not execute half the number of felons that we do. Be so kind, Sir, as to send me word what the law requires that this better testament does not furnish a believer with; when the imperfection or deficiency of this law of the Spirit is made to appear, we shall be able to justify the conduct of those who send numbers that have begun in the Spirit to the law to be made perfect by the flesh. This must be done, or else we shall conclude that this doctrine, of allowing the believer no rule of life but the law, is no better, in the language of the Holy Ghost, than witchcraft.

SEEKING PERFECTION BY THE LAW IS FOOLISH

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth! This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? These people did not intend to give up the Savior, they were only going to help Him; they did

not intend to cast off the Spirit, they were only going to perfect that which was lacking in His work; they had begun in the Spirit, and were going to the law to be made perfect. Ah! says Paul, the law belongs to the children of the flesh; to them it speaks; the works of it are the works of the flesh. Your perfection from thence will be only perfection in the flesh, and where you go for perfection there you must go for righteousness. Christ is our righteousness and sanctification too; go to the law for one, and you must go to the law for the other; by going for perfection there that yoke will entangle you again, and bring you into bondage. God makes us perfect by the Spirit, which unites to and makes us one with Christ, in whom we are complete. These poor souls were coming to be circumcised, and take the law on them as a rule of life, in order to perfect the Spirit's work. These preachers, Paul says, bewitched them, zealously affected them; yea, they would have excluded them from Christ, that they might affect them: "ye are fallen from grace," says Paul. "Christ shall profit you nothing."

Peter on the mount of transfiguration did not intend to exclude the Savior when he said, "Let us make three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; when Moses and Elias heard, they withdrew, as all good servants ought to do. "And a voice came out of the cloud saying, This is My beloved Son, hear Him." Moses resigned his office to the Mediator of the better testament, who is the end of the law for righteousness, to whom Moses had borne witness. And Elias withdrew also, and left the Savior in His prophetic office, as that great prophet to whom all the prophets gave witness; and I believe that Jesus, in the highest sense, was Elias that was to come. And it is said that, suddenly when the disciples had looked round about, that is, after Moses and Elias, "they saw no man any more save Jesus only with themselves," Mark 9:8; and He is sufficient; and it is a thousand pities that we have so many in our days who are fetching Moses in again;

but they will get neither peace nor good works from him, but rather confusion. The Master and the servant must not be coupled together; they are not co-masters; co-rulers, co-yokers, co-mediators, co-builders, co-lawgivers, co-husbands, nor co-sovereigns. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

There are several of our present divines who, notwithstanding their zeal for Moses, and desire to copy after him, do not at all imitate him in this point; he kept the blessing pointed out two different mountains for the blessing and the curse; and different men were named and appointed for each work; these were typical of ministers of the Spirit, and those of the letter; Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin, shall stand on mount Gerizim to bless; and Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali, shall stand on mount Ebal to curse, Deut. 27:12, 13. Zion and Sinai must be kept apart; they are two different mountains, and two different cities are founded on them: "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." (Gal. 4:15) And woe be to that man that is found a citizen of this bond city in the great day! Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon the literal, and Babylon the mystical, may one day understand the awful allegory, when they will be found to belong to the city of destruction, Isa. 19:18.

But God hath built His city on the mountain of eternal election. He hath laid this everlasting foundation there, His foundation is in that holy mountain. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." Psa. 87:2. God hath founded this city Himself, and the poor of His people shall trust in it, Isa. 14:32. He hath appointed salvation to be her walls and bulwarks; He is known in her palaces for a refuge; His dwelling place is in Zion; He hath chosen her, she is to be His rest forever: here will He dwell; for He has desired it. He will abundantly bless her provision and satisfy her poor with

bread. He will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy, Psa. 132:13-16.

It was this city that Abraham and Isaac had in view, they kept it in the eye of their faith, and it made them forget their own country and their native home; they sought a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, Heb. 11:10. Upon mount Zion God hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. To this mountain Jacob looked when he was on his death bed, and knew that God's eternal love was the bounds of this city, and that all his blessings came from thence. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." This is Solomon's little city with few men in it, which the great king came to beseige with great bulwarks, which the poor wise man by his wisdom delivered, who is so little regarded for his great deliverance. (Ecc. 9:14-16) This is the only city of refuge under the gospel; and it is near to flee into, and it is a little one; but God will never destroy it, nor the lot of His inheritance who become citizens of it.

THE LAW THAT GOES FORTH OF ZION

Zion's laws are in the heart of Zion's King; the law of faith, the perfect law of liberty, and the law of the Spirit of life, go forth from thence: "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," Isa. 2:3. And as for them that say, "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us; He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." The throne of grace is in Zion; "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for the mount Zion shall be deliverance, as the Lord

hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call." This is our comfort, that God will never depart from this city; for "the name of the city from that day shall be, the Lord is there," Ezek. 48:35. From this city God sends help to His people; they are strengthened out of Zion: and it is against this city that all our blind legal watchmen are levelling their vain janglings; but all that fight against mount Zion and her munition, and all that distress her, shall be as the dream of a night vision, Isa. 29:7. The Highest Himself shall establish her; "God shall help her, and that right early! she shall never be moved; not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, nor any of her cords ever be broken," Isa 33:20.

THE TWO WAYS COMPARED

To Mrs. R. J. at B- N-D:

I received my sister's kind epistle; and have considered her numberless complaints, and the difficulty of her way. "That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered," says Solomon.

If thou aim at holiness by the law, remember thou must be perfect in the flesh as well as spirit. The law is perfect; it will allow of no infirmities, no evil thoughts, no adulterous looks, no anger nor evil tempers, no fire to be kindled on the Sabbath day; not speaking thy own words, nor thinking of thy own thoughts on that day; thy neighbor must be loved as thyself; half thy goods must be given to the poor; one coat of the two must go to them that have none; and then there is no getting to heaven but by taking up the cross, and following Jesus. No man shall ever stand the test of that law without a pure love to God, divine life in Christ, holiness by the Spirit,

and an everlasting righteousness from the God of his salvation.

When you come to London again we will compare notes together, and see which has gained most by trading; until which time, pursue your present path, and I will pursue mine. Make the law your only rule of life; read it, keep your eyes upon it, and live by it; and I will pray that I may be kept dead to the law, and alive unto God; that I may be crucified with Christ, and yet live; yet not I, but that Christ may live in me. If you make the law your rule of life, you are alive to the law, and walk in the law. And if Christ lives in me, I shall be kept alive unto God, and walk in newness of life.

Go you on with the commandments, and I will go on with the promises. Make the law your rule of walk, and I will pray God to perform His promise in me; for God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." Thus you go on by the law, and I by the gospel. Do you perform your duty, and I will plead my privileges. Act thou as an industrious servant, and by God's grace, I will act an affectionate son. Be thou obedient to the law, and I will pray for grace for obedience to the faith. Live thou in the fear of thy master, and I will endeavor to honor my heavenly Father.

Make the law thy only rule of action, and act accordingly; and I will depend upon God to work in me both to will and to do of His own good pleasure; yea, to fulfill all the good pleasure of His will in me, and the work of faith with power.

Make the law your only rule of conversation. Speak of the commandments "when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way! when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine heart, and upon thy gates; that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children; in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them as the days of

heaven upon the earth." And I will pray God to create the fruit of my lips; to give me a mouth and wisdom that all my enemies shall not be able to gainsay or resist; and that it may not be me that speaks, but that the Spirit of my heavenly Father may speak in me and then my conversation will be with power, and my words seasoned with salt, ministering grace. Thus runs the promise, and the excellency and the power is of God; and, if God performs His promises to me He will have all the glory; and, thou perform thy task, thou hast whereof to glory, but not before God, wherever thou dost before men.

Let the ministers of the letter bind the grievous burdens upon your shoulders that you cannot possibly bear, and I will cast my burdens on the Lord, who has promised to sustain me. Be thou careful to observe all the grievousness which they prescribe, and I will cast all my care upon Him that careth for me. Walk thou by sight, and I by faith; walk thou in the letter, and I in the Spirit. Look thou to the commandments, and I will look to Jesus.

They that say this doctrine opens a door to all licentiousness know not what they say. You saw nothing like that in me; and those that are setting the law perpetually before your eyes, and enforcing holiness from that, in order to blind your mind, and prejudice your soul against the truth and the preachers of it, give you no other proof of their superior holiness than what you hear from their mouth. There is no more power in their discourses, no more savor in their conversation, no more knowledge of the word, no more experience of grace, no more prevalency with God in prayer, no more circumspection before men, nor conscientiousness toward God, than appears in some that are called Antinomians; nor half so much. Men who have nothing to recommend them either in heart or life, must do all by the sound of a trumpet. He that labored more abundantly than they all, and much more to the purpose, said, "It is not I but the grace of God that was with me." But we

have some in our day who tell us they fetch all their comfort from their holiness, and their holiness from the law; and I believe them, for they seem to have no fellowship with the God of comfort, nor experience of the Holy Ghost.

Cleave thou to the Savior, and depend on His grace; and when these fail, then try the law. The way to Sinai is broader than the way to Zion; the path is the most beaten, and there are the greatest number of travelers. It is easier to get law than gospel; and a throne of judgment is more accessible than a throne of grace. We have legions of unconverted preachers of the letter, for that is all their stock. With the letter, a great noise, and a fair show in the flesh, they deceive the simple. The mystery of faith is a puzzling thing to an unexperienced heart and an unenlightened head; when they attempt this they only betray their ignorance. The gentleman was right; "And without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" and if he has no holiness but what he gets from the law, he will never see the Lord with acceptance; for "Except a man be born again (of the Holy Spirit) he cannot see (much less enter) the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God is in power: regeneration enlightens us into it, and gives us a sensible enjoyment of it; for it stands in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost; nothing of which comes to us from the law.

f enforcing the law as the only rule of life, and setting it before thee as the only standard of holiness, be accompanied with power; if it produce love to God and man; if it promotes true holiness; if it refreshes the new man, and clothes the soul with humility and self-loathing; if it endears Christ, and strengthens faith; if it produces spiritual life and peace; if it enlightens the eyes, enlarges the heart; weans from the world, purifies the soul, encourages diligence, and makes God, His way and worship, the delight of thy soul,-thou mayest well bear with them; for these things come from God, and do accompany salvation. But I know there is nothing of all this attends such

preaching; and this letter of yours is a sufficient proof of it. I have set before my sister the law and the gospel, commandments and promises, life and death, a blessing and a curse. If ,thou cleave to the letter of the law, and make that thy rule of life, walk, and action, and conversation; then thy obedience will be the obedience of the law, not of faith; they will be thy fruits, not the fruits of the Spirit.

THE WORD LAW DEFINED

By the law you work, by the gospel God works in me. You produce fruit in obedience to the letter; in Christ is my fruit found. You work by the law; by the gospel God works my works in me. By the law you must make a new heart, and a new spirit; by the gospel God creates me anew in Christ.

Thou dost not seem to understand what the scriptures mean by the word, law. Sometimes in the Old Testament it means the whole scriptures, as the New Testament was not then written: though the substance of it laid in the unaccomplished prophecies, the promises, and the ceremonial law, which was the gospel of the Jewish church; for, "Unto them was the gospel preached as well as unto us; but the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Even the promise made to Abraham is sometimes called a law: "He hath remembered his covenant forever, 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 an everlasting covenant; saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance." This covenant is the covenant of grace. The oath secures the inheritance given to Abraham by promise; and the law was given four hundred and thirty years after. This is manifestly the law of faith; for as many as are of

faith are heirs of this promise, secured by this oath, and shall enjoy the inheritance, for they are blessed with faithful Abraham. In this covenant of promise, or law of faith, the Psalmist believed; "I believed, therefore have I spoken."

CONCLUSION

The term "practical holiness" I do not understand. One half of the pompous phrases that now creep into pulpits will not bear the balance of common sense. Holiness can neither be fetched from the law of Moses, nor from a carnal heart; nor is it a thing to be put in practice by freewill, or an arm of flesh. There is none supremely holy but One; that is, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Christ is the Holy One of His people; and they who are purged from sin by His blood, sanctified by His Spirit, in covenant, in favor, and in spiritual union, with Him, are complete in Him, their Head; who is made of God unto them righteousness and sanctification. Such are new creatures, created in righteousness and true holiness; and it is God, and none else, who humbles them, and sanctifies them. "He chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness." Such persons are holy people; they walk in union with Christ, as the only way; and under the influence of the Spirit as they live; they receive a supply of the Spirit of Christ as they stand in need, live in the fear of God, walk humbly with Him, and labor, to keep a conscience void of offense toward Him. All who are destitute of this, and strangers to it, have no more real holiness than Satan himself; it is only an outward show, which the scriptures call washing the platter, whitening the wall or painting the sepulcher.

The law obeyed and disarmed of its curse, is in the heart of the Mediator, who is Judge of quick and dead, and therefore

keeps the keys of hell and of death. The believer is under the law of faith to Christ; and they that are His have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; such are delivered from the law; and against such there is no law; and sin is not imputed where there is no law. I do insist upon it that if a believer be brought to the law of Moses, to be under it in any other sense, sin stares him in the face, wrath works in his heart, his enmity is stirred up, bondage seizes him, and dependency or despair will sink him, unless the law of the Spirit of life make him free from the law of sin and death.

THE END

Napthali; Or, Holy Wrestling.

William Huntington
(1745-1813)

A SERMON,

Delivered at Providence Chapel, February 9, 1812.

And Rachael said, With great wrestling, have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name Napthali.—Gen. xxx. 8.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Ephes. vi. 12.

" Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able:"—LUKE, xiii. 24.

I SHEWED you in the morning that there was a gate or door into the sheepfold, according to our Lord's words, "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture," John x. 9. And that there was a gate into the household of faith, and that such who have entered in by this gate are no more strangers and foreigners,

but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, Ephes. ii. 19. That there is a gate into the thousand years' reign; "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. xx. 6. And that there is another gate into heaven, or ultimate glory; "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." And I shewed you of those gates, that we must pass through them in this life; "Go through, go through the gates." says the prophet Isaiah, "cast up the high-way, gather out the stones, lift up a standard for the people:" and if you do not enter these gates in time, you cannot enter the gates of heaven at the end of time. "Open ye the gates," says the prophet, "that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in,"

The first gate is the gate of life, and this I shewed you from our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and you are not to marvel, nor wonder at this, for his errand into this world was to give everlasting life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;" which I further shewed from the vision of dry bones, which represents the elect of God, before the work of regeneration hath passed upon them. I took notice also of the quickening, and strengthening power and influence of the Holy Ghost, who through Christ is the fountain of all natural, spiritual, and eternal life; and of the reason assigned by our Lord, "Because I live, ye shall live also," John xiv. 19; and to pass through this gate is called a passing from death unto life.

The next gate is the gate of justification, or our coming into a justified state, which is to pardon, and to acquit, a guilty sinner, from the guilt and punishment of his sin, by Jesus

Christ. First, it is said to be by his grace, as the Apostle tells the Romans; "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:" and the same he tells Titus, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Secondly, it is said to be by faith; "We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law," Gal. ii. 16; and from this cometh our peace, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God:" and, as I shewed you, it is all through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is likewise in another place said to be by his blood; "Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him," Rom. x. 9: and through this gate you must pass.

The next gate I shewed you was that of truth. Our Lord says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6; and he told his followers, that they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free, John viii. 32. They should know him to be the truth of all the types and ceremonies under the law, that they should be freed from the carnal and soul-binding commandments of men, freed from the wrath of God, the curses of the law, from the accusations of conscience and Satan, and freed from the fear of death; that they should understand the true doctrines of the gospel from errors, heresies, and lies; for, "When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; and thus I shewed you, that the gate is only to be opened to the righteous nation, that keepeth the truth, that they may enter in, Isaiah, xxvi. 2.

And now I intend to enter further into my text, to shew you what our Lord means when he saith, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate:" and as I soared too high for some of my bearers in the morning, I will now come down to your experience, and shew you once for all, as it will be for time and eternity, how to strive to enter in at the strait gate. In the next place, I will take

notice of this part of my text, "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able;" and then point out what it is that hinders them. And,

First. You are not to understand, when our Lord says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," that he means a gate straight before you, as if it was at the end of a parallel line; no, the meaning of it is, the great difficulties that will attend sinners if ever they enter in at this gate; and the poor conscious sinner, believing the safety of them that have entered in, he is labouring hard in hopes that he may gain admittance. There are thousands that labour hard, but never enter in at this strait gate; and hence it is, because they follow them that know not the way. One tells them the way is by obedience to the moral law, and then all shall be well; another tells them it is by their obedience to the gospel, that is, obedience to the letter of the word, and that will do; and others tell us that they were drawn by love, without any chastisements, without scourgings, without any wounds, without a daily cross, without multiplied afflictions, and without the path of tribulation: but remember, Christ says, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life," Matt. vii. 13, 14.

At this gate we always find there is a pulling two different ways, and it is this that brings us into great straits. At this gate we are like David, after he had sent and numbered the children of Israel, when God by the prophet Gad sent a message to him, proposing three common judgments for his folly; "I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies while they pursue thee? or that there be three days pestilence in thy land?" Says the Psalmist, "I am in a great strait." To flee before them that pursue is dreadful, for there is not half so much compassion in men, one towards the other,

as there is in devils; no, there is not, for you often hear of hundreds of men quarrelling, and fighting, and cursing each other, but you never heard of two devils disagreeing; and what Milton says of them is a scandal to men.

O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd,
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace: and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides.
That day and night for his destruction wait.

Paradise Lost. Book II line 496.

And therefore, says David, No, by no means let me fall into the hands of man, for we shall have no pity from that quarter. In the next place famine is dreadful, and so is a pestilence destroying from one end of the country to the other: "And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hand of man. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel," and in three days there died seventy thousand of David's subjects and then the destroying angel appeared over Jerusalem with a drawn sword, until the Prophet by an impulse from heaven went to David, and told him to build an altar of sacrifice; he did so, and the plague was stayed. Now by this you see he was in a great strait, and so are poor, sensible sinners, when they come to this gate: they find that salvation is to be had in Christ Jesus, and in no other object.

In the first place they feel their need of him, and yet they have no personal knowledge of him, nor saving acquaintance with him; they know that the worship of God in a broken law, is not acceptable. If they could see themselves in the cleft of the

rock, Christ Jesus, and obtain a pardon from him, then they would be satisfied; but they have a thousand perplexing thoughts, an accusing conscience, and an accusing devil; there is a broken law in the way between them and him, there is a multitude of transgressions, there is much hardness and impenitency of heart, and carnal enmity in the mind: there is a rising in rebellion against God, insomuch that there is a great trembling felt at his sword and rebukes, and it is these difficulties that make the strait at this gate.

In the next place by strait, you are to understand a pulling, two different ways, the one against the other; and this you see in Paul, he says, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, havin' a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh, is more needful for you." And just so it is at this gate, our corrupt affections, carnal relations, a form of godliness, and the religion; of our forefathers, these all cling to us, and these will not let us enter in: on the other hand, we have a wounded spirit, that brings no comfort to the mind, nor assurance to the heart; the anger of God against sin, producing slavish fear; the dread of death, the dread of the judgment day, and the dread of damnation, all these things pulling the other way; so that we are in a strait betwixt two, unless the work is so sharp and severe as it was with Paul, and we are thereby enabled to come to a point at once. Paul tells us he thought much of his being a pharisee, of his reputation also for being a zealous advocate for God according to the traditions of his forefathers, and concerning his zeal in persecuting the church of Christ, and his animating others to the same work; but, as soon as he was plucked as a brand from the burning, then admire his zeal, he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither had his high character among scribes and pharisees any weight with him. No, but, says he, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ:" and thus every one will more or

less find, that there is a pulling two different way's, and which will bring them to great straits at this gate.

Another strait you will find is trouble. You read in Daniel, that the walls of Jerusalem and the temple were to be built in troublesome times, and that they should be troubled and straitened in the work: and so it is with us, when God takes us in hand, we are discontented with a portion in this life, and yet we are not sure of a portion in the next; we see vanity and vexation of soul inscribed upon all things under the sun; we have made proof that all the pleasures of the children of men are vanity, and we have said at last, it is madness. We evidently see that the way of sin is the way of destruction, we find misery and a frowning providence, and by reason of sin we feel the anger of an offended God: and we believe that he hath prepared a furnace of everlasting fire for all the ungodly, and this drives us to our wit's end; yet at the same time when we apprehend we can lay hold of grace, we find we are sadly nonplussed. We are informed by scripture, that nothing can be none without faith, "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" we know repentance is right in his sight, we know that godly sorrow and an humble mind if well pleasing to him, but no humility, no godly sorrow can we produce. Therefore being distressed and troubled in our souls, by the wounding we receive from the sword of his Spirit, we run from place to place in order to find out some one who is skilful in healing these wounds; and no sooner are our wounds laid open, but the devil directly sends tag, rag, and bobtail, to ease our troubled consciences, and every one of these, physicians of no value. "They bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and be that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him" And thus, says the Lord, they heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. They are the worst enemies the children of God have, and the devil's best friends; and every faithful minister, that endeavours to rip up the wounds that these

enemies have healed, they will for this good work prepare war against him. Mind what the Lord says of such, "They bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him;" that is, if they do not preach the same doctrine as these false prophets do; and this is the way they go on; and I cannot shew you any thing clearer than what is recorded of them in the story of Ahab.

Jehoshaphat, though a good man, goes down to Samaria, to pay Ahab a visit: now it is most clear, Jehoshaphat had no business there, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? for Ahab had sold himself to work iniquity, the scripture informs us, and never was redeemed with money nor price, for as he lived so he died. But whilst Jehoshaphat was there, Ahab said to him, Wilt thou go up to Ramoth-Gilead with me to battle? Jehoshaphat answered Ahab, "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. And Jehoshaphat said unto the King of Israel, Enquire I pray thee at the word of the Lord to day." Then Ahab gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? and they replied with one voice, Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. Among these four hundred prophets there was one that made him horns of iron, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou hast consumed them." But Jehoshaphat knowing all these to be prophets of the devil, said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we might enquire of him?" Now Ahab knew that Micaiah was a prophet of God, as well as Jehoshaphat did that the others were prophets of the devil, but, says he, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me but evil."

But he called an officer, and said to him, "Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah." And the messenger that went after Micaiah, said unto him, "Behold now, the words of the

prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me that will I speak." When he came to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah shall we go against Ramoth-Grilead to battle, or shall we forbear? and he answered him, "Go, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." Ahab knew that he had spoken ironically to him, therefore says, "How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?" Then said the prophet, "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead! and one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him. Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." And the Lord said, "Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also. Now therefore," says Micaiah, "Behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." As soon as he told him this, the king said, "Put this fellow in the prison," I wonder he did not call him, as the scribes and pharisees did my blessed Master, Beelzebub, "and feed him with the bread of affliction, and with the water of affliction, until I return in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And," looking on the people, he said, "Hearken, O people, every one of you." Then came near one of the- false prophets, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way went the spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Beold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself."

And thus as Ahab had delighted himself in these false prophets, and had kept them at a great expence on purpose that they might prophesy smooth things, so he was deceived by them, and went up and fell at Ramoth-Gilead. And God to let us know that it was his work alone, put it into the mind of the Syrians to fight neither with the great nor the small, but with the king of Israel. And when the Syrians saw Jehoshaphat in his robes, they said, Surely it is the king of Israel, and the captains pursued him, until Jehoshaphat cried out, and God helped him. Then they perceived it was not the king of Israel, therefore they gave up the chace, and turned back. "But a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness, wherefore he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded:" and he stayed himself up in his chariot till the evening, and there died according to the predictions of Micaiah. And as they were washing his chariot, the dogs came and licked his blood, according to the prediction of Elijah which he spake, saying, "Thus with the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." And how applicable is the word of the Lord by Isaiah to such; "I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not," Isa. lxvi. 4. And as I before observed, these are the worst enemies the children of God have, and the devil's best friends. They are called in our days builders up, they prophesy smooth things to their hearers; but God says of such, they may build up, but I will pull down; and because of these false prophets we find it a strait gate. But, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate."

My next thing is to shew you where this gate must lead to and I will not go out of life's reach, if you can follow me in this one narrow path. The gate here respects Christ principally in the

office of Mediator. If either of you were going to a noble-man's house, you would find that you would have something of a gate to pass through before you could enter that mansion; and thus it is in our text, when we get in at this gate, we go directly to God the Father by Christ. The apostle Paul says, a mediator is always a mediator of two: "Now," says he, "a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one," Gal. iii. 20. But he is a mediator between two parties; God is one and man the other: And this our dear Redeemer points out to us when he says, "I am the way to the Father. He that entereth not by me, "the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. No man can come to the Father but by me." Here you see he is the mediator, he is the door of hope, he is the gate of life. We are said to experience four things by virtue of this Mediator;

In the first place we are said to go sensibly into the enjoyment of God's grace. Mind what Paul says, speaking of Christ; "By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Now take away Christ, and there is no access; take away the confidence or faith in him, and there is no access; for we, both Jews and Gentiles, have by one spirit access to the Father, with confidence, by faith. And this should teach us, that in all our approaches to God, if we have a confession to carry, a petition to present; if we have a tribute of praise to offer, the apostle says, whatever we do, we are to do all in the name of Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father by him. And our dear Lord teacheth us the same doctrine; whatever you ask, says he, ask the Father in my name, and I will do it. But contrary to this we find the Arians, the Socinians, and the Deists, they run into his presence like the unthinking horse into battle, and thus rush upon the thick bosses of God's buckler, and defy all the mediation of the Mediator. And it you were to read all the petitions they ever made, you would find that they knew no more of God than they knew of themselves;

they knew no more of the Saviour, they knew no more of his love; nor is there any more acquaintance, familiarity, or friendship between God and them, than there is between God and Satan. But says Paul, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," by Jesus Christ our Lord; and this is going to the gate; here you find it is the gate into God's grace.

Mind, in the second place, He is the way to the enjoyment of the light of God's countenance. His threatenings to some are In these words I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy: I will shew them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity," Jer. xviii. 17. But what doth the Lord mean by this? you may say; he means, as they have forsaken me, so will I forsake them; I will not skew them anymore of my mercy, but mine anger; and their own evil way which they have taken shall bring them to everlasting ruin and destruction. And in this sense it may be said of a sinner, that God hath turned his back upon him, because he himself is afar off from God by wicked works; but when by the application of the blood of Christ to a sinner's conscience, he is brought nigh unto God, then he is represented to be in the light of God's countenance. Mind these words of the Psalmist; "There be many that say, who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us;" but if you take away the gate, you cannot come to the light of his countenance, for if ever God's light shines upon you, he will shine in the face of Jesus Christ.

"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also," says the Saviour of sinners; for I am "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," should be, the engravers image of his person. In another place the apostle Paul says,

God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of

the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." But if you takeaway the face of Jesus Christ, how can you get at the Father? You may run about and enquire as Philip did, "Lord, shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." Ah Philip, "He that hath seen me; hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, skew us the Father? Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me," John, xiv. 9, 11. Therefore you cannot enjoy the light of his countenance but by this gate.

In the third place, it is a gate that leads into God's presence. The Psalmist says, "The upright shall dwell in thy presence" But Christ says, You shall not come into the presence of the Father but by me. If this is the case, how can you get into the presence of God any other way, only by Jesus Christ? But all that thus do enter in at this gate, do at once come into God's grace, to the light of his countenance, and into his presence; and they will get so accustomed to it in this world, that it the day of judgment they will stand before him, in soul and body; with magnanimity and greatness of spirit. Observe what the scripture says on this; "The upright shall dwell in thy presence." Now that very presence in which they dwell will be the everlasting destruction of the wicked; for, as a dream when one awaketh is gone, so the wicked shall perish at the sight of God. And here the righteous shall stand when the wicked shall perish; one crying to the rocks to fall on them, and the hills to cover them, and the other rejoicing before him; "The upright shall dwell in thy presence," but the wicked perish at the presence of God.

The fourth thing is, it leads into God's favour. "Blessed is the man," says Christ, "that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." You may see this again in the first chapter of Luke; when the angel came to the virgin Mary, he brings his salutation from heaven, and declares the favour of God. "Fear not Mary," says he, "for thou

hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." The next salutation she had was from her cousin, saying, "Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord;" and he will perform his word through the Messiah, and blessed are all they that believe.

In the next place according to scripture, we stand complete in the favour of God, for, "We are," says Paul, "complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power." And Peter in writing to them that had obtained like precious faith with himself, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, says, and take notice of his words According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue;" thus he hath given us all things for life and godliness, for the Lord will bless the righteous, with favour will he compass him as with a shield. But you must be complete in Christ; take away this gate, and then how can you get into the favour of God? But believe in God, that your faith and hope may be in God.

But perhaps you will say, Pray why do you enforce our coming into the grace of God, the favour of God, and into the light of God's countenance? The reason why I enforce this is, because the whole gospel is preached to bring this about; hear what John says. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life

which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ," I John, i. 1-3. Now I would ask you, what fellowship I could have with one of you if I came to the door of your house, and am not admitted into your presence? I am not suffered to enjoy the light of your countenance, but I am kept without; what would this be worth to me? Then what is all religion worth if it leaves us without the presence and fellowship of God?

Christ is, as he is called, the way to the Father, and if we embrace him we shall find favour with the Father; for, says he, "By me if any man enter, he shall go in and out, and find pasture." There is no fellowship with the Father but through the Son. It signifies, joint interest; this is the highest sense of the word, fellowship. Now among men the sense of the word, fellowship, is that which subsists between a man and his wife; hence she is called his companion, the wife of his covenant, and we are commanded not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. And these have joint interest; whatever she hath it belongs to him. In his covenant he tells her, With all my worldly goods I thee endow. Yes, say you, but we have marriage settlements! you may have, but the bible knows nothing of it, and I call it a Smithfield bargain, for where this is the case, the wife is not the object but the money; and we generally find that whenever the union takes place with the cash, then the conjugal union is dissolved. And some men try hard to get a portion in this life, who despise the gift of God's grace. The Lord says of some, that they shall have their portion here, of this world's goods, who no doubt will have a bitter portion hereafter. But, God says, my people, these are my portion; "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." And David takes hold of this, for, says he, "The Lord is my portion says my soul, and therefore will I trust in him." And the Lord not only tells us he is our portion, but he

gives us faith also to claim it. I will, says he, be a God to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, that is my name for ever, and my memorial to all generations: I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee. In another place we find he says, "I will bring a third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God;" there is our claim. And in this fellowship between the Lord of hosts and poor sinners, there is more union than there is in the fellowship of men; and the Lord hath not only left this upon record, but he speaks it to our conscience, and there proves our claim too.

All the fellowship among men falls short of this, for we may see men who are fellow-soldiers and yet not of one heart with each other; we may see in noblemen's families fellow-servants, and in gaols fellow-prisoners, but you cannot say of them as John saith of the saints, "He dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." This is higher than any fellowship that is found amongst men, for there is something of God lodged in us, and something of ours lodged in God. What is that lodged in us? It certainly is his most Holy Spirit, for he hath given unto us his Spirit, as an earnest of our inheritance; and we in return give unto him the greatest thing that we have, but what is that? Why, it is what the Lord himself asks for; "My son, give me thine heart;" and that is really the most we can give, the giving up our heart and affections unto God. And this David did, which made him cry out in that heavenly ecstasy, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?" Psalm lxxiii. 25. And what did God say of David? Why he said, that he was a man after his own heart. But what made him so? Why the scripture informs us that when Samuel anointed David, the Spirit of God came upon him from that day forward; and by this you may see how this

fellowship subsists: the Lord gives us his Spirit, by which we are enabled to give him our hearts.

Now the way in which we are to come to God, is by Christ Jesus; and take notice, that the way of entering this gate is nothing else but by a single act of faith. Christ says, "I am the door, no man can come to the Father but by me. If any man enter by me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Therefore we are to enjoy the light of God's countenance, to enjoy his presence, his favour and his grace; these are things to be enjoyed, and all these things are called life; "In his favour is life, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "Grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life;" you see therefore here what is to be found in his grace and favour, namely, life. In his grace is life, Paul saith, We have confidence through faith in the grace of Christ; and some of you can say the same, as I likewise can. Brethren, this is a good claim. Some of you can remember the time when you could not place any confidence in God; I can look back on that time when I could put no confidence in God; but did you at that time find life? But how is it with you now? Does your conscience reproach you now and then, and tell you that sin is the sting of death? The sting of death is gone from the believer. Oh! say some of you, I feel that I want pardon and justification, to takeaway this sting.

Do you not find at such times as these that there is an accuser, one that accuseth and condemneth within? Yes, say you, I do, and I know I am not got through the gate, because it is said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," and I am condemned; and it is God that justifies, and yet I do not find that I have had the sentence of justification passed on my soul. Well, admit this to be so, and yet you may depend upon it that there is life there, although you have not got rid of all condemnation. Come, I will ask you another question: Do not you with all your heart believe, that

you shall sooner or later find grace and favour with God, through Jesus Christ? Yes, say you, sometimes I do really believe I shall. Well then, hear what Christ says, "He that believeth, hath everlasting life." And do you find the saints the objects of your sincere regard and love? If so, then Paul says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Do you clearly see these things? If you do I will dispatch this part of my text. But our Lord says in the last clause of my text, "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

There will be a twofold struggle at the gate, at the end of time; but then it will be too late, because all the doors and gates will be shut! and God's work of opening the hearts of sinners will be completed. Mercy's door, which was entered by faith, will be shut; and Christ will no longer be the Mediator. No, no, he will not, because "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us," the answer he will make you is, "Depart from me, I know you not." No, it must not be deferred until the day of death, as many defer it; nor must it be left to the day of judgment, as many simple ones expect. We must enter in while it is called to-day, if we enter at all; for it will be too late if once the master is risen up, and shut to the door, and you stand without and knock: now these all come too late. Take notice further. It is said, "Many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able;" the reason is they have no faith, they are destitute of the Spirit of God, they have not got oil in their vessels. They are not made wise unto salvation, they are called foolish virgins, their lamp is gone out (their profession withers, or their natural joys are gone) because guilt rises up, and shame and confusion covers them, and a (tread of damnation sinks them down; and with these it is too late. Again.

There are many that seek to enter in whilst in this life, and yet are not able; the reason is because they were never enlightened to see the glory, the beauty, the excellency, and the preciousness of the heavenly Saviour; nor were they ever drawn by the Spirit of love to experience the spirituality of things above. And if they are not enlightened to see the preciousness of the Saviour, nor quickened by the influence of the Holy Ghost to know the unutterable joy, the influence of love, the heavenly glory, the sweet enlargement and liberty of soul, the glory and beauty of Christ's righteousness, of the spiritual fulness of grace that there is in him—I say, if they are not influenced by these things, then there is nothing under the sun so charming to them as sin, or else there is something of earthly treasure to outshine in their view the glories of heaven. This you may discover in the young man in the gospel. This young man bid fair when he came with, "Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Why, says the Saviour, (who came to give life,) if you would have it by working you must go to the law. This young man had plenty of this world's goods, yet he was restless about something future. Christ says to him, What is written in the law? Honour thy father, and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, &c. "All these," says he, "have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?" Thou lackest one thing yet, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross and follow me;" and you shall enjoy God, Father, Son, and Spirit, as your eternal reward in heaven, and be the companion of angels and all the saints, where you shall bathe in pleasures to all eternity. But this would not do by any means for him, for you see the treasure of this world outshone the treasure of heaven; and he, not knowing the spirituality of the law; said to our Lord, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?"

By this you may see a man that is spiritually blind, how the devil leads him by the nose. This man could tell Christ himself; that he loved his neighbour as himself; a thing which is not to be found in depraved nature; and I will be bold to say that there were thousands of his neighbours, within the compass of two or three miles, that were suffering with hunger and nakedness; and at the same time he had a sufficiency to maintain and provide for a whole village. If thou hast two coats, says the scripture, give one to him that hath none; but this man held all his possessions, and yet said he loved his neighbour as himself. The Lord struck at the root; and although he seemed so willing to do something to merit heaven, yet we find without the grace of God in the heart we can do nothing: "Without me ye can do nothing." When the young man found that heaven was to be obtained this fray, he went away sorrowful, seeing that he had great possessions. And it was his possessions that made his damnation sure, for "The love of money is the root of all evil;" and a covetous man is, in the sight of God, an idolater. Christ tells us, Where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. That man's heart and affections, like a great many professors in our day, laid in his property and cash at home; the language of his heart was, I will keep it and hold it let the consequence be what it may, and yet the thoughts of everlasting burnings fills me with sorrow: it is said, "He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." "It is easier," says our Lord, "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven; for the love of money is the root of all evil:" and it will be impossible for you to enter this gate with the love of money, and the love of the world in your hearts. I know what it is to enter in at this gate, and to enjoy my God, as much as any man in this world; and I tell you that you cannot dwell in God and enjoy him, whilst you hoard up in your affections any thing of this world, for that will keep him out.

The scribes and pharisees they could not get in, but why? Because a man that gets in by Christ, he hath access to God by faith in the Son of God. The scribes and pharisees went about to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God; but we are told by the apostle, that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to all them that believe. But they spake to the grief of him who was wounded for our offences, they persecuted him without cause: they said, We are Abraham's children, we never were in bondage to any man; but Christ told them, "If ye die in your sins where I am you shall never come." They came before him trusting in their own righteousness, having their hearts and affections set upon this world; and this it was that shut them out, as it doth many now, who trust in their own righteousness, and submit not to the righteousness of Christ. But what sort of a Saviour do you suppose that the Jews expect even to this day? Perhaps you may say, Why one to save them from sin and guilt, the tyranny of the devil, the wrath of God, and from everlasting destruction. No, not they, they have not a thought about it, they have carnalized all the scriptural predictions of the Messiah. For when they read Isaiah, who prophesied unto them, saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this" what would you suppose is their judgment of all this? Why, they suppose the Messiah to be a temporal prince, that he will ascend the throne as David did in his time, that he will be a noted warrior; thus they only think of a temporal Saviour. And the same it was with them on Christ's day. Therefore when they found the Saviour's appearance to be contrary to what they expected, they rejected him at once; but as soon as any impostor arose and promised them

deliverance from the Romish yoke, they joined themselves by thousands unto such, and in the end they perished.

The apostles themselves seemed to have imbibed the same traditions of their fathers, for they asked him after his resurrection, If he would at this time restore the kingdom to Israel; but he gently rebuked them, and said, it was not for them to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. And at another time, they were all for making him a temporal king, but he withdrew himself from them; and on this account it was they eagerly ran after every impostor who promised them deliverance; but however they found what our Lord told them to be true, which was, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another should come in his own name, him ye will receive," and ye shall perish. God bless the hints dropped: I add no more.

The Apartments' Equipage, AND Parade Of Immanuel

William Huntington
(1745-1813)

A Sermon,
Preached At The City Chapel, Grub St.,
December 9, 1810.

I will declare thy greatness.—Psalm cxlv. 6.

"Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind."—Psalm civ. 3.

We are not at a loss to know who this divine person is, of whom this Psalm treats: the epistle to the Hebrews has informed us, for the author of it takes the fourth verse of this Psalm, and applies it to Christ, Heb. i. 7. The works of creation, and the providence of God, are the subject-matter, or the whole contents of this Psalm. And John informs us, that the essential Word which was with God, and which was God, was the maker of all things; "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," John i. 3. So that the world is his in right of nature, Ezekiel, xxi. 27. Nor did he lose his right by his incarnation; for as Immanuel, or God incarnate, he is appointed heir of all things, Heb. i. 2. The Psalmist, being under a most lively influence of the Holy Spirit, calls upon his soul to bless the Lord, or ascribe all

blessings and blessedness to him, who is the greatest blessing and the fountain of all blessings to us. David, in his own kingly office, knowing himself to be a type of Christ, views him by the eye of faith in all his ensigns of royalty, or in that divine regalia which is peculiar to him, as mediatorial King of Zion. His crown, his divine glory, his royal robe, are everlasting light; the girdle of his loins, righteousness; the girdle of his reins, faithfulness; his sceptre is his power to salvation, and he sways it by the ministry of the everlasting gospel. But I will come to my text.

"Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters these are his apartments: "who maketh the clouds his chariot;" these are his equipage: "who walketh upon the wings of the wind;" that is his parade. Let our Lord's chambers be Where they may, or what they may, the beams of them are sure to be light: beams, horns, or rays of light, always attend him, for he dwells in it. "He revealeth deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him," Dan. ii. 22. And Paul speaks the same things; "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting," 1 Tim. vi. 16. "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all," 1 John i. 5. And in the verse preceding my text, David says that, "He covereth himself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens as a curtain" By stretching out the heavens, the Psalmist evidently alludes to the creation, when the Lord commanded the firmament to divide the waters from the waters, Gen. i. 6; which is the vast expanse of atmosphere, air, and ether, which serves as a swaddling band to the earth. From all which it appears, that the Lord dwells in the light, and the light dwells with him; yea, he is light, and clothes himself

with it as with a garment. Hence he is called the sun with which the church is clothed, the sun of righteousness and the sun of glory to the church, both militant and triumphant. These divine rays of ineffable glory seem to be the train, or the skirts of his robe that filled the temple, Isai. vi. 1; for David says he is clothed with light as with a garment, and beams of divine glory are the train that attend him in all his manifestations to the sons of men; for he dwelleth in the light, and the light dwelleth with him. These ineffable rays, or beams of glory, are what I understand by the beams of his chambers; for what we call beams are too gross, too mean and low, for these chambers.—"He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters," &c. I come now to offer a few thoughts upon those things which the scriptures call chambers.

1. By chambers, heaven itself may be designed, as appears by the following words: "There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In their, hath he set 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." Paul, in Rom. x. 18, applies the contents of this Psalm to the going forth of Christ with the apostles in the ministry of the gospel. The Lord had purchased his church with his own blood, and he went forth in the ministry of the apostles to espouse her unto himself. The apostles were the tabernacle in which the Sun of righteousness set, and out of whom he shone forth, as he had formerly done from off the mercy-seat. His going forth is compared to the sun in the firmament, dispelling the dismal gloom's of Jewish and Gentile darkness, and bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel. The chamber he came out of is heaven, which will in some future time be the wedding chamber of the church; and from this chamber the Bridegroom went forth, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race, catching and wooing his dear-bought bride; this time being, in an especial manner, the day

of espousals, and the day of the gladness of his heart, Cant. iii. 11. Love to her, and his delight in her, seem to be the cause of this joy at his going forth.

2. By chambers is sometimes meant the clouds, which are watery particles exhaled from the earth and sea; which vapours, ascending into the upper regions, are thereby clarified, and are ordered by divine wisdom hither and' thither, to distil their rich and refreshing contents for the good of mankind: the clouds are called the Lord's chambers: "He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works," Psalm civ. 13. David writes sweetly of these things, calling them the visits and the provision of God. "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with flowers: thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness," Psalm lxxv. These are the blessed provisions of God, and the contents of watering the earth from his chambers; and if these refreshing showers were once withheld, instead of the paths of the Lord dropping fatness, leanness and emptiness would soon appear in the shambles, and barrenness in the dairy.

3. By chambers we may understand the love of the Lord.

David calls the Saviour his house: Be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me, Psalm xxxii. 2. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," says Moses, Psalm xc. 1. And this is the promised peaceable habitation, our sure dwellings, and quiet resting places, Isa. xxxii. 18. There is such a dwelling place as love, for "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 16. And I have at times thought that this is the spacious apartment of

David; "Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my foot in a large room," Psalm xxxi. 8. A large room it is, for it holds a great many friends. Nothing bursts the bands of fear, hardness of heart, and unbelief, like love: love sweetly enlarges the troubled soul, when the foot of faith is established in it, as the beloved disciple found it, when he says, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us." 1 John iv. 16. I think the holy spouse gives the name of chambers to the love of the Holy Trinity, into which Christ introduced her; for we hear of nothing but love all the while she was there; her heart and her mouth seem filled with it. "The King hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee," Song i. 4. The love that filled her soul, and the joy that sprung from it, make manifest what these chambers were. "He that hath my word and keepeth it, he it is that loveth me, and he shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him;" and this is all fulfilled at the descent of the Holy Comforter. These seem to be the saints' chambers mentioned by the evangelical prophet; "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast," Isaiah, xxvi. 20. The indignation here spoken of seems to be the destruction of Jerusalem, for their rejection and crucifixion of our Lord. The people spoken to are the apostles and disciples of Christ: and what chamber does our Lord advise them to abide in? "Abide in my love, as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." In this chamber a man is hid, so that none but the saints can see him, or know where he dwells. And he that enters this guest-chamber finds the doors to be shut, so that no enemy can get at him; and I know of so hiding chambers that will keep all intruders out but this.

4. Another of these chambers seems to be the heart of the mints, as appears from the song: "I held him fast, and would

not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me," Song iii. 9. The blessed lover found, and held fast, was Christ; her mother, the heavenly Jerusalem that is above; her mother's house are the heirs of promise, the children of that holy mother. The chamber of conception is the heart of God's people; here the seed of grace is received and conceived; here the new man is formed, and this is his place of abode; and hence Peter expressly styles him-the hidden man of the heart.

Having offered a few thoughts on the beams and the chambers, I will now pass on to the waters. "He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters," &c.

I observed, when speaking of these chambers, that one of these chambers were the clouds: David says, "He watereth the hills from his chambers," Psalm civ. 13. Clouds are watery exhalations, or vapours drawn up by the sun into the higher regions, and the Lord's ineffable beams of light have often been seen in these waters: in a cloud he descended at the giving of the law. The three highly favoured disciples, Peter, James, and John, upon lip. mount of transfiguration, entered into a cloud, when all appeared light and bright about them; even the Lord's garments became white and shining, and a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud.

It was a cloud that directed the march of the camp of Israel all through the wilderness: it was as a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that his beams were seen in that chamber all night long. In the day-time the light did not appear, Israel having then the light of the sun to guide them; and therefore saw not the bright light which was in the clouds, Job, xxxvii. 21.

If we consider heaven to be one of these chambers, out of which Christ came forth as the Sun, and as the Bridegroom. of his church in the ministry of the apostles, and rejoiced as a strong man to run a race: I say, if we consider heaven to be one of these chambers, we shall find his beams in the waters even there. "The Lamb, in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto fountains of living waters," Rev. vii. 17. I look upon these waters to be the life of glory, flowing from God the Father, through the Son and by the Spirit, to all the saints; and it will be a sea without bounds or bottom, and quite overwhelming, for mortality will be swallowed up of life, 2 Cor. v. 4.

But to proceed: the scriptures speak of a wonderful river in heaven, and by its singular name we may guess what it is. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thine house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures," Psalm xxxvi. 8. The saints will be satisfied with the waters of life from the living fountain, which is the life of glory. But by this river I understand the love of God; it is called a river of pleasure; and what so delightful and pleasant as that? The least stream from it, even in this life, makes glad the whole city of God. But there will be beams in these waters; for when the saints are filled with the waters of this fountain, and with the pleasures of this river, Christ will so shine in them, that even the moon would be confounded and the sun ashamed, were they present at the time when the Lamb, who is the glory and light of the heavenly city, shall make the righteous shine forth as the sun in the glory of their Father's kingdom for ever and ever. In all these waters his beams appear, for the light dwelleth with him.

If by waters we understand the love of God, which Paul save is shed abroad in the heart, and is called a flood upon the dry ground, which, as was before observed, is the stream that makes glad the city; beams are sure to appear in this water,

for he that loveth dwells in the light: the Lord never makes a discovery of Iris love to a sinner, but that sinner finds himself illuminated. Blood and love heal all our spiritual diseases and disorders, and this healing never comes without light: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The rising sun and the saving health come both together; and how should it be otherwise, when he dwelleth in the light, and the light dwelleth with him?

But by these waters we may understand the race of mankind; for, as the tide of the sea ebbs and flows, so one generation passeth away. and another generation cometh. The waters of the river, strong and many, in Isaiah, are explained to be the king of Assyria and all his glory, Isa. viii. 7. The waters on which the whore of Babylon sitteth are explained to be the same. "And he saith unto me, the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations. And tongues," Rev. xvii. 15. The ingathering of the Gentiles to the church of God is compared to an inundating river; "For thus saith the Lord, behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream," Isa. lxvi. 12. And in these waters, which are the children of men, the Lord hath his chambers. He that loveth, God dwelleth in him, and he in God: he dwells in the heart by faith, yea, lower still; he is his people the hope of glory. But he descends two steps lower, for he dwells with the broken and contrite heart that trembles at his word, Isa. lxvi. 2. "if we love one another, God dwelleth in us," 1 John iv. 12. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," 1 John iv. 15. By wisdom is the house of God built, and by understanding it is established, and by experimental knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches, Prov. xxiv. 4. And the wise man tells us what these precious and pleasant riches are. The ransom of a man's life are Iris riches, Prov. xiii. 8. The Lord Jesus Christi who gave himself a ransom for many,

is the true riches, and the everlasting portion of all that believe. Thus the children of men are called waters, their hearts and affections chambers, filled by knowledge with these precious and pleasant riches. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them," 2 Cor. vi. 16. But wherever he hath his chambers he hath his beams also; for the light dwelleth with him. God tells us that Zion is his resting place for ever; "here will I dwell, for I have desired it," Psalm cxxxii. 14. And, as Zion is the Lord's royal pavilion and guest-chamber, there are the beams of glory also: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," Psalm 1. 2. The light dwelleth with him.

Light seems to have appeared first in the old creation, and so it does in the new. Beams of light are generally discovered, or perceived, before the manifestations of pardoning love take place. "In Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of tire shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined," Isa. ix. 2. These beams open the sinner's understanding, awaken his mind, alarm his conscience, and disturb the peaceable and secure possession of the strong man armed. Sin is discovered by these beams, and made to appear what it is; "for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Fearfulness and trembling take hold of the poor sinner, when these beams shine round about him: these brought Pan, to the ground, and put out his eyes, so that "he could not see for the glory of that light" Whensoever, or wheresoever, the Lord intends to manifest himself, or take up his abode with any of the sons of men, rays of divine glory appear, to rend the veil of the heart, dispel the dismal glooms of darkness, awaken the sinner; and to proclaim the Lord approaching. "He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." I come now to the next thing proposed, which is the chariot of the Lord.

"He maketh the clouds his chariot." Angels are sometime called the Lord's chariots: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels," Psalm lxxviii. 17. Angels are here called chariots, in allusion to their having appeared twice in such forms. Elisha's servant, when the Lord opened his eyes, saw the mountain surrounding Dothan covered with horses and chariots of fire, round about Elisha, 2 Kings, vi. 17. At the translation of Elijah an angel made the same appearance; "There appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven;" 2 Kings, ii. 11. But my text calls the clouds the Lord's chariot, and in this chariot he is said to ride. "Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence," Isa. xix. 1. In a cloud our Lord ascended to heaven, and in the clouds of heaven he will come again, and every eye shall see him, at the grand assize of the world, Rev. i. 7.

Ministers of Christ, and messengers of peace; men who are inspired by the Holy Ghost, and who are joint witnesses with the Spirit, (John xv. 26, 27). who have the water of life, and the grace of God in them; who have got salvation in their conscience, and the word of life in their mouth; these are called clouds, because their belly is like a springing well, and their words a flowing brook; and by preaching their doctrine drops as the rain, their speech distils as the dew; "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the bass," Deut. xxxii. 2. These, by their enlivening testimony, are called "a cloud of witnesses," Heb. xii. 1. And again; "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the oat that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men," Micah, v. 7. The abundant access of the Gentiles, at the first publication of the gospel, are represented as covering, or overwhelming, the Jewish church like a spreading cloud. "The

multitude of camels shall cover thee the dromedaries, of Midian and Ephah: all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be (Fathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" Isa. lx. 6, 7, 8. Hence it appears that ministers of the word, and poor sinners, animated and stirred up by the good Spirit to seek the Lord and Saviour of mankind, are compared to clouds.

He maketh these clouds his chariot; in these he rides to transact the grand affairs of his kingdom. Every thing that a cloud discharges, in a spiritual sense, comes from these clouds. Sometimes thunder is discharged: hence we read of Boanergeses, sons of thunder; and it is remarkable, that at the opening of the first zeal of the sealed book the noise of thunder was heard, Rev. vi. 1. I look upon this thunder to mean preaching the law to awaken secure sinners, by discharging the storms of Sinai upon them. Out of the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices, Rev. iv. 5. Lightnings to illuminate the understanding; thunder to alarm the conscience; and voices of life and peace to quicken and reconcile souls to God. Cutting reproofs from the Lord that pierce deep, lay open, wound the spirit, and make the soul tremble, are compared to arrows, attended with flashes of lightning and such they were, in the ministry of the apostles, over whom the Lord presided, and with whom he went forth confirming their word with signs. "And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrows shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south," Zech. ix. 14. But the most beautiful description of this chariot, is in the first chapter of Ezekiel. In verse the 4th, we have the cloud, and a whirlwind attending it. In verse the 5th, we have four living creatures, which shews

that they were ministers of the Spirit, not of the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. I believe the word cherub to signify an ox, and cherubim to signify oxen; and these were such oxen as tread out the corn, and feed the Lord's cattle with clean provender. In verse the 16th, we have an account of their wheels, which are Zion's holy assemblies following and worshipping the Lord under the ministry of the word. In verse the 26th, we have the appearance of a throne, to shew that he who fills it is the King of Zion, who keeps his court there; upon this throne was the appearance of a man, the same that came in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days, Dan. vii. 13. This man, in appearance, had from his loins, upwards and downwards, the appearance of fire; which seems to have seen a vision of him in his glorified humanity, such as Isaiah had when he saw his glory and spake of him, Isa. vi. 1. About the throne was the appearance of a rainbow, to shew us that he is ever mindful of his covenant, and will not suffer the objects of his choice, and the purchase of his blood, to be drowned in destruction and perdition. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, ver. 28. This account is called the visions of God, the prophet being in the raptures of the Spirit when he saw them. The national church of the Jews was now in captivity, and the remnant, according to the election of grace, were involved in the common calamity, for the encouragement of whom this vision was exhibited even in the land of their captivity. And, although the vision in this form was never seen but twice, that we know of, at least it is recorded only in the first and tenth of Ezekiel, yet we have the whole sum and substance of these visions in the book of the Revelation, and the effects of them in the experience of all the saints. The representation of the Lord's going forth in the ministry of the word, as shewn to this prophet, was not a transitory thing, but it was to shew how the Lord would go forth (even into the Gentile world, for this vision was not seen in the

Holy Land) in gospel times; and indeed ever since he has had a church in the world. I have been informed, that it is common with the Jews to call the above vision a chariot, and the chariot of the cherubim; and indeed it is not much unlike a chariot. A wonderful sight it is: the firmament, like crystal, stretched out above; under this a throne, cloud, and rainbow, and the appearance of a man shining in glory on the throne, the living creatures, and their wheels by them, a whirlwind sounding among them, and fire to illuminate, melt, and inflame, flying in all directions. The spouse upon a love visit, compares her soul to a chariot: "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadab," Song vi. 12. Which, according to the learned, signifies the chariots of my willing people; and the church has still the whole contents of this vision. What, have we no whirlwinds of the south; no heavenly gales or breezes of the blessed Spirit among us; no regenerating work going on under these breezes? Yes, we have. Does the Lord of glory never visit our assemblies? Yes, he does. Have we no throne of grace to approach; have we no answers to our prayers, no living creatures to hold forth the word of life, nor that can feed upon the word of life? Yes, we have. Are there no wheels, no Gilgal, no souls, who have had the reproach of Egypt, sin, bondage, and slavery rolled away from them? Joshua, v. 7. Yes, there are. Nor are we without the doctrines, nor without the grace of pacification, reconciliation, and peace, of which the rainbow is a sign. Nor are we destitute of live coals from the altar; and these are the 'blessed effects of these visions: and these in experience, and in the enjoyment of them, is better, in my opinion, than seeing them in vision. For Balaam saw much, but he enjoyed nothing. "He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, he maketh to clouds his chariot, he walketh upon the wings of the wind."

Three times David mentions the wings of the wind, 2 Sam. xxii. 11; Psalm xviii. 10; Psalm civ. 3; and even heathens

ascribe wings to the wind, because of the speed and swiftness of their motions; and by the wings of it, I should suppose, they mean the influences and effects of them upon men, water, trees, and other things; sometimes strong, so that there is no standing against it: sometimes keen, sharp, and piercing; and at other times fanning, with cool and pleasant breezes.

But in my text no mention is made of flying, but of walking, "who walketh upon the wings of the wind." God, our Saviour, hath said, that he will dwell in his saints, and walk in them, 2 Cor. vi. 16. And he was seen in John's vision, either standing or walking, in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 13. Here the Lord promises to dwell; "I will dwell in them, and walk: in them." And John sees him standing or walking in the midst of these seven churches. But then, as we are both by birth and by practice sinners, and our corrupt nature is so foul and vile. how can the Holy One reside with such? When we read that the poor souls, who met him on the road from Bethany to Jerusalem, covered the ass for him to sit on, and spread their garments on the ground, to keep the ass's feet from the earth, and all this in his state of humiliation: but now he is crowned and covered with glory and honour, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. How then can he dwell and walk in men, in whom, that is in whose flesh, dwelleth no good thing? Rom. vii. 18. My text tells us, that the wind spreads out its wings for him to walk upon. "He walketh upon the wings of the wind." We have seen that, wherever he takes up his abode, beams of ineffable light surround the chamber; he dwelleth in the light, and if he walks, holiness must consecrate the path "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy," Josh. v. 15. When he appeared to Moses he told him to put off his shoes from his feet, for it was holy ground, Gen. iii. 5. When our Lord shewed himself to the elders of Israel, we have the following account: "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," Exodus, xxiv. 10. Nor will he tread the utmost bounds, or borders, of Zion, without such a pavement as the above. But he promises to " lay her stones with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires, to make her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones," Isa. liv. 11, 12. The bases and borders of Zion have the same pavement as that which the Elders of Israel saw, under the Saviour's feet. And he promises that a glory shall attend the place of his feet, in all his visits to Zion: "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious," Isa. lx. 13. But my text says that "he walks on the wings of the wind." I will now offer my thoughts,

1st. Upon this wind; and,

2d. Upon the wings of it.

By wind, in my text, I understand the Holy Spirit of God: his well-known emblem is wind. Ezekiel is bid to prophesy to the wind, that it might breathe upon the dry bones of the house of Israel, that they might live, Ezekiel, xxxvii. 9. Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, says the spouse; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof many flow out. It was a rushing mighty wind and sound from heaven that filled the house of the apostles on the day of Pentecost: and our Lord sets forth the Spirit's work of regeneration by wind. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But I shall not dwell upon this emblem of the Spirit here, having written largely upon this subject elsewhere. I will come now to what I understand by the wings of the wind.

On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit appeared in the shape of a fiery tongue, a tongue cloven, or forked. A tongue being no more than one small member of the human body, this form shewed that the best of men have but a measure of the Spirit. But our Lord was to be anointed with the oil of gladness above all his fellows: and hence we read that "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him," John iii. 34. Accordingly, at his descent upon the Son of God, he did not assume the appearance of a tongue, but he appeared in a bodily shape, like a dove, Luke, iii. 22; and a dove is a winged creature. To this dove-like appearance Milton alludes in his prayer to the Holy Ghost, when speaking of the Spirit's moving upon the face of the waters (Gen. i. 2), at the creation of the world:

"And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant; what in me is dark
Illumine; what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man."
Paradise Lost, Book i., 1. 17-26.

By the wings of the wind I understand the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit; and the incorruptible seed (1 Peter, i. 23,) the graces (1 Tim. i. 14,) or holy fruits (Gal. v. 22,) which are the productions of these his operations. For the Lord says, "He will slake the place of his feet glorious," Isa. lx. 13. Glorious grace must be the pavement, for God makes the place of his feet glorious. There is in every soul that God visits, or to whom he makes himself manifest, a preparatory work. For instance; "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall," Mal. iv. 2.

The souls of these poor sinners were prepared by the Holy Spirit, who planted this fear, this reverential awe of God in them, under which influence they separated themselves from the world, and shunned the paths of the destroyer, and were kept watching, waiting, and expecting. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. The fear of the Lord is a summons, a call, a citation; it awakens all the powers of the soul, calls for attention; it is as a herald proclaiming God to be at hand, and raises up expectations of him, and prepares the soul to meet him. The promise is, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise." In all his approaches to sinners he walks upon the wings of the wind. But,

2d, "The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way," Psalm xxv. 9. In the last passage quoted, the Holy Spirit had blowed a heavenly gale, which had produced fear and a reverential awe of the Almighty, and upon this fear the Sun of righteousness arises. But in the last quotation the grace of meekness is produced, which is an influence that makes the soul tame, teachable, and tractable; passive and lowly; submissive and resigned; soft and pliable, and ready to receive any impression or instruction, any discovery or manifestation, that God shall be pleased to make of himself, or of his mind and will. And to such are the following promises made: "He will beautify the meek with salvation." "The meek shall eat and be satisfied." Christ is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, and "the meek shall increase their joy in the Lord," Isa. xxix. 19. "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

3d, "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." Isa. lix. 24. Here the Lord is promised to Zion, and to all them that turn from transgression. But no man will turn from transgression until he is quickened to feel it, and made sick of it, and sore by

it, and grieved on the account of it, and in pain to be delivered from it; such will pray like the publican, "God be merciful unto me;" or like Jabesh, "Keep me from evil that it may not grieve me." "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

4th, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Isa. lviii. 15. Contrition is a wound given to the spirit by the cutting reproofs, and piercing rebukes of the Lord, when the sins of the heart and the follies of youth are laid open; when the guilt of sin and God's displeasure meet together in the conscience; when the soul is bruised, chafed, and made tender, soft, and sore; and yet despair is forbidden by the springing up of hope, and by the expectations of mercy through Christ. A humble soul is one that has both a true sight and sense of human depravity and of the depth of man's fall, and loathes himself in his own sight, and esteems every soul better than himself, the heart knowing its own bitterness. Here we see that contrition and humiliation are the gracious influences which pave the way for the Lord's abode; I dwell with such, to revive, enliven, quicken, encourage, refresh, and make glad the contrite and humble heart-"He walketh upon the wings of the wind." And without these preparatory operations the Almighty would be a terror, and a consuming fire, which must terminate in our destruction; "For, as wax melteth before the fire, so do the wicked perish at the presence of God," Psalm 1xviii. 2 And no wonder, when there is nothing in us by nature but Satan, sin, and death. But wherever the Spirit operates there is some good thing found towards the Lord God of Israel, if it be even in the house of Jeroboam. When the wind blew upon Ezekiel's dry bones, he turned the dry bones into a living army. When he blows upon a sinner, according to our Lord's doctrine, regeneration is produced, John iii. 8. When he blew on the spouse's garden

the spices flowed out; and upon this flowing out her beloved came in, and ate his pleasant fruits, Song iv. 16. When he blew, in the ministry of John, the joys of sinners withered, and human glory soon faded away, Isa. xl. 7, "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

5th, "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways," Isa. lxiv. 5. Here we have an account of God's meeting with a poor sinner, visiting him, embracing him, manifesting himself to him, and admitting him into his company, and into communion and fellowship with himself; and the joy of the Spirit prepares the soul for this heavenly meeting. The soul is rejoicing, working righteousness and remembering God in his ways, and attending on divine worship. "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

6th, God has promised to make his eternal abode in his church; "Zion is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread." This we see is God's rest for ever; and his desirable dwelling; but this resting place is paved with love, which is a work done by the Holy Spirit, for "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," Rom. v. 5. And in this love shed abroad doth God dwell. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 16. This is God's dwelling, and his rest is the same; "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest on his love," Zeph. iii. 17. Here we see that, if God dwells in men, it is in men that love him; this is his dwelling and his resting place; he will rest in his love. "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

7th, "Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love

and peace shall be with you," 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Here we have a perfection, by which I understand a saving and an assuring measure of spiritual knowledge, and divine consolation, springing from a full assurance of understanding; and these becalming, composing, and quieting the conscience, and keeping the soul in peace; and where these are, the apostle says, the God of peace shall be with you; the Holy Spirit's operations, and the fruits of the Spirit, consecrate and sanctify the soul, in which the Lord condescends to dwell. Neither inbred corruption, nor external reformation, can be an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. No, if he visits a sinner, he will make the place of his feet glorious, "He walketh upon the wings of the wind."

8th, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17. Here we find another fruit of the Spirit, persuading the mind, assuring the conscience, and influencing the whole soul with spiritual confidence: faith is a gift from above; it is born of God, and is produced under the operations of the Holy Spirit. With these things is the church of God adorned; these make her all glorious within, being her glorious grace, the incorruptible soul that liveth and abideth for ever; these beautify the place of the Lord's sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious. The same blessed Spirit that brooded upon the confused and undigested mass of matter at the creation, and brought that into order, does, under his benign and prolific operations, produce this holy and heavenly crop of divine grace, on the dry and barren souls of poor lost sinners.

9th. Hope is another grace produced under the Spirit's operations, and discovers itself under the first influence of divine consolation; "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope," Rom. xv. 4. This lively and active grace, which counteracts despondency, and hangs on the faithfulness of God in Christ,

and which expects the fulfilment of God's promise, and which is so deeply concerned with things future, and so closely connected with the glory that is to be revealed; and as divine comfort is the heavenly soil out of which it springs, so divine consolation is its handmaid, or sister grace; and hence we read of "everlasting consolation and good hope through grace," 2 Thess. ii. 16. Now this hope, and the glory expected by hope, is called God's mystery among the Gentiles, and is Christ in us the hope of glory, Col. i. 27.

It hath pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell: and he, taking part of the children's flesh and blood, is the representative of all the chosen family, and a head of influence to every child of it; that, as Aaron's unction flowed from his head to his skirts, so Christ's fulness is extended to all his members. But of this hidden manna some gather more, some less; but he that gathers much has nothing over in the fiery trial, and he that gathers little has no lack; for, as his day, so is his strength. All, and every one that obeys his voice, receives something from his fullness; for virtue goes out of him, and heals them all; he is our priest, that is to examine the poor lepers; and he is a priest that can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and as many as touch him with the finger of faith are made perfectly whole. The fear of the Lord is his treasure, and so is every spiritual grace: and he has lodged this treasure in earthen vessels, as so many parts of his own fulness. As a man, who has a wife and many children, we may say the whole is the man, for they are but so many parts or parcels of himself; even as God, when he had created our first parents, male and female, "called their name Adam," Gen. v. 2. "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," 1 Cor. xii. 12 for we are his body collectively, and members in particular. The human nature that he assumed is first in election, and is a part of our own flesh and blood; he represents all, and is the Father of ail, and

the life of all; all are reconciled by his sacrifice, and purged by his atonement; his righteousness is upon all that believe; they are all influenced by his Spirit, and are all partakers of his grace; and his grace consecrates the whole household. And upon every fresh discovery that he makes of himself, every love visit that he pays, every indulgence that he grants, is for the renewing, refreshing, and reviving of this good work, and for changing us into his own image from glory to glory. "And, if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?" Job xxiv. 25. Let the weakest believer observe, and even the convinced sinner, and he shall find some beams of divine light shining into him, discovering the vileness of his corrupt nature, and making his sin appear exceeding sinful; "for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." The law will appear in its spiritual meaning; the world in an awful state. All our comeliness turns into corruption, and our boasted strength becomes, a bruised reed: the high arm of free-will withers and dries up like a stick; a form of godliness becomes a covering too narrow for a wrapper, and carnal ease a bed too short for a heavy laden soul. Neither death nor judgment, heaven nor hell, are entirely hid where the Lord shines. He realizes both worlds to the objects of his choice: he leaves them no room to doubt about future rewards and punishments; they know the demerit of sin, and the existence of Tophet; the mercy of God, and the malice of Satan; for he that believes, and follows Christ, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Wherever the Lord takes up his abode, beams of light shall surround the chambers and the child of light shall see it; for the face of the covering, which the god of this world has cast over us, shall be destroyed by this divine anointing. And, if the Lord make the cloud of witnesses his chariot, the thirsty soul shall not find this to be clouds without rain; many heavenly distillations shall drop upon his soul, like the dew upon the tender herbs; for God says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as a lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his

beauty shall be as the olive tree; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? Prudent; and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein," Hosea 14.

Zion's Gates And Pleasant Fruits.

William Huntington

"At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved."—Song vii. 13.

WHAT these dudaim, or mandrakes, mentioned in this verse, are I know not; it should seem that women of that country had conceived a notion that there was a prolific virtue in them, as Rachel, in her state of barrenness, would give up Jacob for a night to the embraces of her sister Leah, for those which Reuben found in the field in wheat harvest. Fancy is often indulged before faith, and old wives' fables pass more current than a divine declaration, especially when carnal reason mounts the chair, and the conference is held with flesh and blood, instead of God by humble prayer. Rachel had first fallen foul upon Jacob, "Give me children, or I die;" and Jacob had referred her to God, who had withheld from her the fruit of the womb. But she chooses to try the efficacy of these unknown fruits; such I call them, for such they are to me, and such I believe they are to every man in Great Britain.

The words of this text are conceived by some to be the words of the church, and not the words of Christ; which is what I cannot consent to, for the following reasons: Christ is the everlasting Father of all the members of his mystical body; and, as the apostle speaks, "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children," 2 Cor. xii. 14.

2. Nor doth it agree with other parts of holy writ, which express God's laying up for the church, and not the church for

him. "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men," Psalm xxxi. 19.

3. It is in Christ and not in ourselves that all our fruit's found; and, if she promises this store to Christ for his use, she seems to be too insensible of her own weakness, by promising that which (without his operations) she cannot perform. All our fruit is derived from the Saviour, and depends entirely upon sensible union with him, and upon the Father's purging the branch, that it may bring forth more fruit: but, as no believer can ensure this, so no believer can promise the other; Christ's visits, and all fruitful seasons resulting from them, must be resolved into his good pleasure, for they cannot depend upon the good will of the creature. I come now to treat,

1. Of the gates,
2. Of the pleasant fruits.
3. Of their being new and old.
4. And, lastly, for his beloved.

I take the gates to be three, and they may be called our gates, because Christ and his people pass through one and the same entrance, and go in one and the same way. The first gate is Christ himself: he is the strait gate, and the narrow way; strait because of the burden of sin, sense of guilt, shame, fear, confusion of face, unbelief, misgivings of heart, stirrings of corruptions, buffetings of Satan, apprehension of wrath, legal terrors, and accusations of conscience, which attend the poor soul while pressing at the door of hope, or watching daily at wisdom's gate, and wilting at the posts of her doors, Prov. viii. 34.

Christ enters into his office, and into his church, and into heaven, by the appointment of God the Father, and by his

own merit; to him the porter openeth, and he is the gate at which all our fruits are laid up; for all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the Spirit in all his fulness of gifts and grace, are in him, besides the benefits of his cross, and every lift-giving doctrine, and new covenant promise, is no where to be found but in Christ. And until the sinner gets in by this gate, he will remain barren and unfruitful to God, let him work and toil as much as he may: faith, exercising its confidence on Christ, gives us admittance here, and shuts death, guilt, and wrath, all out, which is the cause of barrenness, while the believer passes from death to life, and comes no more into condemnation; and here he receives the first fruits of the Spirit, and feels a union with Christ, and is indeed married unto him, that he may bring forth fruit unto God.

The next gate appears to me to be that of poor sinners' hearts: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be you lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter in." These may mean the gates of the temple at Jerusalem, for the King of glory entered there; and they include the hearts of sinners too, for he certainly does enter there, as he says to his apostles, "Believe that I am in you, and you in me." Hence we read of his opening the heart of Lydia, opening the door of faith to the Gentiles, standing at the door and knocking, saying, "Open to me, my sister, my spouse." When Christ revealed himself to Paul, and took possession of his heart, he spoke by him, diffused his light, displayed his power, spread the savour of his own name, and the mysteries of his cross by him; he manifested the power of his love, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom, by the instrumentality of his servant; and all the treasure that Paul had in his earthen vessel he brought forth, while the excellency and the power appeared to be of God and not of Paul. The hearts of Christ's ministers are one sort of gates, at which all the pleasant fruits, new and old, are laid up for the Lord's beloved, and to this sense the Saviour himself agrees; "Therefore I say unto you, that every

scribe instructed unto the kingdom of God is like unto an householder who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old," which is the language of my text; but it may be objected, that sinners' hearts cannot be called everlasting doors to which I reply, that if Christ, by his powerful voice, did not command these gates and doors to open to him, carnal enmity and unbelief would bar them against him to all eternity, as is the case of all those who die in unbelief.

Besides, as the gates of the tabernacle and temple were commanded to lift up their heads to receive the King of glory, why not the hearts of sinners also? seeing that sanctified souls are the tabernacles of the Lord, and their bodies "temples of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them."

2. Again, the hearts of private believers may be intended by these gates at which all manner of pleasant fruits are laid up: for they often administer relief and comfort to one another, when under spiritual desertions, or in fits of love sickness. "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love:" these words were spoken to the daughters of Jerusalem.

3. The third sort of gates seem to intend the gates of heaven. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in," Isa. xxvi. 2. Heaven hath got its gates to shut dogs out; and the wedding chamber hath got its doors to receive the wise virgins in, and to exclude the foolish. Christ opened these gates and doors himself, and left them displayed to all his followers: and at all these gates there are fruits laid up for all Christ's beloved ones.

4. Now for the fruits. When faith first breaks forth at the strait gate, and lays hold upon Christ, love attending faith, cordially and eagerly embraces him, as the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely: this is union, and this

union brings virtue from his fulness to heal us, and precious fruits flow in to feed us. The fruit of the tree of life is for food, and the leaves for medicine; under his overpowering shadow we sit down with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to our taste. Faith receives all his saving benefits; dying love operates and melts the stony heart; the atonement flows in and silences all the clamours of law and conscience; righteousness and peace, comfort and joy, humility and meekness, wonder and astonishment, together with the mysteries of the kingdom, the doctrines of Christ, and the promises of grace, pleasing prospects and pregnant hopes, enlivening beams and living roots, heavenly bliss and endless life, are the pleasant fruits laid up for us at this gate.

At the gates of minister's hearts: and the hearts of private believers, are fruits laid up; the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, meekness, patience, &c., are to be found here, and are often brought forth to feed and comfort the hearts of others. If we are comforted, it is that we may comfort others, with the same comfort "wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." And again, "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." What flows out of one believing heart will flow into the heart of another believer: not only will grace be communicated to the hearers, but the fruits of the Spirit, and the doctrines of Christ, which will bring forth fruit in the hearts of others, yea, from the day that they hear it, if they are brought to know the grace of God in truth. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit;" which fruit are threefold good doctrines; "the good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man, evil things." 2d, The fruits of the Spirit, as before observed; and 3d, The fruits of righteousness--an upright and righteous life, answerable to an upright and justified state, which is fruit unto holiness, and the end of this fruitfulness is everlasting life. And such souls as these, who receive these fruits under the word, are the genuine fruits of a gospel

minister; such was "Epenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ." And, as all that labour in Christ's vineyard must first be partakers of the fruits, so all who are profited by the ministry must be partakers of the same; for at these gates are fruits laid up for the Lord's beloved; "whether Paul or Apollos, all are ours."

At the gates of heaven also are fruits laid up: we have in this life the first fruits of the Spirit, but then the first fruits imply, that there is a second crop: hence the encouragement, "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." And the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and that to the full; "for they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," nor shall those blessed inhabitants any more say, "I am sick." Fruits of grace we now feed upon; but the fruits of glory are yet to come, which will be a repast for the body as well as the soul; both shall be satisfied with immortality and eternal life when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and our natural bodies shall be changed into spiritual bodies.

Then these fruits will be pleasant indeed; I never heard of one that disrelished them, who ever fed upon them; nor did I ever hear of one saint that was cloyed with them. No plague nor pestilence, sickness or death, ruin or destruction, ever followed, as effects or consequences of living on these pleasant and precious fruits: they are esteemed better than life itself, and afford inward pleasure under the worst of trials. Old or young, poor or rich, sick or well, in the cradle or on the death-bed, all who taste them, when every thing else is cloying and unsavory, the fruits are pleasant and go down sweetly, and they are both new and old.

The first account we have of these new and old fruits is dropped by Moses. God orders the seventh year, a year of release; and, as it might furnish Israel with a question, What

shall we eat, seeing we are not to sow or reap until the eighth year? God promises his blessing on the sixth year, which shall be sufficient to carry them on beyond the harvest of the eighth, even unto the ninth year. "And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of the old fruit, until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store," Lev. xxv. 22. "And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth old because of the new," Lev. xxvi. 10, That is, you shall bring forth the old store and eat that first, because you will want the storehouses to hold the new fruits. All this store is promised to precede and succeed the jubilee year. On the sixth year the blessing was to be poured out, to supply during the seventh year; and so the elect soul hath many blessings before his release is proclaimed. "Blessed is the man whom God chasteneth and teacheth him out of the law: blessed is the man that endureth temptations: blessed is the man that heareth me, waiting daily at the posts of my doors." But when the trumpet sounds, and the joyful sound is heard; when the release is proclaimed; when the bond-slave, the devil's drudge, and the insolvent debtor, goes free, and returns to the inheritance prepared for him from everlasting, a heavenly crop springs up within, like the spontaneous crop on the jubilee year in the land of Canaan; and we live deliciously, not by the sweat of our brow, but by the bounty of our God: and this heavenly banqueting lasts sometimes a full year; and, though on the eighth and ninth year the fruits may not be so abundant, yet there is some of the old store as well as the new. In the jubilee year the chiefest parts of the feast are love, comfort, and joy; this is milk, honey, and new wine; but after a while they are a little withheld, that we may be fed "with knowledge and understanding." Strong meat are for men of full age, as milk is for babes.

The fruits are new and old; new in time, old because prepared from everlasting; new to every young believer; old, because Adam, Eve, and Abel, the first saints that ever appeared in the

world, were fed with them: they are new testament blessings, held forth in the old testament prophecies and promises; new testament truths of old testament types. So we often get new views, discoveries, and comforts, and yet reflect often with pleasure on the old ones; and thus it will be at the gates of heaven, new glories, and yet resembling the old earnest: the half was not told us, and yet something of it was known and fed upon of old, even in this world, while all the rest is new in eternity. These are laid up for thee, O my beloved.

We were the beloved of Christ before he was the beloved of us, for he loved us from everlasting; and we were preserved in him throughout our whole state of unregeneracy, which is a fruit and an effect of his love. When the time to favour us comes on, he takes the rod in hand, and lays that on, saying, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent." In the next place, he draws us to him by distant views, and dim discoveries of his suitableness and worth, by the savour of his name, by the alluring invitations and promises of his word, by the operations of his power, and by a deep sense of the need of him: "And I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Moreover, when he hath mixed the waters of Marah with all our sensual and carnal delights, he gives us some sweet discoveries of his love to us, and some pleasing sensations under the operations and influences of it; this makes us sick of love, and faint for the full enjoyment of it; then his language is, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." The next discovery casts out fear and torment, and then the knot is tied; "we love him because he first loved us." Now charity believeth all things that he says, hopeth for all things that he promiseth, beareth all the crosses and burdens that he puts on, and endureth all things for his sake, and is as strong as death; for, as death overcomes and conquers all, so love to him overcomes every enemy and rival that the Saviour hath in our hearts. Such souls are the beloved of Christ, and he hath given ample proof

of it, by his undertaking and going forth in our behalf from everlasting, by his sufferings for us in time, by preserving us when children of wrath, by manifesting himself to us when we were enemies, in suffering our manners so long in this wilderness, in pardoning of us from first to last, in delivering us out of troubles, in healing our backslidings, which have been many, in chiding us for what is amiss, and receiving us again when humbled, in destroying many that have hated us, in answering our prayers, in meeting us in his worship, in making us welcome at his table, in supplying all our wants, in favouring us with his presence, in revealing to us his mysteries, and giving us a good hope, through grace, of endless glory.

The Colour Of The Fields, And Their Fitness For The Sickle.

William Huntington
(1745-1813)

"Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest,"—John, iv. 35.

Mr. B
Beloved of God,

I AM more and more convinced of the necessity of seeking wisdom, knowledge, and understanding with fresh life, and a supply of every needful grace, from the Lord God Almighty, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. In searching the scriptures, how many dark and deep mysteries present themselves to me in almost every page! And, if you consult the judgment of good men, who have written comments on the word of God, it is ten to one you do not get that satisfactory information you seek after. They have consulted the ancients that went before, and have given up their own judgment to them, seldom receding from the old beaten path which they have trodden out; so that we have the old light revived, and but little new brought forth and set before us; and the reason is, because, instead of seeking to God by prayer, they rest satisfied with the opinions of others, as if all wisdom had centered in the ancient fathers.

The following words in John's gospel have puzzled me for many years. "Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest," John, iv. 35.

The difficulty with me appears to be in the colour of the fields, "they are white already to harvest."

The Lord had begun his good work in the poor woman at Jacob's well; she came to draw water, and he discoursed with her of living water, namely, the Holy Spirit and his grace.

The Lord being, as the apostles imagined, hungry and weary, they press him to eat. Our Lord diverts their attention from natural to spiritual provision, saying "I have meat to eat that ye know not of;" which he explains by telling them that his meat was to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work. Thus the Lord discourses both of natural and spiritual water; of literal and spiritual food.

The poor woman, having found her inmost soul searched, and her hidden works of darkness brought fresh to her mind and memory, and set before her eyes, was so bewildered that she forgets her pitcher, and runs into the city; and, in a great hurry, staring, and panting for breath, and all in confusion, cries out, "Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did;—Is not this the Christ?" This outcry collected a multitude of people about the poor creature, who, when they understood what the woman's outcry was about, flocked out of the city in great numbers, to see and hear, as this poor woman had done.

Upon sight of this multitude coming forth, our Lord asks, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?" It is thought that our Lord had been eight months in Judea since the last passover which he had kept at Jerusalem; and that in about four months more the next passover would come

on, and at the same time one of their harvests would come also; by which he means harvest in the literal sense; and then he brings in a spiritual harvest:

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." By these fields cannot be meant corn fields: for, if there were four months to harvest, the corn must have been but newly up, and therefore very green, and by no means white. And, if the ground was really white, the sun must have scorched and burnt up the green blades of the corn; and, if so, they might look in vain to the end of four months, for there could be no harvest at all that year.

I shall drop a few thoughts upon the harvest, and then explain what our commentators overlook, or bury in oblivion; namely, the white colour of these fields.

1. That a harvest of souls, or a large crop of elect sinners, are meant by this harvest is plain; because the corn harvest would not come on for four months, but the spiritual harvest was already white, and fit to cut.

2. There is a harvest at the conversion of souls, when the sickle of the gospel cuts men off from the old stock of self-righteousness and fleshly confidence, and gathers them out from among the wicked, brings them into the bond of the covenant, and they are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. Hence our Lord says, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest," Matt. ix. 37, 38.

Wheresoever and whensoever the gospel comes in the power of it, it is then time for men to sow to themselves in righteousness, and to reap in mercy, Hosea, x. 12. And, when these spiritual seasons are over, when the gospel in the power of it is removed, we may lament, as the prophet does,

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," Jer. viii. 20.

3. By harvest is sometimes meant the end of the world, when the godly will be gathered out of this world, and from among the wicked; and when this world, and the men of it, will have no grain left, it will be a field of stubble, the refuse of the harvest, and nothing else. "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch," Mal. iv. 2. This sense of the word harvest our Lord gives in his answer to the disciples, when they ask him to explain the parable of the wheat and tares; who answers, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels," Matt. xiii. 37, 39.

Now these fields are said to be white, which is the general colour of rye, wheat, or barley, when the corn is full, when the sap of the straw is dried, up, and when the straw and the ear are changed by the heat of the sun. But these fields were Samaritans. And what where they? Why, they were a mongrel people, partly Jew and partly heathen. The kings of Assyria having sent the ten tribes into captivity, he re-peopled the land from his dominions with people of different nations, but all idolaters. And Sanballet, the governor of Samaria, built a temple in opposition to that at Jerusalem, which drew many of the profligate Jews over to the Samaritans; and this mixed multitude the Jews looked upon to be no better than devils, as appears by their vile speech to Christ, "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" The difficulty is, in solving what that can be that is called white in such a dark company as this? Were they not the worst of sinners? And is

not all sin the work of darkness? And do not such walk in the ways of darkness? And are they not, by nature and by practice, as black as the tents of Kedar? And is not blackness and darkness for ever said to be reserved for such, if they die in such a state as this? All this is true, and worse things than these may be said of such sinners, and these things make them as black, as the devil himself. And yet our blessed Lord, who is a better judge of colours than we are, could see something white in them, though we cannot.

1. Sinners are said to be white when they are cleansed from sin, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. i. 18. But then it may be asked, Were these sinners in a pardoned state, or had they received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins? No, they had not. But Christ was their surety; he had undertaken for them; he had been already circumcised; by which ceremony he was then become debtor in their room and stead. Their sins were placed to his account on the eighth day; the body of the sins of their flesh was put off from them, and laid upon him, by the circumcision of Christ. Read and compare Col. ii. 11, Isa. xliii. 6. And in this sense they were white, though the great atonement was not as yet applied to them. And this may be seen in a similar circumstance. You read, in Acts the tenth of Cornelius being ordered by an angel to send for Peter. Peter is previously prepared for this embassy, by a vision from heaven. A sheet appears to him filled with all manner of four-tooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And a voice came to him, saying, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." To which Peter objects, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." And the voice answered, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," Acts, x. 15. The centurion's company was no more converted at this time than the

Samaritan multitude were, at their coming out of the city. And yet the heavenly voice told Peter that God had cleansed both Cornelius and his Gentile friends, and therefore these must not be called common, but rather uncommon, and men wondered at, Zech. iii. 8. In the same sense these Samaritans were white, and ready to harvest; and only wanted cutting off from the old stock, and being gathered from the stubble, and to be accepted of God in Christ, when they would be at once complete in him. Two things have just come into my mind, which I will not conceal.

1. When our Lord saw this multitude of Samaritans coming out to him though he was very hungry, and his disciples knowing this, "prayed him, saying, Master, eat;" yet he would not, but told them that he had meat to eat which they knew not of. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me," which is the conversion and redemption of sinners. Compare this with what follows. "And as the man from Cornelius drew nigh unto the city of Joppa, Peter went up upon the house top to pray about the sixth hour," or at twelve o'clock, "and he became very hungry," as Christ was at the well of Samaria; "And, while they made ready for Peter, he fell into a trance." Then came the vision and the voice, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat." Peter was very hungry, so was Christ. Peter would fain have eaten, but Christ would not. Peter was bid to feast upon the conversion of Gentiles, and Christ's meat was the conversion of the Samaritans.

2. I look upon Peter's vision, of the sheet and beasts, to be the best explanation in the world of that law, in the eleventh chapter of Leviticus, which respects clean and unclean beasts, reptiles, and fowls. They who have time may read, compare, and consider. But I shall return to my subject.

1. Elect sinners are said to be white when God separates them from among the ungodly. "When the Almighty scattered

kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon," Psalm lxxviii. 14. This psalm respects the children of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, where they had lain among the pots, but now they had the wings of a dove, God having borne them as upon eagles' wings, and brought them out of their bondage. The kings that were scattered were the confederate kings of Canaan, and the devils among them, whom God by Joshua defeated and scattered, and when this was done God's hill was as white as snow of Salmon, because the Lord was among them, as at Sinai in the holy place. In this sense the chosen Samaritans were white. They were chosen in Christ, set apart for God, and separated from all others in the purpose of God, and in the decree of election; and the following passage means no less—" Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," Jude 1. In this decree all heathen kings and subjects, and all the devils among them, were scattered from the elect, and not included in this purpose. Hence the elect are called Christ's seed and offspring before conversion, Isa. xlv. 3; and the others are called the seed of the serpent. The colour of these fields is their sanctification and cleansing in the eternal purpose of God. And the voice spake unto Peter again the second time, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," Acts, x. 15. And Peter afterwards owns that God had shewed him that he should not call any man common or unclean. These God had sanctified and cleansed, though the atonement had not been applied, nor was the Holy Ghost yet given to renew them; yet they were not common things, but very uncommon; nor were they to be called unclean, for the voice said that God had cleansed them. Christ appears in the presence of God for us. And they were completed in their head, and without fault before the throne. This is God's account, who is the best judge. And, though carnal reason and unbelief in us tell another story, widely differing from this, nevertheless I believe God's account to be strictly true.

That which makes black sinners white is the imputation of Christ's righteousness, called the best robe, the wedding garment, and the clean linen, white and clean. But then these Samaritans, and Cornelius's company, were no more justified at this time by faith than they were purified by it. And yet our Lord says they were white, and even white in this sense. For Christ was set up from everlasting, &c. "made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." And, if they were cleansed and clean in him, they must be just in him; unless we put asunder what God hath joined together, by separating sanctification from justification.

But Christ is not divided. Christ is made of God unto us all these. They were in him, and their sins were upon him, and their sentence was borne by him, and his atonement and obedience were theirs, according to God's council and covenant; and therefore he speaks of them not as in themselves, for hell itself cannot be blacker; but he considers them in himself, and such as they were all fair, and there was no spot in them. "Behold I say, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest."

The word of God is sometimes compared to a hoe and arrows, sometimes to a hammer, a fire, sometimes to a sword with two edges, and sometimes to a sharp sickle, which is to gather and to cut; and this is the use of the gospel. It is to gather poor sinners to Christ, who is the church's head. He is the father, master, and king of his own household. God has made us accepted in the Beloved. This sickle is to cut down the best and worst among men, and to cut him off from the old stock on which he grows, and from among the stubble to which he is fastened. A sheaf in God's harvest is a cluster of believers in the bond of peace, and enclosed in the love of Christ. Shocking these sheaves, or setting them up in tens, shews that they are the tithes of our great High Priest; see Levit. xxvii. 32; Isa. vi. 13. And, as this shocking of the

sheaves is the last work in the field, and is a preparing of the crop for housing, so Job's death is compared to it. "Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth. Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh (ascendeth) in his season." This will be the harvest-home; "Gather the wheat into my barn." "I have sowed and ye have reaped; and the time cometh when he that soweth and they that reap shall both rejoice together."

Particular Election

William Huntington
(1745-1813)

BARRY ON PARTICULAR ELECTION.

REVISED BY

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.,

TO THE

IMPARTIAL READER,

Courteous Reader.

I AM to inform thee, that in the time of the Popish government, when Popery and Quakerism smiled so amicably on each other, as two religions, if I might so call them, which are nearest of kin of all the religions visibly professed in these kingdoms, the people called Quakers sent me a Thrasonical challenge in writing, which was afterwards published in print to prove, from the Scriptures of Truth, the four doctrines here following.

1. The doctrine of the Resurrection of this fleshly body, which dies and turns to dust.
2. The doctrine of Justification, by the alone righteousness of Jesus Christ, freely imputed:

3. The doctrine of Imperfection in Sanctification in the most mortified believer, while in this world.

4. The doctrine of Particular Unconditionate Election before Time, All which Quakers do stiffly and peremptorily deny, as by their printed book against me doth evidently appear.

Their challenge I was resolved to answer in print, to let the world see what heterodox and heretical principles that deluded and seduced people, do hold and teach for true religion. Besides my resolution herein, I obliged myself by promise, to my congregation: that I would, in the strength of Christ, prick the bladder of their blasphemous pride, by proving and making good, by the Scriptures of truth, the above said doctrines. For my encouragement wherein, my congregation did unanimously stand by me, resolving I should be at no other charge hereabout but the studying part. Paper was bought, the printer agreed with; and just as the press was ready to begin, the storm came suddenly on the Protestants in Dublin, that we were soon scattered asunder. The Providence of God calling on us to secure our lives, instead of printing books. The reason why I have been so long silent in this cause, is the want of that help I had from my flock in Dublin. If any generous noble-spirited Christians, who love Christ's cause better than they do the Mammon of this world, will step in to my encourage, merit, in supplying the room of my absent-friends, they shall, in a very short time, see the four doctrines above mentioned cleared up and made good from God's word, maugre all the jesuitical craft and subtlety, whereof that people seem to be masters. The reason why I have singled out the last of the four doctrines, rather than any of the other three, to discover and confute the Quakers pernicious heterodoxy in the foundation principles of true Christianity is two-fold.

First, because that in denying and opposing the doctrine of a particular, unconditionate election (before time), they do manifestly rob God of his sovereignty and praise.

Secondly, because of the natural tendency which the denial of this doctrine of a particular, unconditionate election (before time), and the holding and propagating its contrary, viz., The doctrine of free-will to good in every man, of general redemption, and a temporary, conditional election, with falling from grace; hath to encourage men in living a licentious, loose life; and to necessitate men's final despair of salvation, when the natural conscience in unregenerate men comes to be under powerful awakenings, for sin committed against the Law of God.

That I do the Quakers no wrong in charging them with robbing God and encouraging men to live in sin; as also their laying a foundation for men's despair of ever being saved in their way of conditional and temporary election, will evidently appear to him who reads and compares with God's revealed will, what is discovered in this small tract; and in case any noblespirited Christians will but encourage the work, as already hinted, I do not so much as doubt, but that the Spirit of God will enable me to demonstrate from God's own word, that the Quakers, in denying the resurrection of the body, and the justification of a sinner, by the alone righteousness of the Son of God, freely imputed, without any regard had to any qualification inhering in the person of the sinner justified, do deny all sound and saving religion: and as touching their sinless perfection, attainable in this life, whereof they make such brags, it shall be made plain that herein they both belie the Spirit of God, and contradict the experience of all saved believers, both in heaven and earth.

Chapter I.

Of Election Before Time

GOD did before all time, by his unchangeable counsel, most freely, unchangeably, and from all eternity, elect and choose unto himself out of lapsed Adam's fallen posterity, a certain number of persons, which can neither be lessened nor increased, to partake of his special saving grace to salvation, by Jesus Christ his Son, to the praise of the glory of his own grace.

What I have now asserted for truth, if God enables me to demonstrate and make good by Scripture, as I doubt not he will, then will it unavoidably follow (all the wit and malice of men and devils cannot overthrow it), that God hath passed by, and reprobated others.

In the proposition now laid down, there are three, things to be considered, in order to a clearing up and making good the point in dispute. First, The act of God, and the objects thereof, which are both held forth and intended in the Scriptures following: Ephes. i. 4, According as he hath chosen us in him. Jno. xv. 19, I have chosen you, &c. 2 Thess. ii. 13, God hath chosen you, &c.

In the Scriptures now quoted, we have God electing or choosing, and then the objects of his election or choice, viz., particular persons, on whom that election of God fixeth, viz. some particular persons.

That God's act of election hath fixed on some particular persons, not on all in general, as the enemies of election would fain have it, the following arguments will evince.

Arg. 1.—If God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, then hath he elected and chosen to himself a certain number of persons, to whom alone, excluding all others, that promise of grace and salvation shall be made good.

But God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, excluding all others; therefore God hath elected and chosen to himself a certain number of persons, to whom, excluding all others, the promise of life and salvation shall be made good.

That God hath made a promise of life and salvation to some particular persons only, excluding all others, is evident and plain to such as acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of divine authority. Gen. xvii. 7, And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Here the judicious and unprejudiced reader may plainly see that Abraham and his seed were particular persons, distinct from all other nations and people, which were round about him: and these it pleased God, of his mere sovereign grace, to single out for his own peculiar use, that they may be a holy people, to bear his name, and to give him a pure and spiritual worship and service, which should be according to his own holy institution and divine appointment: and that they maybe made partakers of the promised inheritance, which was the sure possession of the kingdom of heaven, of which the promised land of Canaan was but a type and a shadow.

The people of the Jews was but a small people when God fixed his love on them, and called them. Deut. vii. 6-8, For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not

set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you: and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house bondmen.

The same promise which was made to Abraham and his seed under the old Testament dispensation, is confirmed by the New.

And evident it is that as God chose and called Abraham under that dark dispensation, with whom he entered into a covenant of grace; the benefit of which was to be of equal extent to himself and his children, even so many of them as were the children of the promise. So under the gospel dispensation, God, who is a free agent, acting all he doth in a way of sovereignty, saw fit to make known, by the gospel, that among the Gentiles also he had a select and chosen people, on whom he had decreed to confer the riches of his free grace, through the plenteous redemption that is in his Son Jesus Christ; and that pursuant to his own immutable decree and purpose, electing and choosing them before time began. Acts ii. 39, For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Here is that promise formerly mentioned, which looks at Abraham and his children, and also discovers the gracious design of God, to make a certain number of the Gentiles actual partakers of the self-same grace and blessing.

The manner of the apostle's expressing himself is full of clearness and perspicuity, proving that the promise of that grace and salvation is not designed for all and singular the Gentile sinners that then were, or in after times should be, in the world, but he limits and restrains the promise to a certain

peculiar number, lest sinners should mistake the apostle, and conclude, that because he had laid down an universal term, saying, And to all that are afar off, he, by way of explanation, shews what the Spirit means by that universal term, adding, Even as many as the Lord our God shall call: in which he plainly shews, and invincibly proves, that none of the Gentile sinners shall ever partake of God's special grace, but such as are (in time) effectually called out of a state of nature to a state of justification and sanctification; the which is never granted to any, but in the right of a covenant-promise, which covenant-promise respects that gracious act of God, electing and choosing in Christ his Son, as many of Adam's posterity, both of Jews and Gentiles, as his own sovereignty pleased, according to that of the apostle: Rom. viii. 30, Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And our Saviour himself, in Jno. x. 16, designs the Gentiles, whom God had, in his electing love, given in charge to him, in those expressions: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring; and they shall hear my voice, &c.

Arg. 2.—If, among the many thousands of people who hear the Gospel preached, but some, and that very few comparatively, are savingly converted, receive mercy, are justified and sanctified, and are made to persevere in a course of faith and holy life; then God hath elected and chosen only a certain peculiar number of men to life and salvation.

But among, the many thousands of people, who hear the Gospel preached, but some only are savingly converted, receive mercy, are justified, are sanctified, and do finally persevere in a course of faith and holy life.

Therefore God hath elected and chosen only a certain peculiar number of men to life and salvation.

There is nothing more evident than that the greatest number, even of those people, who are outwardly called by the Gospel, do slight and contemn the Gospel, and the grace offered therein: Witness that of our Saviour, Matt. xx. 16, For many are called, but few are chosen. Luke xiv. 16-19. That parable, of the king, who made a great supper, to which the king by his servants invited the guests, notwithstanding which many of them made blind excuses, and shifted it off. By which practice in the guests we are to understand, that great slight and contempt which worldly-minded sinners put on the Lord Jesus and his great salvation, wrought for the elect, which God offers in the Gospel, the which, they under value, preferring the accommodations of this perishing world, before that great and precious salvation.

To this also pertinent is that of Paul, Rom. x. 16, But they have not all obeyed the Gospel; for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? Rom. ix. 27. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant only shall be saved.

Now then, if among those many, who are externally called, and the very many who make a profession, there are but very few who savingly believe, repent, and finally persevere in a course of faith and holy life; then it is beyond all controversy, that those few who so believe, repent, &c., are particular persons, whom free grace elected to that state of believing and persevering; and the rest, who were by far the greater number, were left to inward blindness and hardness of heart, according to Rom. xi. 7. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded: According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes, that they should not see; and ears, that they should not hear; unto this day.

Arg. 3.—If God hath chosen persons by name, to be partakers of life and salvation by Christ his Son, then hath he chosen particular persons.

But God hath chosen persons by name, to be partakers of life and salvation by Christ his Son.

Therefore God hath chosen particular persons, &c.

The major proposition is not questioned; the minor or assumption is secured by the express testimony of the Spirit. Rev. xiii. 8, And all that dwell upon the earth, shall worship the beast, whose names are not written in the Lambs book of life. Luke x. 20, Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice because your names are written in Heaven.

Philip. iv. 3, And I intreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of Life.

Arg. 4.—If Jeremiah, and Jacob, &c., were particular persons chosen and loved of God before they were born, then God did elect and choose particular persons to life and salvation; but Jeremiah. and Jacob, &c., were particular persons, chosen and loved of God before they were born.

Therefore God did elect and choose particular persons to life and salvation.

That Jeremiah and Jacob, &c, were particular persons, no man of sense will deny; that they were beloved of God before the natural birth, the word of God is full and express. Jer. i. 5; Jer. xxxi. 3; Rom: ix. 11.

Arg. 5.—If God knows his elect from all others, before he calls them in conversion, then hath God elected particular persons to life and salvation.

But God knows his elect from all others, before he calls them in conversion.

Therefore God hath elected and chosen particular persons to life and salvation.

That God's precognition or foreknowledge, joined with his purpose of grace to save his elect, goes before his actually calling them in effectual conversion, is beyond dispute. Rom. viii. 29, 30; 2 Tim. ii 19; Jno. xiii. 18.

Arg. 6.—If they who believe in time, were, before their believing, ordained to eternal life, then did God elect and choose particular persons unto life and salvation.

But they who believe in time, were, before their believing, ordained to eternal life.

Therefore God hath elected and chosen particular persons unto life and salvation.

That God's pre-ordination of persons to life and salvation, doth precede, or go before, believing and repentance, is plain from Acts xiii. 48: And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Rom. xi. The election hath obtained it. Jno. x. 26: But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.—From which scriptures it is most plain that none do, or can, in time, believe and repent to salvation, but such persons as are theretofore appointed by God's gracious purpose.

Arg. 7.—If the term elect doth signify and pre-suppose a calling or choosing some particular persons or things, out from

among other particular persons or things, then hath God, out of so many, elected some particular persons unto eternal salvation.

But the term elect doth signify and presuppose a calling or choosing some particular persons or things, out from among other persons or things.

Therefore God hath, out of many, called and chosen some particular persons unto eternal salvation.

Arg. 8.—If the Lord Jesus did lay down his life but for a certain particular number of sinners, then did God elect and choose a particular number to, life and salvation.

But the Lord Jesus did lay down his life for a certain particular number of sinners.

Therefore God did elect and choose a particular number to life and salvation.

That the Lord Jesus did lay down his life for a certain particular number is obvious and plain to him that can but read, Jno. x. 15, As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. With this accords that of Paul to Titus, chap. ii. 14, Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purchase, to himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works. Ephes. v.25, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church: and gave himself for it, &c.

The sheep of whom Christ speaks can be understood to be no other but believers, even such as died in the faith before his incarnation, with the believers of that present day, and all who in time to come were to believe in him:—And these are the souls who were by the Father committed to the pastoral care and charge of Christ the great Shepherd of the sheep, as

sheep are committed to the care and charge of an under shepherd.

For these Christ lays down his life: To these he, by his Spirit, actually applies the virtue of his death, over these he watches: and to these only, excluding all others, he gives eternal life.

That these were given to Christ by the Father, to be redeemed and brought to glory, appears from Jno. vi. 39.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. Jno. xvii. 6: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, &c. And, verse 2: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Mark this, reader! To as many as thou hast given him. This plainly proves that God did commit to the care and faithfulness of Christ, his shepherd, a certain particular number to be justified and saved by him; and therefore not all the race of fallen mankind, as Papists, Arminians, Quakers, Free-Willers, &c., vainly teach and hold.

Another consideration, which is full of clearness, to convince and satisfy any right in their minds, That not Adam's posterity in general, as the heretics above named would fain have it, but a certain particular and definite number were elected and chosen by God, and by him given to Christ his Son, to be redeemed and saved; Christ's refusing to concern himself for any others, in the discharge of his office of Intercessor, as appears from Jno. xvii. 9: I pray for them (that is, for the elect, for whom he had undertaken as Vedeemony and Surety). I pray not for the world (that is, those of the world who were by God left in a reprobate state and condition), as is evident from Jno. xvii. 14: I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because, they are not of the world; even as I am not of the world. Here are two distinct parties described by Christ, the one is prayed for, the other is not; the one is hated,

the other hates; the very practice of the latter denotes the persons to be children of another father, distinct from those they hate, There is nothing more discovers, men to be the children of the devil than their hating righteousness, and not loving those who appear to be godly. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God; neither he that loveth not his brother. 1 Jno. iii. 10.

As love to God, his truth, and such as bear his image, is an infallible character of an elect child of God, Jno. xiii. 35; 1 Jno. iii. 14; 1 Jno. iv. 7,—

So to hate God, his truth, and such as bear his holy image, is the indelible character of a reprobate designed for eternal destruction. 1 Jno. iii. 10.

The second thing in the proposition to be considered, is the end and design of God in that act of his in electing and choosing, which is two-fold. First, as it respects the creatures elected, viz., that they might partake of the special grace of God here on earth, and of eternal glory in the kingdom of heaven, through Christ his Son, according to that of Paul:— According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love Ephes. i. 4. Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thess. ii. 13. Whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 14. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. v. 9.

Secondly, with respect to God electing, viz., That the glory of his sovereign, free, and rich grace, might be extolled and praised for ever, according as the Apostle expresseth it: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us

accepted in the beloved. Ephes. i. 6. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinate, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. ver. 11, 12.

The third thing in the proposition to be considered, is to take notice of the properties in that act of God electing.

Those properties are in number three. First, God in electing and choosing some sinners to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he purposed to shew mercy: He did elect and choose them most freely; there was nothing at all in the objects elected and chosen, that could move God wherefore he should elect one sinner more, or sooner, than another, for as fallen into sin, and equally obnoxious to the curse of the law and the wrath to come, were all the sons and daughters Adam looked on by God, when he fixed his electing love on some, and actually rejected and passed others by, on whom the most High God, as an uncontrollable Sovereign, purposed to execute the fierceness of his wrath for sin. The reason or impulsive cause of this difference, which the tremendous God saw fit to make between sinners, equally guilty and obnoxious to the curse and wrath of God, is not to be sought out of God himself. An example and lively, instance hereof we have in Rom. ix. 11, which the wise God hath seen fit should be recorded, on purpose to stop the month carnal reason, which is so wretchedly prone to question and dispute against his sovereignty over his creatures:—The children being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The wise God foreseeing the purblind reasonings and cavillings, of carnal men's unsanctified brains, against the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty in disposing of the eternal concerns of his rational creatures, fallen by sin into state and condition of misery, through their own default; hath seen good, for the vindication of his own prerogative, to make known to the sons of men, and that by the unerring wisdom and unquestionable authority of so great a man as Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the reason of God's method in proceeding to elect some of fallen mankind to a state of life and salvation through a Redeemer, and reprobating others, leaving them for ever to perish in that sin and misery, into which they did, without any constraint, wilfully plunge themselves, to be no other than his own most free and holy will, seeing that he alone is the undoubted Sovereign of the world, who hath an indisputable right to determine what to do with, or how to dispose of, sinning rebels, without being any way liable to the controlment of any of his creatures, especially such of them as, by sin, have forfeited their very being to the divine justice; and who while in an unreconciled state, are not capable of knowing him, or of being subject to his divine law.

The good will and pleasure then of the blessed God, is the source and fountain whence the great disparity between the elect and the reprobate world doth spring, not any thing in the creatures themselves, as Arminian cavillers dream and conceit it doth. This will evidently appear, if the reader will but, with a becoming modesty and unprejudiced judgment, read the whole chapter at length, and with fervent prayer to God for the wisdom of his Spirit, look narrowly into, and with sobriety consider the 11th and the 16th verses, where it plainly appears that the two conceited qualifications, of which the enemies of election are usually proud, and which they hold and teach, are the procuring cause of the difference, between the good and the evil men on earth, viz., the free will in man, and the good

works which unregenerate men do but conceit they do; they are both met with, and equally discarded, by God, from having any room or place among the causes which put God either upon choosing the elect, or rejecting the reprobate. Mark the 11th verse: That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. With this agrees Ephes. ii. 8, 9. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. And, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, &c. Tit. iii. 5. Vain unregenerate man would fain persuade himself that his worse than threadbare rags of polluted morality, negative and positive, is a covering sufficient not only to hide his ulcerous and plague-sores of guilt and vileness from the pure and all-seeking eyes of an Infinite Majesty, but also to deck and adorn his soul, so as to bespeak him an object fit for a holy God to behold with delight: O horrid delusion! worse than frenzy, or madness itself, this being but a temporary malady, which may, by the use of ordinary means, be holpen, but that, the bane and destruction of the immortal soul, which nothing but the despised grace of God in Christ can cure; such miserably deluded souls will not find it easy to believe, that to think so highly of their own qualifications is the greatest bar or hindrance which keeps them from salvation. Read also, with care, verse 16: So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy.

Let the adversaries of the doctrine I am now vindicating, but consider that man, as fallen into sin and misery of his own accord, is the object of election and reprobation; and let them (if they can) tell or shew me how a natural man, in his lapsed, guilty state, can possibly either will or act any thing but what is, both for matter and manner, most vile and abominable in the sight of that God who is purity and holiness itself in the abstract.

And if so, wherefore then should the most just and holy God be conceived, to elect men for that which he can do no other than hate and loath, as the best duties of an unregenerate person are both contrary to the nature of God, and also repugnant to his just and holy law?

When unregenerate men talk and brag of their duties and qualification, as that which must recommend them to God, and purchase for them a right to the crown that fades not away, they think, and speak as men in a midnight dream, not understanding what they say, or whereof they affirm; and the head spring of this their boasting of their qualifications, is the profound ignorance and Luciferian pride which sways their unrenewed spirits, having never passed under the killing severity of the law of God, set home on the conscience by the spirit of bondage, to prepare them for healing by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until this work of the Lord pass on the soul, no child of Adam can possibly prize the Son of God, or see himself to be utterly undone, till, with the rich man in the parable, the unquenchable flames of hell discover his misery to him. Luke xvi. 23. From what hath been observed from the Scriptures now referred to, plain it is, that God, in electing some, and reprobating others, of Adam's posterity, cannot, without blasphemy, be said to elect or choose any man to a state of life and glory, for any thing of good, which he foresaw would be in the sinner, fallen into a state of sin and misery: And, therefore, if there was nothing of foreseen good in the creature elected, for which God had respect to him more than to another, it must unavoidably follow, that, in God electing, not in the sinner elected, is the impulsive or moving cause, viz., his own sovereign good pleasure.

God, as hath been already observed, in electing and reprobating men, looks on them as fallen and guilty creatures,

who had wrought their own misery, by their voluntary breach of his royal law. To none of them was the most High any way obliged. He might have sent them all to the same place and condition of the fallen angels, whose conduct and example they followed in rebelling against their holy sovereign. And which of all the reprobates now in hell will it avail, to dispute the point of God's sovereignty with him? or to enquire why or wherefore he hath left them in that sad and deplorable estate of sin and misery? Pertinent to the business in hand, is that query which Augustin puts in his Book of the City of God; *quis fecit reprobum?* saith he, Who made the reprobate? To which he himself replies, *Quis nisi Deus?* Who, saith he, but God?

Again he queries, *Quare Deus fecit reprobum?* Why did God make the reprobate? To which he answers, *Quia ita voluit:* Because, saith he, it was his will.

Again he queries, *Quare Deus voluit reprobum facere?* Why, saith he, was it God's will to make the reprobate a reprobate? He answers the cavilling querist, or saucy and ragmatical enquirer, with that of Paul, Rom. ix. 20. *O homo, tu quis es, qui respondeas Deo?* O Man, who art thou that repliest against God?

If Augustin were now living on earth, and should read the reply which Grevincovius, that blaspheming proud Arminian, made to the query which Paul put to the called Corinthian, who excelled in the gifts of God, 1 Cor. iv. 7. For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou, that thou hast not received? To which Grevincovius most arrogantly and blasphemously replies, I myself make myself to differ. I say, if Augustin were to read this Arminian's answer to Paul, it would not be difficult to guess at what rate Augustin would treat his insolence.

If the abused grace of God changed him not before, death, it is most dreadful to think, and seriously to consider, how little

the Free-will and learning, of which he was greatly proud, do now avail him at the bar of the Great Judge; no doubt but he finds, in woeful experience, what an impar congressus, or unequal match, he is, for the great Jehovah to dispute matters with. Oh! that Men of his Spirit and pernicious principles were wise, to consider things aright, before they see and feel their folly in the unquenchable flames of God's wrath in hell.

Let it be farther considered, how express the spirit of God is in charging on Adam and all his off-spring, without exception, the breach of his Law, and on that very account, accounting them all guilty criminals, and unclean polluted sinners, who, by their voluntary apostacy, have forfeited his favour and lost his blessed image, wherein the glory and happiness of the rational creature consisted, as the Apostle witnesseth, Rom. iii. 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God. And in ver. 19, Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them, who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. The conclusion whereof he sets down in ver. 20. Therefore by the deed of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. With Paul concurs all the prophets, and the other penmen of Holy Scriptures, setting forth the wretched condition of all mankind by the apostacy of Adam, the natural and federal head of his children.

The condition, then, of all Adam's posterity being such, as renders every sinner culpable before God, and not only so, but utterly incapable of willing or acting the least part of that duly, which God's law requires to a helping or recovering himself out of that his misery. It is most plain and obvious to every enlightened understanding, that by the tenure of the first Adam's covenant; all are born heirs of the curse and wrath of an offended God; and are, by reason of that spiritual, impotency, which is inflicted on Adam's nature as a

punishment for breaking God's law, as altogether unable to believe in all atoning Saviour, when offered by God in the Gospel of his grace, as they are, to perform, the condition of that holy law of God, the violation and breach whereof hath cast and condemned, at God's bar, the whole race of mankind.

Man's wretchedness and misery then is of himself; he can truly and justly blame none for it but himself. (Gen. iii: 17), (Eccles. vii. 29), (Hos. xiii. 9).

This granted, it unavoidably and by necessary consequence follows, that God is most just and Righteous in sealing to the day of his wrath, with the black character of reprobation, that part of Adam's posterity, on whom he hath fixedly resolved to glorify that adorable and tremendous attribute of his incensed justice; for breaking his just and righteous law.

And where is the man who will undertake to prove God unjust and unrighteous, in case he had dealt with the elect themselves as he hath done with the reprobates, viz. Seal them up to the judgment of the great day of his wrath? God is debtor to none of Adam's children, unless to damn and forsake them for ever, for their devil-like apostacy and rebellion.

In this adorable and tremendous dispensation of his, in reprobating the greatest part of mankind, and electing to himself, out of the fallen and corrupted mass, some few of man kind, on whom he purposed to glorify the riches of his grace, through Christ his Son, he acts towards both in a way of absolute sovereignty; so that as the reprobates cannot say they have not merited that curse and misery which is like to be their portion for ever, so neither shall the elect be ever able to attribute their salvation to any other cause besides the sovereigns, free, and rich grace of God, which, had it pleased God, might have fixed its hold on the reprobates, making them

the elect, while they themselves were overlooked and passed by.

For my own part, I must ingenuously confess, that I am so far from reflecting on God, as any way unjust or partial, for dealing with Adam's children as he doth, that I am rather astonished to think that any of Adam's apostate offspring should ever escape that curse and wrath, to which they were all equally born heirs apparent. And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Ephes. ii. 3.—This, this was the state and condition of the elect themselves, as they are the natural off-spring of Adam. But the banner of God's free-grace, and undeserved love and pity, hath been, by the arm of divine sovereignty, effectually displayed over them, when in their blood and wretchedness, even then when God first laid the foundation of their salvation in election. According to Ephes. i. 4-7, and Ephes. ii. to the 10th verse: Well may every justified believer cry out with Paul, Rom. xi. 33. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

In the bottomless profundity, or depth, of God's unsearchableness, the wit, and corrupt reason of regenerate men, with all their acquired parts, are swallowed up and confounded; by reason whereof it comes to pass, that my times such as are admired, for their great reason and learning, will not allow the Creator of the world that privilege which they readily grant to a man like themselves, viz.,—To decree or act any thing but what their blind reason and perverted judgment can see a reason for. Oh, what an age do we live in! wherein the immensity and unsearchableness of God is, on every occasion of men's disputing principles of religion, called on to hold up the hand at the bar of those men's carnal reason, who indeed have lost the use of right reason.

Of such men I would gladly know, whether they can, with all their mother wit, decked and adorned with all their academical learning, fathom the depth of the created ocean, or tell the exact number of the stars, and what influence they have on human bodies? If they can tell how the soul and body of man are united? Or how the bones grow in the womb of the woman with child? With many other secrets in natures not only difficult, but even impossible to be found out by the wit and learning of Adam's children: witness the many learned philosophers, wherewith the world abounded, whose wit and learning came vastly short in finding out and tracing the Almighty in his works of creation and providence: whence I argue, *A Minore ad Majus*—From the lesser to the greater. If all the mother wit and acquired parts and learning of the children of Adam could never find out many secrets in the works of creation and providence, how much more impossible is it for them to find out the Almighty Creator himself to perfection?

The query which Zorhar the Naamathite put to Job, will never be answered by any creatures in earth or heaven any other way than in the negative. Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? Job. ii. 7.

And from what source or fountain men's atheistical and saucy reflections on God, for making such a difference between Adam's children, in saving but few in comparison, and damning the rest, should spring, I cannot tell, unless from their profound ignorance of the immense and incomprehensible perfection, of God's being, and their not owning and believing his absolute sovereignty over his creatures.

I appeal to the conscience of every savingly enlightened man, who reads this, whether this wilful and affected ignorance of God, and their denying his absolute sovereignty over his creatures, be not the very portal or door at which the horrid

profaneness and matchless debaucheries of this worst of ages, which now lays the kingdoms open to utter ruin, have entered the stage.

"This is that which the devil, and his busy agents the Roman Jesuits, aimed at, when, in the late King James's reign, they obtained the King's: royal prohibition, forbidding ministers, both *Non*, and *Con.*; to meddle, in preaching, the doctrine of election, and reprobation. They well knew how subservient the keeping the people ignorant of the doctrine of election would be to open the floodgates to profaneness and debauchery; and, consequently prepare England for a ready, reception of cursing and damning popery.

The denying the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in electing and reprobating lapsed and guilty rebels, and teaching and maintaining, both in pulpit and print free-will to good in unregenerate men, as also the doctrine of general redemption, is a doctrine which is altogether unscriptural; and because of men's violence and peremptoriness in teaching and propagating the same, and their obstinacy in refusing to receive and submit to the contrary doctrine, which is according to the Scriptures, and the only doctrine which designs the destruction of sin in the hearts and lives of true believers; and the promoter of true holiness; God most justly punisheth such people with a giving them up, not only to believe the most nonsensical lies for true religion, but even to wallow like swine in the mire of the grossest immoralities, even to an excelling the very pagan world.

To illustrate the point I am now defending against the Quakers and Arminians, viz., That God, in electing some and reprobating others, doth act therein most freely, as an absolute Sovereign; let them give me leave to put this question to their reason and conscience, such as it is: suppose that all the several parties in the city who differ in

their mode or way of worshipping God, should, in their respective meetings, instead of worshipping God, lay all their heads, hearts, and hands together, to contrive and carry on a plot against the king and the fundamental laws of the kingdom, with a full intent to destroy both the one and the other; to which plot all the several parties do, as one man, harmoniously and unanimously agree, the law condemns not only the practice, as traitorous and treasonable, but sentences the very persons, all and singular, who are proved to have had any hand in such a plot, to a shameful and cruel death.

The plot comes to be discovered; upon discovery, the king, who hath the executive power of the law in his own hand, he considers the matter, and finding that all these several parties, whom he took to be loyal subjects, are turned rebels; as most evidently appears by the unnatural plot, lately engaged in by them all, against both his person and government; for which both he and they know full well the law condemns them all alike.

The king, to whom the executive power of the law belongs, according to his prerogative, he nominates two select parties out of all the rest, viz., Quakers and Arminians, to whom he resolves to extend his favour, in giving to them his royal pardon; the other several parties, distinct from them, he resolves to leave them to the sentence of the law, to undergo the deserved penalty thereof, for that, horrid and unnatural rebellion, I would fain know what the Quakers and Arminians could object against the king of England, for passing an act of indemnity, or free pardon, on the people called Quakers and Arminians, and leaving all the other parties to suffer death.

Seeing that herein the king acts by prerogative, not according to desert; for the Quakers and Arminians deserved death as well the rest, who are excluded out of the pardon: my reason tells me, that the Quakers and Arminians would be so far from

charging the king with injustice or partiality that they would rather sound forth his praise, for saving them by his favour and mercy, no way deserved, whom, in strictness of justice, he might have left to the sentence of the law.

And in case any of the criminals condemned to die should offer to murmur against the king, for making such a difference between his equally guilty subjects, would not the Quakers and the Arminian, both plead the king's prerogative for saving themselves, when, at the same time, and by the same sovereignty, he passed by the rest; and shall the King of kings be disputed against and reflected on for acting, in matters of the like nature, by his own undoubted prerogative.

If any should be so saucy and bold as to demand a reason why or wherefore the King of England should leave seven or eight several parties out of his royal pardon, and extend the benefit thereof only to two select parties, who were both as liable to death, by the law, as the others; the answer is ready, it is the king's sovereign will and pleasure to make the two select parties nominated in his pardon, objects of his pity and mercy, and the rest to be the objects of his incensed justice, to undergo that death and misery which they, by rebellion, brought upon themselves.

Now, in all this, hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour? Rom. ix. 21.

Reader, I pray consider that the lump in the place now quoted intends no other than men and women, whom God (the absolute Sovereign of the world) decreed to create: the making vessels is God's creating mankind with a purpose to permit their fall.

His making one vessel to honour, and the other to dishonour, is God's creating one with a fixed purpose to recover him out

of that fallen state into which he was to fall, and that by sovereign grace; the other he leaves to die and perish in that wretched state into which he, of his own default, fell.

In this procedure God is altogether free; neither can the creature so left by God, any way reflect on God, as dealing unjustly or unequally with him; and the reason is, because God is under no tie or obligation to give grace to that creature, who, of his own accord, did abuse and throw away that stock of grace whereby he was rendered capable of keeping the law of his Maker; and who, by the instinct of his vitiated and corrupted nature, doth obstinately oppose and resist the means of cure propounded and tendered in the gospel.

So that the point in controversy between me and the adversaries already named is in this comparison propounded in the verse last quoted, lively set forth; from which it is apparent that the design of the Apostle is to prove that God, as the undoubted Sovereign of the world, who acts what him pleaseth, and that according to the counsel of his own most holy will, decreed to make some of the corrupted mass to be vessels of mercy, and of the rest vessels of wrath; and that by electing some unto himself, upon whom he purposed to bestow his love, with all the means tending to fit and prepare those persons so elected and chosen, for the actual enjoyment of that love.

Such as a Redeemer, to die for them; faith, whereby they should be made partakers of that Redeemer, with all the saving graces of the Spirit promised in the covenant of grace, with final perseverance in grace to the end; the rest, as hath been before observed, he left, or passed over, purposing to leave them in that wretched and deplorable condition into which they causelessly plunged themselves.

Neither is God therefore the cause why the reprobate is sinful and wicked, but his own will, which being left to its own natural

freedom, did most freely and readily choose that which was by God's law forbidden, upon pain of God's displeasure and curse.

The second property in God's act of election is its unchangeableness, and therefore, most certain it is that he or she whom God hath once purposed to love and save shall never finally, or totally, fall away from grace, or miscarry eternally, Psal. xxxiii. 11. The Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

What is God's election of some to life eternal, and the means leading thereto, but the birth or product of his own counsel? Rom. ix. 11. The purpose of God, according to election, must stand. And oh! what an unspeakable cause of rejoicing is this very consideration to that man or woman, who find in themselves the fruits or effects of the new birth, to think and believe, that they in particular are chosen to life eternal, by him who cannot change that purpose of his wherewith he hath purposed to save so poor and miserable a sinner as the effectually-called sinner looks on himself to be.

Neither is the poor weak believer to doubt but that those sins and backslidings, both of his heart and life, for which he will be but too apt to fear, and conclude God will at length cast him off, were all perfectly known to God, even then when he elected him to salvation; notwithstanding which, God fixed his love, and embraced the poor sinner in the bosom of his irreversible decree, when nothing of loveliness, but rather the contrary, appeared to the eye of God's praecognition, or foreknowledge, in the soul, so pitched on by his decree.

Whom God once loves with that electing love, he loves them to the end. Jer. xxxi. 8. Mal. iii. 6. Jno. xiii. 1. Rom. xi. 29. And as God's act in electing is without change, so, in the third place, it was from eternity; though the work of effectual calling and saving conversion be in time, yet God's decree and purpose of bestowing that grace and mercy on the elect

sinner was before Time. So witnesseth the Apostle, Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world, Acts xv. 18. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, Ephes. i. 4. From the beginning hath God chosen you, 2 Thes. ii. 13. Whose names are written in the Book of life, from the world, Rev. xvii. 8.

The electing love of God is from one eternity to another; as it did commence before time, so, when time shall be swallowed up endless eternity, this love of God to his elect, and chosen in Christ, will be, and continue, the same for ever.

And therefore, let that believer who feels himself inwardly and frequently annoyed with those discouraging fits of fickleness and unconstancy, in walking with God, in the way of new obedience, take sanctuary here by faith, applying to himself the sweet benefits of these properties of God's electing love, filling both his head and heart with the thoughts and fixed persuasion that the blessed God, who is the infinite sovereign of the world, who acts all things which please himself, according to the counsel of his own will, hath of his own good pleasure chosen him a poor unworthy, empty, nothing creature, to be a vessel of mercy, through Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his own grace and that love, wherewith God hath loved him, it began towards him before he had an actual being, yea, before the world was: and as that love of God was set on him before time began, so when time itself shall be no more, that love of God to him shall still be endless, like God himself. Nothing more conduceth, under God, to heart-settlement, in the ways of God, than to be well versed in understanding and believing, with application to one's self these fundamental principles of gospel religion.

And this one thing I desire the Reader to remember, and carefully to observe, viz., That if there were no other argument to evince and make good the truth I have now asserted than

the arduous and elaborate endeavours of Satan and his busy agents, both in preaching and printing against the doctrine of election and reprobation, it were sufficient. The devil and the pope knew full well how destructive and pernicious to both their kingdoms the bringing sinners to the scriptural knowledge and right believing his doctrine will be.

And therefore, for preventing hereof, the doctrine itself must be exposed in the blackest hue, as a doctrine which makes men proud, secure, and careless of good works, and which leads men to loose living; and in the end to final desperation. And as the doctrine itself is shot at by the Romish and Arminian Archers, so the most zealous and bold assertors and maintainers of it are set out in the most odious and black colours which envy and malice itself can devise; but maugre all the craft and envy of the devil and his most subtil and industrious tools, the doctrine of particular election (before time) is plainly held forth and asserted in the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and the Holy Apostles; and in case divine providence calls to a suffering condition for defence of it, I do not doubt but God hath a sealed number in these kingdoms, known to himself, who will be enabled to seal the truth of it with their dearest blood.

An objection or two lies in the way to be answered, before I can proceed to what mains behind.

Object. 1. The doctrine of particular election puffs, men with pride.

Ans. The contrary to this the devil himself knows to be true.

For I doubt not but Satan hath made his observations, that none of all God's called children have more abounded with humility and self-abasement than those who have had the highest assurance of God's electing love: none but these can

rightly admire and adore the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus.

To me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, &c., cries that great Apostle of the Gentiles, Ephes. iii. 8. This a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief. 1 Tim. i. 15.

For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 1 Cor. xv. 9. But by the grace of God I am what I am. verse 10. It is to be observed, that among all the Apostles none was more highly advanced, in respect; of extraordinary manifestations and gospel revelations, than Paul was; and yet, among all the apostles, none more abased: No greater admirer of free grace than he was; and indeed,, not only Paul, but others also, both under the Old Testament and under the New, whom free grace singled out to be vessels, of mercy. These were still addicted to go out of themselves in a way of self-abasement, and crying up the riches of God's grace and mercy every way, free and undeserved by them. And herein I appeal, most freely, to the personal experience of every regenerate believer now living, whether they do not find in themselves, that the nearer they come to know and perceive the love of God to themselves in particular, the more vile they are in their own esteem; and the more the sight and sense of their own nothingness grows and abounds, the more are they inwardly stirred up to adore and magnify the riches of God's free grace, who hath vouchsafed to regard such poor contemptible worms as they judge themselves to be.

Object. 2. The Doctrine of particular Election cuts off the force and strength of all threatenings and warnings which are recorded in the Scriptures, as a curb and bit, to restrain men from sin.

Answ. The ever blessed and holy God, who decreed to elect and choose a particular number to salvation, hath decreed also the means of bringing them to that end, whereof those threatenings and warnings, scattered here and there in God's Word, are a part; the which the good Spirit of God makes effectually useful to work and increase in the elect (called to the state of grace) the filial and reverential fear of God; as also to caution them against all kind of declinings in the way of holy walking with God, in the way of new obedience to his Holy Commandments; the which God hath revealed in his word to be the only way in which true believers must go to an actual possessing the purchased inheritance, according to Psalm i. 1-3. Psalm cxix. 1-3. Heb. xii. 14.

These divine threats and warnings are, through the saving influence of the Spirit of grace, made a powerful bit and curb, to restrain the savingly converted from returning, with approbation and delight, to former and forsaken folly, and not only so, but to keep them more close to their duty in a gospel dependance on Christ, their mediatorial head, for all manner of supplies, till they come to glory.

Those threats and warnings, if they were ten thousand times more than they are, will never curb or restrain any reprobate from loving and liking sin.

It is true, that, through the common operation of the Spirit of God, such threats and warnings may, for a time, influence a hypocrite to a keeping him from the external gross acts of sin, and a putting him on doing many things which are morally good in themselves. But alas! what will this avail, while the state of the man is unchanged, and his heart unrenewed? Sad instances hereof are recorded in God's Word; witness Pharaoh, Exod. vii. 4, and Judas, Matt. xxvi. 15, Matt. xxvii. 5, with many other reprobates, whose names are left on record in the book of God, who were neither restrained from sin, nor

yet kept back from running headlong to hell, with this bit in their mouths. The Spirit of God, by the holy prophet, gives a full description of the natural disposition of wicked hypocrites, as touching the incorrigibleness of their hearts, in going on in sin, not only under God's rod, but also under his favourable dispensation, which, one would think, should win them to repentance, Jer. v. 3. Rev. xvi. 9-11. Isa. xxvi. 10, 11. Rom. ii. 4, 5.

Object. 3. If I be elected to life eternal (before time) I may live as I list; I need neither to believe, to repent, or to use the means of obtaining salvation. And though I live after the flesh, I shall be saved, being elected.

Answ. To this threadbare objection, which is commonly in the mouths of all cavillers against the doctrine of election, I answer in two particulars.

First, This objection doth not, in the least, find any encouragement from the doctrine of particular election (before time) as will evidently appear by the inseparableness of the end and the means asserted and held forth in the word of God, and constantly maintained by the orthodox against Papists, Arminians, &c.

He who hath elected to life eternal, he hath also elected to the means; such as, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, held forth and offered in the gospel; repenting for sinning against God; advancing in holiness, and persevering in the same to the end: whence it plainly appears, that he who makes this objection, is either wilfully ignorant, not in the least understanding the doctrine of election, according to divine revelation, or, which is unspeakably worse, an affected caviller, and a wicked subverter of the Gospel. Suppose I should query of the Papist, the Arminian, the Quaker, and Free-willier, who are all agreed in opposing and decrying the doctrine of particular election before time, and perseverance

to the end, whether they believe that God hath decreed, or absolutely determined in himself, how long he, or they, shall live or continue in this world? The answer will, undoubtedly, be in the affirmative, viz., That God hath decreed, or determined, in himself how long he, or they, are to live or continue in this world.

If then, say I, you believe that God hath decreed, in himself, how long you are to live or continue in this world, what need you to mind any of the concerns of this world, for the support of human life? Why will you so insatiably covet the perishing riches, and the transitory pleasures of the present world, seeing God hath decreed how long you are to live?

The answer again will be, he that hath decreed how long I am to live in this world, he hath also decreed, and (in his revealed will) commanded me to exercise my reason, and my other natural faculties, in order to procure and make use of the ordinary means, such as food, raiment, physic, and the like, whereby, in an ordinary way, the life and health of the body are secured and maintained. Here, in the concerns of the body, they are sharp and witty enough, even to an out-doing thousands of the children of God. But in the concerns of the soul they are as corrupt and heterodox as they are sound and rational in the other.

If a Papist or an Arminian should fix his purpose of building a house in such or such a place, it cannot be rationally supposed that he intends to build without materials; and therefore my reason tells me that, in order to accomplish that his purpose, he hath also purposed to provide all the several materials necessary for such a purpose.

Qui serio vult finem, media etiam ad finem illum tendentia vult: He who in good earnest wills the end, he also wills the means leading to that end is a sure rule, both in logic and divinity. And why these popish Arminian cavillers should not allow it its

proper place in the doctrine of election before time, I can understand no other reason for it than either because God hath judicially smitten them with blindness of mind, that they should not be able to understand or believe this amazing doctrine of election before time, or else because hath left them, as he did Pharaoh, to harden themselves, that they might, with the greater acuteness and stubbornness, oppose and withstand his sovereignty in electing some and reprobating others of the same fallen and corrupted mass, and that before time.

Secondly. As there can be no argument more cogent and irrefragable, to evince and prove a man to be either a fool or a madman than his resolving to expect the accomplishment of an end, such as building a house, or living in the world, without the use of the proportionate means leading to such ends; for there no argument which more strongly proves a man or woman to be of the number of reprobates than to expect or hope to go to Heaven in the continued and approved neglect of believing in the Son of God, repenting of sin, living a holy life, and persevering in the same to the end of life.

Object. 4. The doctrine of election before time doth not only encourage to sin, but it leads people to final desperation, for preventing of which all imaginable care ought to be taken to suppress and decry it.

Answ. To this horrid and blasphemous objection I shall, in Christ's strength, Answer in four particulars.

And first, I do boldly affirm, in the name of the ever-blessed Trinity, that this blasphemous objection did originally spring from that spirit which charged the Son of God with casting out devils by Beelzebub, which, if I mistake not, is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost; and such as peremptorily, with allowance and approbation, persist in

making and liking the same against the doctrine of election, so plainly revealed and so positively asserted by the Holy Ghost, I am not afraid to declare and pronounce them the children and successors of those Pharisees, now in hell, who vented that unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, Matt. xii. 24. 32. Let all cavilling adversaries who bring this objection against the doctrine of God's absolute and free election before time have a care they be not found ranked among those mighty sinners who, in the height of their wickedness, ran themselves most desperately upon the thick bosses of the Almighty's buckler. Job xv. 26.

Secondly. If the doctrine of election be such a dangerous doctrine as leads to licentiousness, and which, in the end, brings men to desperation, I would fain know how it comes to pass that the enemies of this doctrine are such slaves to their brutish lusts, and why so many of them die in despair when under powerful awakenings and common convictions in their guilty consciences?

Thirdly. I do with the greatest confidence and certain assurance, grounded on the word of God, and backed with my own personal experience affirm, that as the right knowledge and believing of the doctrine of election before time with a particular application thereof to one's self, is the only doctrine that sets the heart of a true believer against all sin, and which secures and keeps the believer from desperation in the time of the deepest desertion, and most violent temptation; so the doctrine of free-will and general redemption is a doctrine which encourageth to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation.

Here two things are to be demonstrated: first, that the doctrine of election before time rightly understood, and particularly applied by faith, is the only doctrine which engages the heart of a sound believer against all known sin, and which fortifies

and secures the believe against desperation in the time of the deepest desertion, and the most violent temptation.

Secondly, That the doctrine of free-will and general redemption is a doctrine which encourageth to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation.

The first of these, will evidently appear to him that rightly considers and believes the particulars following.

First. The purpose and design of God the Father in electing, which was, that his elect and chosen, who were fallen into sin and misery in Adam, their natural and federal head, might be delivered, and by strong hand, rescued out of that state of sin and misery, and made effectual partakers of that liberty and redemption, purchased by Christ his son, the sponsor and surety of his elect.

Secondly. The design of Christ, the surety and sponsor of the elect, in the whole work of mediation, which he undertook to go through for the elect (which his Father had chosen in him), which was to purchase for, and, in time, to apply actually to the elect, the saving benefit of that freedom and redemption purchased by himself.

Thirdly. The design and office of the holy Ghost, which is to sanctify and renew the souls of the elect in effectual calling, and to carry on and maintain the Work of grace, begun in the believer, to the end.

Fourthly. The design of the gospel in revealling and discovering the mystery of God's love and grace to his elect and chosen, which is, that believers might, by virtue of Christ's death, savingly applied, die unto all sin, and that they might, by virtue of Christ's resurrection, walk in newness of life before God.

Fifthly. The design of divine providence towards true believers, which is to purge them from the remains of indwelling sin more and more, and to make them more and more to abound in holy conformity to Christ their mystical head.

All these, as so many lines in a centre, do meet in the doctrine of particular election, the which, when the believer seriously considers, and, by faith, applies to himself, he is so far from being drawn either to sin or desperation thereby, as that he finds the quite contrary in himself, viz. an admirable aversion and repugnancy to yield consent to the flattering solicitations of sin, and an anchor-hold which powerfully keeps him from descending into the darksome valley of desperation, which is, as I may say, the very entrance into hell itself.

When the believer is at any time attacked by Satan, his enticing instruments, or by indwelling corruption, to yield to the motions of sin, he fetcheth arguments against sin from the doctrine of God's election thus: hath God from all eternity fixed his gracious purpose of delivering and rescuing me out of that state of sin and misery, into which the apostacy of Adam, my natural and federal head, plunged me, and that by choosing out and fixing on his own son to be a surety and saviour to purchase a liberty and to work out a perfect and complete redemption for me; and shall I, can I, with approbation, yield my full consent to grieve and offend this freely and this dearly loving God? I cannot do it, neither can all the craft and policy of my spiritual enemies ever work me to a willingness to go back into that state of spiritual captivity, under sin and Satan, from which the grace of God, in election and effectual calling, hath set me free.

Secondly. Hath Christ the son of God, pursuant to his Father's holy decree and gracious purpose, and in compliance with so noble and glorious a design as redeeming captive sinners,

and reconciling them to his father, consented to become a mediator for me, to work out a work of perfect redemption for me, that I might be set at liberty, from the law's curse, from the dominion of sin, and the usurpation and tyranny of the devil? And shall I consent to commit sin against such bowels of mercy and love? I cannot do it.

Thirdly. Hath the Holy Ghost (who, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, had a hand in my election to eternal life) vouchsafed to take on him the office of a sanctifier, to sanctify and renew the elect in effectual calling and who hath begun in me the work of special sanctification, and will never finally leave me till he hath perfected his work begun in me; and shall I, can I, willingly grieve and offend that holy spirit, by whom I am sealed to the day of redemption? I cannot do it.

Fourthly. Is the gospel appointed by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be a word of revelation, to discover to me how the heart of God, his Christ, and Holy Spirit, stood affected towards the elect, and toward me in particular, from eternity and to endless eternity; and not only so, but the same might be a rule of direction to me all my days, to discover the false ways I am to shun and avoid, as also the paths I am to walk in, in order to a pleasing the Trinity, and coming safe to heaven; and shall I, can I, consent to abuse so sweet and excellent a gospel? I cannot do it.

Fifthly. Is the design of divine providence, in all its various dispensations to the elect, and to me in particular, to purge believers from the remains of indwelling corruption, and to make them more and more to abound in holy conformity to Christ, their mystical head; and shall I abuse it by sinning against it, and taking an occasion therefrom to be vain and secure in my conversation? I cannot do it.

And as the true believer is enabled, being taught and guided by the Holy Ghost, to fetch arguments against sin from the

five sacred topics now mentioned; so is he, in like manner, enabled, being savingly influenced by the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost in him, to fetch from the above-named topics arguments to keep him from final desperation, in the most violent hurricane of temptation which can attend over deserted or an afflicted condition.

To evince and clear up this truth, for the comfort and encouragement of the poorest believer, in an hour of sore distress, when the waters of affliction reach even to the very soul, to a sensible endangering the extinguishing the little grace lodged in the soul; let it be seasonably and seriously considered, that the believer when he finds Satan, his wicked instruments, and in dwelling corruption, all conjunctly together, pressing and working his soul within to despair of mercy and salvation, he falls on arguing from the sweet doctrine of God's election thus: shall I, can I, who am secured of life eternal by the gracious and unchangeable decree of the immutable God, despair of mercy and salvation, as Satan, the wicked world, and my own carnal reason, would have me do? I cannot do it. If it were possible that my sinking soul should drop, through the very jaws of despondency, into hell itself, thence would God's unchangeable purpose of grace fetch and deliver it.

Secondly. Shall I, or can I, for Whom Christ the Son of God hath undertaken, as a sponsor and surety, and for whom he hath wrought a perfect reconciliation by his own mediatorial righteousness, in which no spot or defect ever was, or ever shall be found by God, angels, or men, despair of mercy and salvation, as the devil, wicked men, and my own carnal reason would fain persuade me to do? I cannot do it.

Thirdly. Shall I, to and for whom the Holy Ghost is become a sanctifier and a renewer of my nature, and who, by his saving, influential presence, dwells in me, never finally to leave me, till his good work of grace begun in my soul in effectual calling,

be completely perfected, despair of mercy and salvation, as the devil, wicked men, and my own carnal reason would have me do? I can by no means do it.

Fourthly. Shall I, who have all the sweet and precious promises of the gospel, of God's love and grace to comfort and assure me, that God, Christ, and the blessed Spirit will never, never fail or forsake me, despair of mercy and salvation, as mine enemies would persuade me to do? I cannot do it.

Lastly. Shall I, who have the divine providence engaged for me, to uphold me, to purge out the remains of in-dwelling sin in me, and to forward me in conforming to my mystical head Christ, in holiness, despair of mercy and salvation as my enemies would have me? I cannot do it. This is the use which a true believer makes of the doctrine of God's election (before time) while faith in the believer is in its right exercise; none will stumble at it so as eternally to perish, but such as are not, by that act of God's electing decree given to Christ, (before time) to be actually redeemed in time.

Secondly. The doctrine of free-will and general redemption is a doctrine which encourageth to sin, and which necessarily leads to desperation. I shall offer two things to consideration for evincing and clearing up this for truth; the which I desire the reader to weigh and consider without prejudice.

First. The use which all unregenerate men make of the doctrine of free-will, which sad experience, teacheth, is this: I will turn to God by repentance; I will believe in an atoning Saviour; I will fall on the work of reformation, and thereby prevent my perishing by the deserved judgments of God, when I see my own time, and when I am thereto disposed; who sees not, except one spiritually blind, how greatly this doctrine doth encourage to sin: for, saith my carnal reason, as often it hath while I was in a state of nature, if I do not return

to God upon his call and invitation this day, this month, this year, I fully purpose and resolve to do it the next; for God hath implanted in my soul a principle of free-will whereby I am enabled to answer his call, by repenting, believing, and reforming; the which, when I do, though not at present, God will have mercy on me, and I shall be accepted, being secured by that general redemption provided for all who so repent, believe, and reform. Woeful and sad experience convinceth me, that many God-provoking follies and vanities of youth, in my heart and life, have been indulged by this deceiving cursed doctrine: Oh! how often hath carnal reason within me cried out, when the common notions of the Spirit of God hath touched my conscience, to call on me to convert and turn to God? I will repent, I will convert, I will turn to God to-morrow, to-morrow: as Augustine confesseth of himself he often put God off with his free-will, cras, cras, to-morrow, to-morrow; till at length he grew both ashamed and weary of his graceless to-morrow, crying out to the Almighty, in the very hour of his effectual conversion, *quam diu Domino clamabo cras, cras? quare non hodie Domine, &c.*: how long, O Lord, shall I cry to-morrow, to-morrow? Why, O Lord, should I not be converted this very day?

And as an unregenerate man takes encouragement from this principle to go on in sin, so it leads him to desperation: of this also my sad experience hath fully convinced me, as plainly appears by the near approach I made to hell, in my own apprehensions, while I bordered so near the confines of final desperation, finding in myself how vastly short my personnel qualifications came of answering: the law's demand, as a condition of life and salvation.

I found that nothing could possibly quiet or satisfy my wounded, despairing conscience, but what doth effectually appease and satisfy that holy God, against whom I have so many thousands of times offended, which can be nothing

short of an infinite righteousness; which righteousness can be had no where but in Christ, God-man, and no way to be had but in a way of believing, of which mystery my blind and perverted reason was as ignorant as a beast, and not only so, but my heart and soul were zealously set against looking for life and salvation in any another way than that of free-will and general redemption.

This principle, so every way quadrating with my legal frame of heart, which was acted by no other principle but—do and live.

Here it might not be amiss or unseasonable for the relief and encouragement of a poor tempted soul, who as touching this very point of election, may, by walking in darkness, having no light of comfort, in his own spirit, to answer or resolve this needful question. How shall a poor, bewildered, tempted soul come to know that itself in particular was elected of God before time?

To this question, about which many of God's called ones are not a little distressed in their own spirits, I shall answer in three particulars.

First, The way to know thou art elected before time is to go about it in a right way or manner. By this I mean, thou art not to tempt to pry into the secret counsels of the Most High concerning this matter, knowing that secret things belong to God, and to none else, until he pleaseth to reveal them (Deut. xxix. 29). Therefore, in order to know this mystery to thy comfort, do as thou wouldest do, if thou wert to bring both ends of a bottom of thread or yarn to meet together; the way is not to begin at that end which is hid in the very centre of the bottom, but to take the end which is outmost and next to thee, and by thus doing thou wilt soon bring both ends to meet, whereas, if thou go about it in any other way, as by cutting or ravelling the bottom to hasten the work, thou wilt but fret and vex thyself, and, which is worse, thou wilt mar and spoil the

work. Do not then attempt, as the devil and carnal reason would have thee, to climb up to heaven to inform thyself of this matter; God's work must be done in the way of his own appointment; which is, that thou begin first with thy own heart. See, examine, and search thy own soul, to find out whether his Holy Spirit hath ever been at work there. The cause must be known by its proper effects, not the effects by the cause. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Gal. vi. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Election, the thing thou wouldest fain be resolved about, is the cause (this is a secret in God's breast,) which can be known by thee no other way, ordinarily, but by its effects, which are faith in thy heart, and obedience to Christ's commands in thy life and conversation. If the Spirit of God hath called thee to embrace and close with Christ, held forth in the Gospel; and if the fruits of that thy closing with Christ do discover themselves in thy life and conversation, thou hast no ground or reason to question thy election, but what the devil and thy carnal reason suggest. Acts xii. 48. And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. Jno. x. 26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. In the Scriptures now quoted, election to eternal life is held forth as the cause of faith, and faith, or believing in Jesus, as the undoubted fruit or effect of election.

Secondly. Art thou frequently tempted to doubt of, and question thine election to eternal life?

This is an undoubted argument, that the devil discerns in thee the fruits and effects of God's electing love to thy person, which puts him upon tempting thee to question and doubt of God's love to thee.

Where the devil knows he hath the full and quiet possession of a sinner, there he suggests that the man is a good christian: his faith is a good faith, and God is his father, and

that he is elected, and shall be saved, notwithstanding he lives after the flesh.

On the contrary, where the devil sees and discovers the fruits and effects of God's grace and love appear, there he pesters the soul with infernal suggestions and temptations, to put the soul on mis-believing and questioning the truth of God's grace bestowed on the sinner; thou art but a painted hypocrite, thou art none of God's elect; it is in vain for thee to hope or expect to go to Heaven. Thus he dealt with the believer's redeemer. If thou be the Son of God, &c. Matt. iv. 3, 6.

And if the adversary hath done this to the green tree, what will he not attempt to do in the dry? Luke xxiii. 31.

Thirdly. Dost thou find thine heart fixedly resolved, come life, come death, to cast thy soul at the foot of divine sovereignty, in the way of duty, shunning all known sin, and pressing after holiness, resting entirely on the grace and merit of Christ after life and salvation? Thou art to know, for thine everlasting comfort and encouragement, that no reprobate ever was, or ever shall be, able to do this. Time will discover that thou art one of God's elect; go on in the strength of thy God: fear not.

Chapter II.

Of Reprobation.

BY what hath been discoursed out of the holy Scriptures, concerning the act of God's election of some to life and salvation by Jesus Christ, to the praise of the glory of his own grace; it unavoidably, and by necessary consequence, follows, that the same sovereign God hath reprobated or rejected, the rest, not so elected, and that from all eternity, having decreed never to recover them by converting grace, but hath fixedly purposed for sin to damn them; and that for the praise of the glory of his own justice. Nothing can be more plain than that, if God hath elected and chosen a certain number out of the whole corrupted mass, or lump, of fallen mankind, in whose salvation he hath purposed to glorify his mercy and free grace by Jesus Christ, then hath he refused or passed by the rest, as will most evidently appeared in all the parts of it.

The decree of reprobation hath in it four parts, to each of which I will speak as plainly and as briefly as I can.

First, God hath refused or rejected some particular persons, on whom he purposed never to have mercy; this is most evident from the scriptures following: Jno. x. 26, But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I saith unto you. Rom. xi. 7, But the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. Rom. ix. 18, Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. In which scripture it is plain and conspicuous to every one-savingly enlightened, that there are two distinct, or differing parties intended or spoken of, some whom Christ chose to himself, known and distinguished by the term sheep; and others,

whom Christ denies to be so. These are those intended in Matt. xxv. 32, 33, termed goats, opposed to the sheep of Christ, some, whose understandings were savingly enlightened to know the glorious mysteries of the covenant of grace, in order to salvation; and others not at all enlightened, but left to abide in that spiritual darkness and blindness of mind, which they brought into the world with them. Some, whom God,s powerful grace mollified and softened to saving repentance in order to mercy; and others, whom God sees fit to harden, that is, to leave them to that sin of their own, which hardens them.

Secondly, God hath from eternity rejected or refused these.

This is plain from the Scriptures following. Jude 4, There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Rev. xvii. 8, Whose names were not written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world. 1 Pet. ii. 8, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. From all which it is manifest, that God did, as a just judge, purpose and decree, to give up the reprobate: to the obstinacy of their own mind, and their wilful disobedience against his son Jesus Christ; that so they might not only ripen themselves for, but even pull down the judgments of God upon themselves.

Thirdly, God hath decreed to damn these persons for sin.

This is plain from the following scriptures. Prov. xvi. 4, The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. 2 Pet. ii. 12, But these as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed.

Fourthly, God's reprobating some persons from eternity, and that in order to damn them for sin, is for the praise of the glory of his own justice.

This is so plain and obvious that he who runs may read it. Rom. ix. 32, What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endureth with much long-sufferring, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

Against this doctrine of election, and reprobation of particular persons, the Quakers, Papists, Arminians, free-willers, and others, who, in this point, are all one with them, object several things, out of which I will single out the chief and most material of their objections, which, to ignorant and injudicious minds, seem to be of great force against the doctrines now laid down; to which I shall give plain and clear answers from God's Word, to the end the fallaciousness and deceit of these men might appear, open faced, to all men.

Object. 1. They object, that to hold and affirm, that God hath from eternity elected and chosen a particular number to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he decreed, unchangeably, to shew mercy, leaving the rest with a full purpose never to recover them to life and salvation, reflects on God the highest cruelty imaginable.

Answ. To this seeming plausible objection, I shall reply in the particulars following.

First, I have made it evident from God's own Word, that God hath, undeniably, elected a certain particular number to himself out of the corrupted mass of fallen mankind, on whom he, unchangeably, decreed to shew mercy, leaving the rest, not so elected, in that state of sin and misery, into which they, voluntarily, run themselves.

Secondly, by way of query; I desire to know by what Scripture (Divine) the Quakers, or any who are abettors on this point, can justify their bringing in lies to plead for God; or wherein doth it appear that His truth stands in need of being upheld by the figments of their vertiginous brains.

Job puts such a like question to his three friends, who all seemed to take part with God against himself. Job xiii. 7, Will ye speak wickedly of God, and talk deceitfully for him? Ver. 8, Will ye accept his person? Will ye contend for God? Ver, 9, Is it good that he should search you out? Or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

What do these heretical pretenders to an infallible spirit less than mock God? who, in pretence of making God more merciful and pitiful and he himself hath revealed in his word he will be, or than the wicked in hell will find him to be, strike at, and audaciously dispute against, the justice and sovereignty of God.

These pleaders of God, they will, forsooth, have God to be so tender, compassionate, and kind, as to love all his creatures with an equal love; and, consequently, that to fix his love on a small and particular number, to whom his special grace and favor should be extended, and to pass by the greatest number, on whom to resolve never to shew mercy, is altogether inconsistent with the tender, kind, and merciful nature of God. Now, whether these men do not, in pretence of pleading for God, cause, as much as in them lies, both his attributes, his counsels, and his word, to clash and contradict each other, I leave to the judicious and unprejudiced reader to judge.

I demand from John Burnyeats, and the rest of the Quakers who joined with him in challenging me to make out, by the Scriptures of Truth, that doctrine which I am now defending against them, why or wherefore God was so strict and severe as to confine those angels, which, of their own accord, fell from that state of innocency and blessedness, wherein they were created, to those chains of darkness wherein they are to be kept to the judgment of the great day? and that without extending the benefit of a Redeemer to them. Was it because

the angels were not his creatures? Certainly they will not say so; for without dispute, the angels were in their nature far more glorious and excellent creatures than was Adam and his posterity in their state of innocency.

Was it because God's arm could not reach to help and deliver them? They dare not say so. Neither was it because God had no bowels of mercy and compassion in him towards his creatures: this cannot be supposed to be the reason; for, alas! this, viz. the tender and merciful nature of God to his creatures in general, is the argument whereby they would overthrow the doctrine of particular election. What is the reason then? did the angels fall by sin and apostacy? Yes, they cannot deny it, unless they deny the Scriptures to be Scriptures of Truth. And were those angels, all of them, sent forth with to hell for their apostacy and rebellion? this they cannot deny. Was not the least dram of mercy shewn to one of that numberless number which fell? They dare not affirm there was, or ever shall be; if they do, it lies at their door to prove it.

If then the reason why the apostate angels are eternally lost, is not because they stood not related to God as creatures, nor because the hand of God was not strong enough prevent their sinking into hell; nor yet cause God wanted bowels of mercy and compassion: the reason then must be, because the glorious God did (before time) decree and purpose with himself, not to recover those creatures whom he foreknew would causelessly rebel and apostatize from that state of holiness and happiness, in which he decreed to make them.

If then the adversaries I now contend with, will acknowledge God to be just and righteous in leaving the angels, which by transgression fell, so as never to shew them favour more, I desire to be informed by what law the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven can be justly charged with cruelty, for saving but a

small remnant of apostate Adam's offspring, seeing that Adam was every way as voluntary and free in sinning against God, as were the angels which fell.

Surely, had it pleased God, he might have cast both Adam and his children into the same lodging with Beelzebub and his apostate train, there to endure, to endless eternity, the torments due to their rebellion and disobedience.

And in that God hath been pleased to extend mercy to any of Adam's posterity, it is mere grace and mercy every way undeserved, the which he was no way bound to shew to Adam and his children, any more than he was obliged or bound to help or commiserate the fallen angels.

If John Burnyeats, or any of his friends, who oppose the doctrine of particular election, can prove by the Scriptures that God hath given, or is by any law bounds, to give, special saving grace to rebels who, have fallen by their causelessly abusing and losing the grace given in Adam, their natural and federal head, any other than what he bestows on his elect, and that, in the right of election, I will readily submit and yield the cause.

Object. 2. The Scriptures of Truth are express and positive in alarming that the salvation discovered and held forth in the gospel is designed by God, and offered by the Apostle to all men in general, without any distinction or limitation of persons; and therefore, to restrain that salvation to a stinted number, is most injurious and wicked.

Answ. These cavilling objectors do, at a very easy rate, wrest and pervert the sense of the Holy Spirit, not knowing what they say, nor whereof they so rashly affirm, where they meet with universal terms, from them they infer universal principles; witness the Scriptures following, 2 Cor. v. 14.; 1 Tim. ii. 6.; Heb. ii. 9.; where the Apostle saith that Christ died for all; and

that he gave himself a ransom for all men; and that he tasted death for every man; they hence infer and conclude, as they think, that beyond all peradventure, the end and design of God's sending his Son into the world, and the Son's laying down his life, was on full purpose that general redemption might be procured for and granted to all and singular the sons and daughters of lapsed Adam; and where the Apostle Peter shews that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. iii. 9), they would fain persuade themselves and all others, that, without any restriction or limitation, the sense must be that God wills not that any sinner should be damned.

And so foolishly fond are they of the general redemption, which, from the fore cited Scriptures, they highly conceit themselves able to demonstrate and prove against all gainsayers, that they, with great care, set down the terms, all, every, and any, in great capital letters, that the reader might observe and take notice of them.

That those universal terms all, every, and any, are to be restrained and limited to a particular and select number only, (which can be no other than that number which the Scriptures positively affirm, God elected and chose to himself out of the corrupted mass, as hath been above observed, is beyond contradiction.

The objection consists of two members, or branches; first, the design of God, in preparing and intending redemption and salvation for all men in general; secondly, God's commanding to preach, or offer it, to all in general, without exception. On these two mistaker, grounds the Quakers, and the other heretics who in this point join with them against the word and churches of Christ, do ignorantly and falsely infer that the benefit of the second Adam's obedience and righteousness is in God's imputing and applying it, as extensive as was the

disobedience and rebellion of the first, which, say they, was to all the posterity of Adam. The places of Scripture from which they draw this their unscriptural inference are those of Paul; Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life, Rom. v. 18. Again, But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man, Heb. ii. 9.

The ground of these men losing themselves in this controversy is their using Scriptures without reason, and reason without Scripture; the which whoever doth will be sure to run himself and his followers into a labyrinth of dark and uncertain interpretations of the most plain text of Scripture, whence comes, most commonly, chimerical and enthusiastical notions, which are attended as really with a satanical energy, to deceive earthly minded people, as the true word of God is attended with a divine energy and power, to teach and guide God's elect to the saving knowledge of God in Christ.

Here they seem, to the ignorant and unwary reader, to have Scripture on their side, when opposing those who assert and defend the doctrine of particular election against these universalists, viz. those Scriptures above quoted; in which God seems to have intended the redemption purchased by his Son, for every individual son and daughter of Adam, and that because the term set down is universal.

But now, these men inhering in the bare letter of the Scriptures, and laying aside the use of reason, the which they should make use of in distinguishing terms, they, themselves, and their poor deluded proselytes, lose the true sense of the Scriptures, never looking farther than the bare letter, never

regarding whether they take the sense of the Spirit with them, yea or not.

And hence it is that, with such unbridled licentiousness, some men do, with highest confidence, positively affirm that the salvation of the gospel is purchased and intended for all and singular the posterity of the first Adam; and that an universal offer thereof is, accordingly, made to each man and woman. Whereas, indeed, when the judicious and unprejudiced reader joins Scripture and sanctified reason together, accompanied with self-denial, and sincere and hearty prayer to God's throne of grace, for the obtaining from God the true sense of the Scriptures so much boasted of, he will plainly see how egregiously they are mistaken in both the one and the other; for neither doth God intend the death of his Son for salvation to any of Adam's children, save those whom he elected, and from eternity chose in Christ; neither doth God make such an universal tender of it to all men as the Quakers rashly and boldly affirm he doth.

This lies on me to demonstrate and make good against these boasting universalists; the which, that I might do to the satisfaction of the judicious and unprejudiced reader, I shall propound my argument dilemma-wise, thus:

The terms all, any, and every, on which they ground their unscriptural assertion, they are to be taken either in an universal sense, intending every individual of mankind; or else they are to be taken in a limited and restrained sense, as intending some of all sorts, ranks, and degrees of men indifferently.

If by the universal terms above-named, some of all sorts, ranks, and degrees of men indifferently to be understood, then the assertion of the adversaries is manifestly false, and consequently the doctrine of particular election is true.

If by those universal terms all men and women without exception be intended, as the adversaries will have it, then must I be allowed to demand of them, how any of Adam's children come to be damned?

For seeing that God willed that our Christ should redeem all the children of Adam, who fell by his transgression; I would fain know how any created power can effect the hindering God of bringing about his own purpose, or frustrate the end and design of Christ in laying down his life; for undoubtedly if God should absolutely will and purpose the salvation of every individual son and daughter of Adam, it is not to be questioned, but that he being the El-shaddai, the mighty God, every way perfect and all-sufficient, would find out ways and means to effect and bring about his own purpose, seeing that he works all things according to the counsel of his own most holy will: as Paul witnesseth, Ephes. i. 11.

It is in the work of regeneration, as it is in the work of the first creation, God clothes his word with a creating power; so that whenever and wherever he sends forth that creating voice of his mighty Spirit, neither devil nor self, nor any other enemy or impediment, whether internal or external, shall ever be able to give any stop to his intended work; as the Lord himself tells his church by the prophet- Yea, before the day was, I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it? Isa. xliii. 13. Whom God in justice and righteousness will damn and sentence to the flames of his deserved wrath for sin, who can rescue and save them? Whom God in sovereign mercy and grace purposeth to save and deliver, who can hinder or prevent him? Again, My sheep (saith the Lord Jesus) hear my voice, and know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is stronger than all;

and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. and my Father are one, John x. 27-30.

Here it is plain, that from the invincible power of God and Christ, the certainty of the life and salvation of the elect is inferred proved.

That many of Adam's children are already in hell, and that many more will be lodged there, the Scriptures affirm, and the Quakers cannot deny. How comes this to pass? seeing God, if we must believe the Quakers, designed a general redemption for all mankind, and that the Son of God laid down his life to ransom them from the curse and wrath of God, due for their sin; to say that God willed their salvation, but that their own obstinacy and wickedness hindered that his will should be accomplished on them, is, in effect, to say that. God did seriously and efficaciously will and purpose that all the children of Adam should be saved; but, indeed, the greatest part of Adam's posterity fell by the power of Satan and their own rebellious will.

Now, whether to think or say that either the power of the serpent, or the corruption in a sinner's nature can, or ever did, or shall overturn or prevent the efficacious will of God being accomplished, be not impious and blasphemous, I leave, to every impartial and sober reader to judge.

Thus the first member or branch of the objection appears to be rotten and unsound; neither is the second any better, which affirms that God makes a general offer of that salvation to every individual sinner in the world; the which, if it be true, as the Quakers affirm, they are highly obliged to shew how it comes to pass that the greatest part of the world by far should remain in darkness, I mean with respect to the very external means of salvation; the which God hath seen fit to deny to many nations in the world; to which also the very letter of the Holy Scripture bears witness. A few instances hereof I lay

down, that the reader may plainly see how vain these foolish boasters are in their imaginations, who would fain impose on all, that God doth love all the children of Adam with an equal love, and that the offer of his grace, in general, is made to all, without any exception or limitation; wherein they prove themselves as false in their sayings as they appear vain in their deluded imaginations.

They say, and boldly affirm, that the tender of salvation is made to all alike; I say, they belie the Spirit of God, in pretence of pleading for God, by whose instinct and immediate inspiration they would make the world believe they themselves, above all men, are guided; and not only so, but they egregiously thwart and contradict the very letter of the Scripture, which they seem to own and acknowledge to be holy, true, and the rule and standard of trial of all matters in religion wherein they and christians differ.

For satisfaction herein, let the reader peruse, and with serious consideration weigh in the balance of God's sanctuary, what is recorded in Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20. He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.

Whether the place now quoted doth not evidently prove that when God chose, called, and settled a church unto his own peculiar use and service, to whom he gave his word and ordinances for a rule of faith and holy obedience, he did not leave the other nations of the earth, out of whom he chose his people with a peculiar love and favour, in their native darkness and blindness, is a matter to be enquired into. That of our Saviour in Matt. xx. 16, Many are called, but few chosen, doth also give countenance to the point in hand: he doth not say that all are called, but many; in which text there are three sorts of men offered to consideration. First, some

who are not called at all, Secondly, some who are called with a common or external call, but not elected. And thirdly, some who are called, not only with the common and external call, but also with the internal and efficacious call of the Spirit, and that because elected and chosen to life and salvation. Now, that these three sorts of people were equally beloved of God, and their salvation equally intended, who but children of darkness and deceit dare to affirm or believe? That of Paul also, Acts xiv. 16, God, who in times past suffered the Gentiles to walk in their own way, backs and confirms the present truth: And doth not the account we have by travellers, who correspond with the most part of the world, inform us, that the greatest part of the nations have not so much as the name of Jesus Christ among them; and even in those kingdoms where Popery, Arminianism, and Quakerism prevail, doth not sad experience teach us how deplorable a condition the generality of the kingdom is in, as touching the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, or the proper means appointed by God for the saving discovery of his justifying righteousness to the souls of men; such as the pure and unmixed Word of Truth read and powerfully preached to them, for calling them out of darkness into the marvellous light of the knowledge of God in Christ: for want of an orthodox teaching ministry, these kingdoms, especially England and Ireland, are near to a harvest ripeness, ready for the sickle of God's judgments, through the affected ignorance of the Lord Jesus Christ, which reigns in the minds and hearts of the greatest part, even of England and Ireland's professors; with the occult and spiritual idolatry of men's souls, whereby the Son of God and his pure Gospel-worship are shut out of mens hearts and affections, that the statutes of Omri, and their carnal secular interests, might bear the sway. To which I will add, that deluge of open debauchery and atheistical oppression and profaneness which, like a land flood, over-runs the nations; the which, if not very speedily prevented by those who have the reforming power put into their hands by God, will pull

down from heaven such sore and desolating judgments as will make England, with her hypocritical formal professors, an abhorring to all nations. More might be offered to consideration from God's Word to the same purpose; as the sad and deplorable condition the Ephesians, Philippians, and other countries were in before the Apostles were sent among them.

The ancestors and forefathers of whom God suffered to live and die like brutes, and worse, serving dumb idols, those teachers of lies, serving divers lusts, atheists, without the knowledge or hope of God in the world. Ephes, ii. 1-3, To them God sent no Prophet or Apostle, nor Law or Gospel, which should be a means of salvation to them, till God sent Paul to their offspring.

Now, can it in truth be said that God did equally love, and will or design the salvation of, both the fathers and their posterity, seeing the means of salvation were denied to the fathers, and freely given to their posterity?

As touching the learned, or rather silly and impertinent question, wherein the Quakers desire to be resolved, viz. What Gospel of glad tidings it is which I and others, who hold the doctrine of particular election, have to preach to those for whom Christ died not?

Answ. This silly question is grounded on a false supposition, that faith is required of all men; the which I never taught, neither do now own to be true.

For I do not think or believe, that such as never heard of Christ, or who never had means of knowing him, are required to believe that Christ died to redeem them.

Secondly. They are grossly, if not wilfully, mistaken, in thinking and saying, that I press on all I preach to, that it is

their duty to believe that Jesus Christ died for them all, without any limitation or restriction. I do not believe that those people, to whom the glad tidings of the gospel are preached, are any of them required absolutely, and without restriction, to believe that Christ died to redeem them. All who ever attended on my ministry, and who are able to give a judgment, they will witness for me, that the scope and drift of my preaching is to convince and awaken sinners out of their natural state, by opening up to them, from God's Word, the happy, sinless state, wherein God created them in Adam, their natural and federal representative, how they came to fall from that happy state, and what the sad and wretched effects of that fall was to Adam, the head, and now is to all his children in their unrenewed state. This I do instrumentally, by opening up to sinners the sense and design of the moral law, which is to discover sin, and to damn the transgressors of it before God, to let sinners know how spotless that obedience: and righteousness must be, which answers its own demand, in order to its justifying them at the bar of a holy God. As also how weak and unable it is to help a lapsed transgressor. It points out and requires duty, but can afford no ability or strength to do that duty; and all this, in order to bring dead sinners to a sight and sense of their need of a redeemer. I labour to make them sensible, that out of Christ no life or salvation is ever to be expected; and that until Christ the Son of God be received by a true faith, they themselves, with all their threadbare polluted morality, and all those advantages wherein they bless and count themselves happy, are all under the curse of God, and living and dying so, they must, as certainly as God is just, and his law holy, look to be eternally separated from God and Christ for ever and ever. No civility, goodness of natural temper, no morality, no zeal for that which they take to be the best religion, no learning or shining parts, whether natural or acquired, no riches or greatness in this world will ever avail to keep them back from being, by the law's powerful sentence, sent down to hell.

When I find and perceive that the Spirit of God hath, by the law set home on the conscience, brought the sinner, with the prodigal, to a sense of his undone condition; when I hear him cry out, not in a rotary and formal customary way, which, God knows, is too much in use and fashion in this sleepy hypocritical age, in the bitterness of his soul, Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved? I then open up, as God's messenger, the mystery of God's covenant and grace held forth in the Gospel, wherein is discovered the incomprehensible all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ, to save and reconcile to God the greatest and vilest of sinners. I presently fall on directing and sending the poor sin-sick wounded sinner to the Son of God, with his wounds and plague-sores to be healed, pressing him to believe in the Son of God, out of whom no salvation is to be found. Hereto I add the peremptory command of God himself, that the poor despairing soul believe on the Son of God, I Jno. ii. 23.; Mark xvi. 16. By these methods and ways of God's own appointment, God is pleased to work saving conversion and effectual faith in the souls of elect sinners.

To what hath been offered out of God's own word, to prove the doctrine of particular election (before time), I here set down the judgment of the most orthodox Protestant Churches concerning the same. Not that I think the Word of God stands in any need of human testimony to help it out, but rather to shew forth the sweet harmony which is between the Holy Scriptures and the saints of God, in their holy and orthodox confessions of their faith, concerning the present so much controverted and impugned doctrine of election and reprobation (before time); as also to shame those nominal Protestants, both non, and conformists, who have so apparently turned the back upon their own articles of faith, whereby both the one and the other party hath, not a little, strengthened the foundation of the Jesuits hope of bringing

England's neck once more under the Papal yoke; from which I heartily wish, and sincerely pray, that God will-ever keep us.

I begin with the Church of England. "Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them, by Christ, to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose, by his Spirit, working in due season: They (through grace) obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity." See 39 articles of the Church of England. Article 17th, Of Predestination and Election.

Secondly, The confession of faith agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster.

By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated to everlasting life, and others to everlasting death, 1 Tim. v. 21.; Matt. xxv. 41.; Rom. ix. 22.

These angels and men thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting

glory, out of his meer free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of the glory of his grace.

As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto, 1 Peter. i. 2.; Ephes. i. 4, 5.; and ii. 10.; 2 Thes. ii. 13. Wherefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation. 1 Thes. v. 9, 10.; Tit. ii. 14.; Rom. viii. 10.; Ephes. i. 5.; 1 Peter i. 5.

Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. Jno. xvii. 9.; Rom. viii. 28.; Jno. x. 26.

The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power, over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice, Mat. xi. 25, 26.; Rom. ii. 12.; 2 Tim. ii. 19.; 1 Peter ii. 8,

See The Assembly's Confession of Faith. chap. 3, of the eternal decree of God.

To this the church of Scotland hath fully agreed: With this also agrees the articles of faith of the church of Ireland, in Bishop Usher's time. See those articles; and Usher's Body of Divinity. *Quest.* What are the parts of predestination? *Answ.* Election and reprobation. 1 Thes. v. 9.; Rom. ix. 13, 22, 23.

Quest. What is election? *Answ.* It is the everlasting predestination or fore-appointing of certain angels and men unto everlasting life and blessedness, for the praise of his grace and goodness, 1 Tim. v. 21.; Jno. 15. 16.; Rom. ix. 22, 23.; Ephes. i. 4, 5, 6, 9.

Quest. What is reprobation? *Answ.* It is the eternal predestination or fore-appointment of certain angels and men unto everlasting dishonour and destruction. God, of his own freewill, determining to pass them by, refuse or cast them off; and, for sin, to condemn and punish them with eternal death. Prov. xvi. 4.; Exod. ix. 16.; Rom. ix. 17, 22.; 2 Tim. ii. 20.; Matt. xxv. 41. See Usher's Body of Divinity, page 91, 92.

The church of France, in the 12th article of the confession of her faith, hath these words, viz. We believe that God, out of that corruption and general curse, into which all men were plunged, doth free those whom, in his eternal and immutable counsel, he elected of his meer goodness and mercy in our Lord Jesus Christ, without the consideration of works, leaving the rest in the same corruption and damnation; to shew forth in these his justice, and in them the riches of his mercy; for none of them are better than others, because God hath separated them, &c.

The Synod of Dort, in the 7th canon, doth lay down this plain and clear definition of election, thus, viz. Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, according to the free good pleasure of his will, of his meer grace, he hath chosen out of all mankind to salvation in Christ, a certain and set number of men, neither better nor more worthy than others; but lying in the common misery with others, and fallen from original righteousness into sin and destruction, by their own fault, &c.

And, in the 15th canon of reprobation, they say thus, viz. The Holy Scripture doth manifest and commend unto us this

eternal and free grace; especially when it doth farther witness, That not all men are elected, but that some are not elected, or passed by in the eternal election of God, viz. Those whom God, according to his free, just, unreprouceable, and immutable good pleasure, decreed to leave in the common misery, into which they had cast themselves, by their own fault, and not to give to them saving faith, and the grace of conversion.

It were almost endless to insert all the confessions and the judgments of the orthodox, in all ages, who have held, and, with an unshaken confidence, maintained to the death, the very same faith, concerning the doctrine of election and reprobation; on whom, with the pen-men of Holy Writ, the frothy Arminians of the age we live in, who are more crafty than truly wise, do not spare to cast the basest reflections; as if they were no way worthy to compare with themselves for either learning, parts, or piety. But whatever others think, for my part, I am neither afraid or ashamed to tell them, that the advances they are daily making towards the scorner's seat, in contemning and undervaluing the bright shining ones gone to glory; it is to me an invincible argument, not only of their being destitute of true saving grace, but that this their priding it over the best of men is a true prognostic of their own destruction, when the overflowing scottrge, threatened in Isa. xxviii. 15, comes on England. The Arminian drugs of free-will in fallen man, general redemption, falling from grace, with temporary conditional election, revived and sown in England by the Jesuits' art, and propagated by too many preachers of the two parties above-mentioned, have proved the most successful expedients, to lay England open to utter ruin, that ever these incendiaries of the world could devise. And indeed the poisonous drugs now mentioned, have so epidemically overspread the nation, that I cannot see how the land can be cured (in an ordinary way) any other way than by the preachers of both parties, who have imbibed those poisonous

principles, and, by preaching, conveyed them, insensibly, into the heads and affections of the people; vomiting up, by sound repentance, those cursed principles, as some have done their doctrine of passive obedience and nonresistance; the which had they not done, the land, before this time, would, in all probability, have been turned into an Acaidama, or a Papal slaughter-house. Vomiting up, I say, by sound repentance, the cursed principles above-mentioned, and labouring in preaching up the soul saving doctrine held forth in the 39 articles of Queen Elizabeth, and the assembly's confession of faith, on which they have so shamefully and apostatically turned the back, to undeceive the people, who, by their means, have been so sadly corrupted in their principles, and, by reason of those principles, so wretchedly engulfed in the quagmire of debauchery and open profaneness.

It will prove their own, and the nation's great advantage, to endeavour, seasonably and cordially, to retrieve the ground they have lost, by their modish compliance with the corrupt and erring humour of the two last reigns; and that by sounding, in their respective pulpits, a timely retreat, and exhorting the people with them, to a cordial reception of their abdicated articles of religion; from which the infernal craft of England's enemies, and their own supine incautiousness, have drawn them aside. It is infinitely better for such manifest corrupters of the true Protestant doctrine, to own their errors, and repent of them here, while the gate of mercy is open; and all true Protestant hearts and arms are open, ready to receive them, on their return from the communion of the worst and most pernicious of the Church's and poor England's enemies, than to own and repent of their errors and prevarications in hell; of which place such men cannot but know it is said, *Ab infernis nulla redemptio*: There is no redemption or returning from hell. This the inhabitants of that place know experimentally, in their endless and remediless sorrow and grief, From which place, should it please the Holy Sovereign

of the world, to send the most gigantic disputers against the doctrine of God's free election of particular persons (before time), which are now tongue-tied in that place of torment, to London, to relate what they know, by sad experience, since death arrested them, they would be forced, I doubt not, to declare, that no wit or parts, natural or acquired, no courage or magnanimity of mind, no morality or personal qualifications, acquirable by any of Adam's children, is, or can be, armour-proof against the vindicative proceedings of an angry and a sin-revenging God, against those Papists, Arminians, Socinians, Free-willers, &c., now in hell, who, when on earth, did bend all their wit and learning to run down and ridicule the doctrine I am now vindicating. It will be well for their successors, who are yet this side hell, if this plain dealing with them prove an occasion of awakening them, and putting them upon a serious consideration of the present state they are in, and the way they walk in, that being savingly convinced both of the wretchedness of the one, and the destructiveness of the other, they may be driven, by a holy despair of ever being saved in an unregenerate state, and walking in ways of their own devising, to shelter themselves under the shadow of that mediatorial spotless righteousness of the Son of God, by a sound faith, and an evangelical repentance, which the Spirit and Word of the ever blessed God assures me is the only way to escape hell and eternal ruin; which is all the harm I dare to wish them, and the greatest enemy I have now living.

I conclude my Treatise with an Apologetical Reply, &c.

Chapter III.

An Apologetical Reply

To the slanderous charge given against me to some of the London ministers, by that malcontent party which schismatically separated from the church in Christ, whereof I was the then lawful pastor.

The charge was, That I was a man of an independent judgment, a great enemy to Mr. Baxter, declaring that Mr. Baxter is damned in hell; a man who openly declared, that Christ hath but two or three true and faithful ministers, in and about London, who preach Christ in truth, and who bid a public, challenge to Mr. Williams, and all the Baxterians, to dispute certain positions held and asserted by Mr. Baxter, and such as go his way; and, to add no more, one who is an universal decryer of all the duties of holiness in a Christian's life and conversation, crying out, in the pulpit, Away with your holiness, to hell with your duties and personal qualifications.

This charge consists of five branches or parts, to each of which I will speak as distinctly as I can, and that with as great seriousness and regard to conscience, as if I were to make the present defence at the bar of the Great Judge.

I begin with the first, viz. My being an independent: I have this to say for myself, first, the congregational way of church government is the principle which, according to my present light, I apprehend to be nearest to the platform of Gospel-churches, planted by the apostles, which to own and practise, I am fully convinced, is my duty; for which, I humbly hope and charitably believe, none of my brethren of the Presbyterian persuasion, dare to censure or blame me, until I can see that I am herein mistaken and out of the way.

Secondly, As touching my judgment herein, I do affirm, and that in truth, God knows I lie not, I honestly and fairly acquainted my now reproachers, what I was in my judgment, as to this very point, when they first discovered an inclination to call me to take the pastoral charge of their souls. About this, they and I had several occasional discourses pro and con., for and against it; and in conclusion, they, with the rest of the covenanters with God, in a church way, did own themselves fully convinced, that the congregational way of church government was most certainly the way of the Gospel; and as such, they freely closed with me. If what I have now asserted be denied, I shall, by authentic testimonies, make the same good to their faces.

I come to the second branch of the charge, viz. My being a great enemy to Mr. Baxter, &c.

In answer whereto, I positively affirm, that I never in my life had any prejudice against Mr. Baxter, save only to dislike and caution my flock against some notions of his, wherein I conceived him to be heterodox in the foundation principle of justification. I told my auditory, as plainly as I could speak, that in mentioning Mr. Baxter's name, my design was not to meddle in judging him, as touching his eternal state; only what of corruption I found in his books, I judged it my duty to take notice thereof, and to caution my hearers, who had his books, to beware of such notions. And what I did herein, I did it (God and my conscience knows) in faithfulness to Christ, and the souls of those committed to my pastoral charge by the Great Shepherd of sheep.

But to say that Mr. Baxter was damned in hell, I abhor the very hearing or thoughts of such a thing; neither dares any one living, except a cauterised and brazen-faced sinner to charge such a slander on me: So far was from uttering such an uncharitable, I may say infernal expression, that I plainly

spoke the contrary as my judgment of him, declaring, that I hoped Mr. Baxter was with Christ in glory, and, that I dare not think no otherwise. As for what of corruption is mixed with his writings, I told my auditory, I looked on that as a part of the wood, hay, and stubble, intended by the Apostle in 1 Cor. iii. 12, of which Mr. Baxter will, I doubt not, suffer the loss in the great day, though he himself be saved; he holding Christ the foundation firm and stedfast to the end, as in charity I hope he did.

The third branch of the charge is, That I affirmed, that Christ had but two or three right gospel ministers, who preach Christ truly, in and about London.

To this I answer in the negative, viz. That I never thought or spoke such a thing, either in or out of the pulpit, in all my life.

The occasion of this slander was this; I was, in a sermon, bewailing the small number of right gospel preachers, at which time, and on which occasion, I said, that a great many preached up the Pope: That man of sin. Others, said I, preach up the national hierachy, and its interest, instead of the kingdom of Christ. Others there be, said I, who preach up Moses, and obedience to his do, and live, in the room of Christ's mediatorial spotless righteousness, for justification and life; so that, in comparison, it is undeniably true, that Christ hath but few who preach him and his immaculate righteousness, as the only meritorious and procuring cause of justification and salvation. This is what I said then, and truly see but small reason to think or say otherwise: I question not but the orthodox in and about London will readily harmonise with me herein: but that I did limit the true ministers of Christ to any certain definitive number; or that I mentioned any ministers names, by way of distinction, I utterly deny. And I have very good reason to judge it no breach of the law of charity, to believe that the secret design of the reporters

hereof was to incense and provoke the spirits of godly ministers, and their respective congregations, against me,— and hereby to prepare them for a more facile and ready reception of the other black and scandalous reproaches which were to be brought on the stage on purpose to do my business; as one of their confederates was heard to say he would do.

I come to the fourth branch of the charge, which is, That I should bid a public challenge to Mr. Williams, and the rest of Mr. Baxter's followers, to dispute certain positions held and asserted by Mr. Baxter, and those who go his way.

To which I reply, That this is as true as the rest, and did, I am very sure, proceed from the same lying spirit which coined and forged their other lying stories against me; the design whereof was not only to corroborate that their design in its foundation, but also to draw over Mr. Williams and others, whom they knew to be impatient to hear any opposition given, to any notions of Mr. Baxter's, to them; to help and encourage them to break that church whereof themselves were an essential part, and to force my flight from my station in C—, to which their own electing voice called me.

The occasion of this slander was thus: I did one day, in preaching, lay down this position, viz. That an elect sinner is, in effectual calling, freely justified from all charge of sin, both original and actual, by the alone mediatorial righteousness of, the Lord Jesus Christ, freely imputed by God; and that without any regard had to any conditions performed by, or qualifications inhering in the person of the sinner, as con-causes with Christ in justification; this, said I, is a truth so clearly laid down and asserted in the gospel, and so backed with the witness of God's Spirit in the hearts of all assured believers, that all the disputers in the world, who oppose the same, will never be able to overthrow it, be their wit and parts

never so sharp and admired. And whether I be mistaken herein, I freely appeal to the judgment, and determination of all orthodox Protestants, who, in the point of justification, are not more or less tainted with the Popish, Arminian leaven of free-will and general redemption.

But to bid a challenge to Mr. Williams, or any other, to dispute matters of controversy in religion, I do most solemnly profess, I never spake such a thing, either in or out of the pulpit.

The fifth and last branch of the black charge brought in against me, was, That I am an universal decryer of all religious duties in the life and conversation of a Christian; crying out, in the pulpit, Away with your holiness, &c.

The design of my accusers in this, was to represent and expose me as a rank Antinomian; and so I should prove, were the accusation true.

But to let all who read this see with what a virulent and malicious spirit the contriver and presenter of this black charge against me has acted, I here sincerely and conscientiously set down the very words I spake, from which the occasion was taken to represent me in such black colours. The thing was thus; The subject I was then upon, leading me to discover the sad and deplorable condition the poor sinner is in while in a state of unregeneracy, I had these expressions, whose design and tendency was to awaken and convince the sinner of his misery by nature, by way of observation, viz. That where God sets the law on work in the conscience of an unconverted sinner, it will, like the avenger of blood, pursue the guilty sinner, till it either drive the sinner to Christ, the city of refuge, or till the sinner be lodged in hell.

To bring the matter home more particularly and closely to an awakened conscience, labouring, with Adam, to cover the sinner with the fig leaves of self righteousness, both negative

and positive, thereby to be justified and saved; I addressed myself to this sinner in these words, Thou convinced rebel sinner! who art now under the law's arrest, and sinking under the heavy weight of thy sins, hoping to relieve and lick thyself whole with thy conditions and qualifications, as if thereby thou couldst make amends to the offended justice of God, for all thy violations of his righteous law; know and consider it thou must, that the just and righteous law of God, whose terrible sentence, in thy guilty conscience, thou art now striving to fly and shun in this way of works, it is like a strict creditor, who will not accept, for payment, any coin which appears short and deficient either in quantity or quality. It will not hear of a sinner's being justified by any works, but such as are exactly commensurate to its own just and holy demands. Now, said I, either see that thy conditions and qualifications, whereunto thou trustest for life and salvation, be spotless, and exactly commensurate to the law's demand; or in case they be not, then away with their fig-leaf holiness, to hell with thy duties and personal qualifications. Look to the Lord Jesus Christ by an eye of faith, cast thy weary sinking soul on him for life and salvation, or thou wilt perish eternally, Jno. iii. 36, and viii. 24. This is what I said then; Christ knows I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.

When I have to do with believing Christians, I press them to the duties of practical holiness and good works, as if they were to be justified and saved by them; but still with this seasonable caution, that believers never do join their works of sanctification with Christ's justifying righteousness in the work of justification.

Besides the black charge brought against me, to which I have spoken by way of apology, mine accusers, the better to palliate their own black and horrid crimes, charge me with defectiveness in my life and conversation, as not practising what I preach: to this I reply in four particulars.

First. By way of concession, or grant, my life and conversation is not according to my preaching. In a sense I own it; I do humbly acknowledge, with shame and grief, that I find myself vastly short of that perfection in sanctification which, in preaching, I press as duty on myself and others: and the searcher of hearts best knows of how great a concern it is to me, to reflect on the vast disparity which I sensibly perceive is between what I am, and what I ought to be, in point of conformity to Christ, in life and conversation; which lays me under an indispensable necessity of subscribing to that *Vide meliora, proboque, deteciora a sequor*: I know and approve better things, but follow or incline to things which are worse: and to that of Paul, Rom, vii. 24., O wretched man that I am, &c.

Secondly, By way of negation; if my accusers, intend and mean that I give myself up to a course of dissolute and loose living, or that I allow myself in the approved practice of any immorality, which is incompatible with a regenerate state, or which is inconsistent with a holy profession; I absolutely, through special grace, deny the charge, and do bid my invidious bespatterers, and all such as do uncharitably credit such malicious reports of me, a fair and sober challenge, to make good such a charge against me, by any authentic witness, which is not known to be prejudiced against me, if not one or more of them who have plotted to overthrow my reputation and ministry.

Thirdly. If short coming in living up to what I preach and profess, be a sufficient warrant for church members to prevaricate and run away, like children of Belial, throwing off the yoke of duty in the church; I would gladly know how it is possible for any churches to be kept up on earth, considering that the instruments, by whose ministry God sees fit to gather and build up churches, to fit them for glory, are frail men, not sinless spirits.

For my own part, albeit I am far from pleading for any sin, though but the least infirmity, whereof either I myself, or any other know me guilty, I must needs say, that I never yet could find that ever God the Father, in the Old Testament, or Christ his Son, in the New, did call or send any to be prophets or apostles, who were exempt or free from personal failings, or who were ever able to live up, perfectly, to the doctrine they preached to others; yea, it is most evident, to any intelligent reader, that a considerable part of the canon of the Holy Scripture is occupant about discovering, acknowledging, and bewailing the sinful miscarriages and shortcomings of the pen-men thereof; as the learned and godly well know.

Fourthly, and lastly. Supposing that my brethren knew and could prove me guilty of as great falls as ever any pardoned sinner fell into; is it not the duty of church members to endeavour my recovery, by coming to me in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love; to call on me, and to stir me up to repentance and reformation? knowing that the holiest of saints, even those of the highest attainments in grace, while in the body, are obnoxious to the sorest temptations; and by reason thereof, and the remains of in-dwelling corruption, are liable to the sorest falls hereby.

The word of God proves, that so to do is the undoubted duty of church members one towards another, Lev. xix. 17.; Mat. xviii. 15.; Gal. vi. 1. But this my schismatical brethren never did to me, though never so earnestly courted, and lovingly entreated thereto, and that both in and out of the pulpit; as can be sufficiently proved, if need be.

Satan and his plotting agents knew full well, that the old trade, Report, and we will report it (Jer. xx. 10), was the most likely and effectual way to accomplish their ungodly design, which was to unchurch the church, and, for future, to render my ministry useless; in order whereto, the pastor must first be

attacked, according to Zech. xiii. 7, Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

This apology I thought not only expedient, but my duty to publish, for the true information of those, especially dissenting ministers, who have, from the character given them of me by those I here intend, sucked in prejudice against my name and ministry.

And to occasion their seriously considering, how every way unbecoming the gospel it is, for one Christian, especially such as are called to sacred, office, to be open eared, and of too credulous a temper, in listening to, and improving, to the great prejudice of those whom the law of charity commands them to love, any reports, which look like a design to blacken or stain the reputation of a brother, especially a poor stranger, who, for Christ and the gospel, hath lost his all; and who, for witnessing against the spreading errors of the times, is surrounded and besieged with enemies of all sorts. To frown on, and carry it strange to such, will neither please God, credit religion, or help to make a dying bed easy and comfortable. Exod. xxii. 21.; Deut. x. 19.; Mat. vii. 12.; Colos. iii. 12-15.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.

Flattery begets friends, speaking truth causeth enemies. Compare Isa. xxx. 10 with Amos v. 10.

FINNIS.

William Huntington

Earthly Tabernacle

William Huntington

THE APOSTLE Paul calls our earthly bodies a tabernacle, which is a portable dwelling, set up, taken down, and removed, just as it pleaseth the owner of it to do. This tabernacle, as it now stands, is not to continue, because of the misery which attends the inhabitants of it in its present state. For we that are in it do groan, being burdened. There is in it the plague of leprosy and therefore it must be pulled down. There is a body of sin, a body of death in it, and this has made it corruptible, and corruption is the seed of death: "It is appointed unto all men once to die."

The apostle calls these our earthly bodies clothes which a man puts on in the morning. So we come into this world with these corruptible bodies; and, as a man puts off his clothes at night and goes to bed, so there is a night coming on (in which no man can work) for the Lord's servants, when they shall be paid; they who labour under the cross, in faith and love and in self-denial, at which time they will put off their clothes, go to rest, or fall asleep in Jesus.

But this is not all that hope is conversant about. "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." In the resurrection-morning, when the marriage of the Lamb is to be consummated, these bodies of ours shall not only be put on again upon our souls, but these corruptible bodies themselves shall put on incorruption, and these mortal bodies shall put on immortality; and this is to be

done when He who only hath immortality shall appear. This will be the finishing stroke to the new creation, and is the last transforming view that we are looking for. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2:13).

We have already put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have walked in him, namely by putting on his righteousness, the garments of salvation, and the covering of the Lord's Spirit. But at this time we shall put him on with a witness, and that for good and all. The Holy Spirit will quicken our mortal bodies, and infuse divine life throughout every member of them, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear" The Spirit will purge away not only all our sins, which is called changing our vile bodies (Phil. 3:21), but will eradicate all corruptible matter, for incorruption shall be put on. We shall then know the love of Christ, which, in this state, passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God (Eph. 3:19). The church is Christ's body, the fulness of him, all dwelling in him; and he will fill them all, be all fulness to them, and be all in them (Eph. 1:23). Our bodies will not only be purged from all their gross and corruptible matter, which is now a clog and a weight, but they shall be spiritual: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." This dead weight shall give place to an eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:17). It shall be raised in power – power to bear this eternal weight of glory, and power to bear the sight of seeing God the Father; for "the pure in heart shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Christ said, "In that day I shall show you plainly of the Father;" In this power the body will be a fit companion for the soul; it will be vigorous, alert, and for its agility, as angels of God in heaven. Hence, in the delightful service of God there will be no fainting, no weariness, though we shall sing salvation to God and the Lamb for ever and ever.
